

*ISN Global Outreach (GO) Programs*

# ***Fellowship Program***

***Practical Details for Applicant Fellows***



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From your first step in the application process to your return upon completion of your training, this document is meant as a guide that will help you all throughout your fellowship.

The Fellowship Program has 2 separate application rounds a year. The respective deadlines for submitting complete applications with all supporting documents are **June 15** and **December 15**.

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## Step 1 - Making sure you are eligible

### Eligibility Criteria

If you can answer positively all these questions, you are ready to proceed with your application.

- ✓ Are you at least 30 years of age? (If you are over 40, you may ONLY apply for a short-term fellowship – even so over 45 years, you may not be successful).
- ✓ Are you living and working in a developing country? (Low or medium economy according to the World Bank criteria – Please refer to the ISN website for the detailed list: [www.isn-online.org](http://www.isn-online.org)).
- ✓ Have you received basic training in nephrology in your home country?
- ✓ Are you nominated by a home Mentor and your home Institution who guarantee your re-employment once training has been completed?
- ✓ Can you be recommended by two senior nephrologists in your home country?
- ✓ Are you endorsed by the National Society of Nephrology in your home country? If you are applying from a country where there is no nephrology practice, you can apply for a fellowship training only if you have governmental or institutional support to set up a nephrology program upon your return.
- ✓ Have you identified an appropriate Host Mentor and Institution with whom you have agreed on a suitable training plan?
- ✓ Does your training plan reflect the skills and knowledge that are required by your home Institution and which you can implement on your return?
- ✓ Can you understand and communicate in the host country's language?
- ✓ Are you willing to guarantee your return to your home country within three months of completing the training? (Otherwise all funds received

If you do not know a host institution that could train you, you can find one through the **ISN Fellowship Matching Initiative**.

We will help you locate an appropriate center and establish the first contact.



For more information, contact Ms Samantha Rens ([srens@isn-online.org](mailto:srens@isn-online.org)). In your e-mail to her, you may already wish to indicate which are your preferred countries and on what topic you would like your training to focus. You should also attach your CV and a letter of recommendation from your home Mentor.

We strongly advise you to look for information about practical issues (tax, housing, transportation, security) in the host city prior to applying.

Applicants with more than 6 months of previous experience outside their home countries are only eligible for a short-term fellowship.

## **Step 2 - Preparing your application file**

You can obtain the application forms through the Fellowship Program page on the ISN Gateway or through the ISN Headquarters by contacting Ms Samantha Rens ([srens@isn-online.org](mailto:srens@isn-online.org)).

Your application will only be considered as complete if it contains the following documents:

### **Application file**

- ✓ The completed and duly signed application form.
- ✓ The completed and duly signed Host Institution Form (to be filled out by your Host Mentor).
- ✓ A curriculum vitae (CV) of maximum 4 pages.
- ✓ A letter of motivation signed by both your Home and Host Mentor, stating the objectives of the training as well as how you intend to implement the newly gained knowledge and skills upon your return home and how the training will benefit your home country and host institution.
- ✓ A nomination letter from your Home Institution Director detailing the required type of training and explicitly stating adherence to the Declaration of Istanbul.
- ✓ Two recommendation letters from nephrologists in your Home Institution (or country).
- ✓ A letter from your Home Institution guaranteeing re-employment.
- ✓ An acceptance letter from your Host Mentor detailing the training that will be provided and explicitly stating adherence to the Declaration of Istanbul.
- ✓ A photocopy of your passport or identity.
- ✓ Only if you come from an active SRC pair (i.e. at level A, B, C, HB or HC at the time of your application): a letter of endorsement from both the emerging and supporting centers.



## General tips and comments

### - Application:

The application is a lengthy process and we recommend you allocate enough time for it before submission. The ISN can only fund a limited amount of fellows each year and only candidates with a strong application file are accepted.

### - Forms:

Your application must be typed. The Fellowship Committee will not rank your application if it is hand-written and illegible.

### - Letters:

Make sure all letters are written under official letterheads and duly signed. They will not be considered valid otherwise.

### - Training plan:

The Committee members who score your application expect an indication from the host institution of the training to be provided, with sufficient details to help them judge that there is a match between your aspirations, the host center's offer and the strategy of the home center. It is highly recommended that the host mentor adjoins a specific training plan to his letter of acceptance. Do not neglect this part and make sure you allocate an appropriate amount of time with your host Mentor to jointly establish a strong training plan.

### - Re-employment:

Make sure the letter clearly states that your home institution guarantees your re-employment upon completion of your training.

### - ISN Membership:

Both your home and host Mentors must be current ISN members. This is a key condition for your application to be eligible. If their membership fees are not paid, the application will not be submitted to the Fellowship Committee. If you wish us to invite them to enrol and/or wish them to have a list of the benefits of ISN membership, do not hesitate to contact Ms Samantha Rens ([srens@isn-online.org](mailto:srens@isn-online.org)) or visit the Membership pages on the ISN Gateway.

