2022

Lay summary development - guidance for researchers

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Lay summary development offers you the chance to receive input from the MS Society’s Research Network **before** you submit your application to our grant round.

Who are the Research Network?

A group of over 350 people affected by MS, either living with MS themselves or with a partner, family member or friend with a diagnosis. They are trained to use their personal experiences of MS to help improve the quality and relevance of research.

Why consult people affected by MS before submitting your lay summary?

Your lay summary and involvement plans are an essential part of your application. And will be assessed by our lay reviewers and funding panels. If your lay summary is too brief or too complex, it will be difficult for them to comment and score your application. And this will have an impact on whether it might be funded.

Our lay summary development scheme can help you write a clear summary for your proposal. People affected by MS can provide feedback on your application before you submit, focusing on how well you have communicated your research proposal and the importance of the topic to people affected by MS.

This isn’t part of our review process, but is intended to help you to improve your lay summary before you submit.

How do I submit a request for lay summary development?

Please read the guidance below.

Email [researchnetwork@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:researchnetwork@mssociety.org.uk) with your request form and a copy of your lay summary and public involvement plan.

You must submit your completed form by the deadline for the award type you are applying for. You will receive the feedback on your summary approximately four weeks before the deadline for submitting your grant application (see table below).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Award type** | **Deadline to return your lay summary development form** | **When you will receive feedback on your lay summary** |
| Spring Catalyst Awards | 7 March 2022 | 28 March 2022 |
| Data Discovery Awards | 1 April 2022 | 25 April 2022 |
| Project Awards | 11 April 2022 | 9 May 2022 |
| Career Development Awards | 11 April 2022 | 9 May 2022 |
| Autumn Catalyst Awards | 11 July 2022 | 8 August 2022 |

What happens once I have submitted my request?

Your lay summary and public involvement plan will be reviewed by a small number of Research Network members. We’ll aim for 5 responses per application, but can’t guarantee this.

We’ll allocate Research Network members at random, unless you specify that you’d like to involve only people who meet certain criteria (e.g. those experiencing a specific symptom). We’ll do our best to meet such requests, but can’t guarantee it.

All responses represent the views of the individual Research Network members, and not the official position of the MS Society.

How will this affect my chances of being awarded funding in the 2022 grant round?

Lay summary development doesn’t form part of our funding review process. It is a resource which allows you to improve the quality of your application before you submit it.

Research Network members who provide you with feedback as part of lay summary development are then exempt from reviewing your application once it’s submitted.

Assessing impact

Assessing the impact of our public involvement activities is very important to us. We may contact you after the grant round deadline to find out how useful you found this exercise.

What you tell us won’t affect your chances of receiving funding. Research Network members are always pleased to hear if their input was helpful.

It’ll also help us to explore how we might improve this process for the next grant round.

How to complete the request form

You should complete the below request form and return it, alongside any documentation that you’d like reviewed by the Research Network, to researchnetwork@mssociety.org.uk.

Section 1

Add your details and specify if there is any experience it would be helpful for Research Network members to have.

Sections 2 and 3:

Please answer the questions to outline your **lay summary** and **public involvement plan**. You need to clearly describe your research project in [plain English](http://www.invo.org.uk/makeitclear/). It should explain what you plan to do, and how this could benefit people affected by MS. Diagrams and analogies can really help.

Section C of the grant application form asks about the public involvement you have planned for your project, so you may find it useful to receive feedback on this too.

Section 4

Please list the questions you would like Research Network members to respond to based on their personal experiences of MS.

Some examples of very general questions might be:

Are the proposed research questions important to people affected by MS?

Is the aim of the project and the potential benefits it will have for people affected by MS clear?

Do you understand how the project will be carried out?

Is the summary written in plain English? Are there any words or phrases that are difficult to understand?

Are the requirements placed upon study participants – e.g. number and duration of visits – realistic and achievable? Are the procedures too invasive or burdensome?

Do the outcome measures capture what is important to people affected by MS?

Have we planned to involve people affected by MS in a meaningful and appropriate way in the design, oversight and dissemination of the project?

You can ask much more specific questions than these, and you can ask as many or as few questions as you like.

Lay summary development request form – 2022

Please complete the below request form, and return it with any other documentation that you would like the Research Network to review to [researchnetwork@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:researchnetwork@mssociety.org.uk)

Make sure you submit these documents by the deadline for the grant round you are applying for (see table on page 2).

1. Application details

Lead applicant’s name:

Institution:

Lay project title:

Would you like to involve Research Network members with particular experiences? (e.g. of particular symptoms or treatments, or with a particular type of MS)

1. Lay Summary

What is the aim of the project? How will it benefit people affected by MS? (500 words max.)

What is the reason for this study? (500 words max.)

How will this project be carried out? (500 words max.)

Where could your research findings lead next? (500 words max.)

How will you share your results? (500 words max.)

1. Involvement of people affected by MS

How have people affected by MS been involved so far in the planning and development of this project and how has this affected the development of the project so far? (500 words max.)

How do you intend to involve people affected by MS in the ongoing development of the project? (500 words max.)

1. Questions for the Research Network

**We’re the MS Society.**   
Our community is here for you   
through the highs, lows and   
everything in between.   
We understand what life’s like with MS.

Together, we are strong enough to stop MS.



**Contact us**

MS National Centre 020 8438 0700

[info@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:info@mssociety.org.uk)

MS Helpline Freephone 0808 800 8000 (weekdays 9am-9pm)

[helpline@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:helpline@mssociety.org.uk)

**Online**

[mssociety.org.uk](http://mssociety.org.uk/)  [facebook.com/MSSociety](http://facebook.com/MSSociety)

[twitter.com/mssocietyuk](http://twitter.com/mssocietyuk)

**MS Society Scotland**

0131 335 4050

[msscotland@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:msscotland@mssociety.org.uk)

**MS Society Northern Ireland**

028 9080 2802

nireception@mssociety.org.uk

**MS Society Cymru**

[mscymru@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:mscymru@mssociety.org.uk)

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