### - Language:

The application and all enclosed documents **must** be written in English. Documents submitted in any other language will not be submitted to the Fellowship Committee. No exception to this rule will be made.

It is the responsibility of the host and home institution to ensure that the applicant's language capabilities are sufficient to efficiently undertake the fellowship training. The ISN does not conduct any language tests.

### - Host Country:

An important object of the program is to add value not just to the fellow, but also the home unit and home country. The host country should therefore be different from the home country.



- Host Institution:  
A maximum number of 2 Long Term fellows can be accepted per year in the same host institution.
- Licensing requirements:  
In some countries, training with a clinical emphasis is contingent upon specific licensing requirements (e.g. applicants for centers in the USA and in Canada and expecting direct patient access must be aware that the USMLE examination is necessary for clinical training. It is also the case in other countries such as UK and Australia.)
- Declaration of Istanbul (DoI):  
Following ISN's adherence to the Declaration of Istanbul, it has become an important requirement and a criterion of selection that all parties in a Fellowship training confirm they endorse the Declaration of Istanbul.

Any other specific host requirements that are not mandatory for ISN should be formulated by the host institution.

### **Step 3 - Submitting your application**

The Fellowship Program has 2 separate application rounds a year. The respective deadlines for submitting complete applications with all supporting documents are **June 15** and **December 15**.

Once your application is complete and ready, you can send it by:

- ✓ Fax: +32 2 213 13 63
- ✓ Email: [srens@isn-online.org](mailto:srens@isn-online.org)
- ✓ Post: Samantha Rens  
International Society of Nephrology  
Rue du Luxembourg 22-24  
B-1000 Brussels  
Belgium

Please submit your application **once** only and as a **fully completed package**. Scanned copies of your application sent by e-mail are acceptable.

All information provided is entered into a database for future reference and is verified by the ISN headquarters. Upon receipt of the application form and check for completion by the ISN Headquarters, a confirmation will be sent to you.

The results are announced via e-mail approximately 3 months after the deadline, i.e. in February/March and August/September respectively.



No application will be accepted past the above deadlines. It is therefore highly recommended that you start the process months ahead as it can sometimes take time to gather all necessary documents.

	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>
Application	15 December	15 June
Announcement of results	February/ March	September
Start of training	Within 6 months upon reception of your acceptance letter	Within 6 months upon reception of your acceptance letter
Return home	Within 3 months upon completion of your fellowship training	Within 3 months upon completion of your fellowship training

## **Step 4 - Reviewing process**

Each application is reviewed by all members of the Fellowship Committee. The selection of the most deserving applicants is based upon an objective and fair scoring system. The scoring reflects various factors such as:

- ✓ The proposed training plan and its relevance to the Home Institution's needs;
- ✓ The strength and relevance of the recommendation letters;
- ✓ The number of ISN Fellowships granted to the same home country over the past three years;
- ✓ The institutional involvement in the ISN Sister Renal Center Program.

Approximately 3 months after the application deadline, all applicants are notified in writing about their acceptance or rejection in the Fellowship Program. The successful candidates will be informed about their grant and their names will be announced on the ISN website. You may be partially or fully sponsored by different partner organisations and this will be announced in your acceptance letter. (See the ISN website for details of the various partnership fellowships for which you may be eligible.)

Once you have started making your travel arrangements and applying for a visa (if necessary), you must inform the ISN Headquarters about your exact starting date.

### **Concurrent Funding**

You must declare any concurrent funding or funding applications to other organisations. If both your ISN and other applications are successful, then you will be encouraged to accept the other application so that more ISN funds are available for other fellows. You may be permitted to have



concurrent funding up to a value of 10,000 USD pro rata - but beyond that the value of the ISN fellowship would be reduced by the additional funding above the 10,000 pro rata.

## **Step 5 - Living in your host institution**

### **Insurances**

ISN cannot be held liable for any consequences related to travelling or staying abroad. The responsibility for procuring health/accident and travel insurances remains with the fellow; you or your relatives cannot hold ISN responsible in the event of untoward events or experiences.

### **Financial support**

ISN Fellowship grants are awarded on the condition that Fellows return to their respective home countries within three months after completion of the training to actively practice nephrology, teach, and help improve the standards of medical treatment and education in your home countries. Failure to do so, unless exempted in writing by the Secretary-General, means you are in violation of the conditions of the Fellowship and must pay back the grant money to the ISN.

The total sum of the grant is in alignment with the length of the training and varies according to the anticipated expenses in the host country, as per World Bank data. Grants are intended to cover, or offset, all costs related to the Fellowship, including travel, accommodation and living expenses. The grant is intended to cover expenses of the fellow, not his/her family.

- For short-term trainings up to 6 months, the grant is paid as one instalment shortly after your arrival in the host institution.
- For longer Fellowships, the grant is typically paid in two instalments separated by 6 months. The first instalment amounts to 60% of the total grant.

In order to receive your grant or first instalment (if you are on a long-term training), you must fill out the payment request form (available on the Fellowship Program page of the ISN Gateway) and send it to the ISN Headquarters. This document must be signed by your host mentor in order to be valid. If all information is in good order, you would receive your grant within the next 2 weeks. It is therefore advised that you take some spending money in order to cover your expenses upon your arrival.

You may opt to receive your payment either in the form of a wire transfer or a check (not recommended). The payment can also be sent to your host institution if more convenient to you.

Towards the end of the first 6 months, you must again send a "Payment Request Form" to Headquarters to obtain the second instalment payment (for applicable Fellowships).

Please note that ISN does not have any information on local tax policies. You may wish to contact past or present ISN Fellows and ask to share their experiences with you or give you advice. Their names and addresses are listed on the ISN Gateway.





## **Extension of your training**

You may apply for an extension of your training at the host institution if the home and host Mentors feel this is necessary for a successful completion of the your training plan.

As ISN cannot pay a grant retrospectively, please be aware that if you wish to apply for an extension, you have to take into account that ISN typically needs two to three months before announcing the results of the application round.

The application deadlines for a review of an extension application are the same as for a regular application: **June 15** and **December 15**.

However a different application form has to be filled out and enclosures are slightly different.

You can obtain the application forms through the Fellowship Program page on the ISN Gateway or through the ISN Headquarters by contacting Ms Samantha Rens ([srens@isn-online.org](mailto:srens@isn-online.org)).

### **Extension application file**

- ✓ The completed and duly signed application form
- ✓ A report on the training achieved signed and approved by both the Home and Host Mentors
- ✓ A description of the purpose for Extension signed or written by your Host Mentor
- ✓ A letter of approval of extension from the Host Mentor
- ✓ A letter of acceptance from the Host Institution Director
- ✓ A letter of Approval of Extension from the Home Mentor
- ✓ A letter from the applicant's Home Institution guaranteeing re-employment.

## **Step 6 - Finishing your training**

You are required to return home within 3 months after completion of your training and must work in your home institution for a period of at least 3 years and fill a long-term position in your home country in line with your training objectives.

Failure to show proof of return home will result in you having to return all received grant money to the ISN.

By the end of your training, you must send to ISN a final training report (a form is available through the Global Operations Center or on the ISN website). Your host mentor will also need to fill out a short report about your performance. Those reports are expected within the three months following the end of your training.



After verification and approval of the reports by the Fellowship Committee Chair, ISN membership privileges will be activated (these depend on the length of the training period as shown in the table below).

Training duration	Benefits	Title
13 months or more	2 years full membership and travel grant to 1 WCN	"ISN FELLOW"
7 - 12 months	1 year full membership and travel grant to 1 WCN	"ISN FELLOW"
6 months or less	1 year online membership	"ISN SCHOLAR"

On top of these privileges, you will receive an official ISN training certificate and may also benefit from some priority for participation in other Global Outreach Programs (Sister Renal Center Programs, Educational Ambassadors Program, and organization of CME meetings). You will also have the opportunity to present scientific materials in the special ISN Fellows' sessions in the World Congresses of Nephrology and compete for some awards (Fellowship Prizes) at WCNs.

Please note that no privileges will be awarded until your report is approved by the ISN Fellowship Program Chairman. If you submit the report later than 3 months after completion of your training, you will lose the right to your benefits of membership and guaranteed WCN Travel Grant.

You can send your training report by

- ✓ Fax: +32 2 213 13 63
- ✓ Email: [srens@isn-online.org](mailto:srens@isn-online.org)
- ✓ Post: Samantha Rens  
International Society of Nephrology  
Rue du Luxembourg 22-24  
B-1000 Brussels  
Belgium

In order to monitor the Fellows' accomplishments, ISN sends out a questionnaire to past Fellows every two years, which is to be completed and submitted on-line. It is expected that you will complete these questionnaires, ISN indeed attaches great importance to maintaining a relationship with all past Fellows.



## **Step 7 - Being unsuccessful**

You should make sure that you present, as part of your application, a well described and coherent training plan justifying the proposed training, describing your goals, ambitions and expectations, and giving cogent reasons for your choice of host center.

You are always compared to all other candidates and your chances of success depend very much on the relative strengths and weaknesses of the other applicants as well as the number of applicants. Every year we are faced with more and more applications for the program and because our procedures and budget remain the same we are obliged to also reject more candidates every year.

As a reminder, the Fellowship Committee members and the ISN Headquarters individually score several different items, including:

- ✓ Your past experience and achievements
- ✓ The training plan
- ✓ Publications and presentations
- ✓ Age
- ✓ Number of fellows from the same country
- ✓ Involvement in other ISN programs.

### Important notes:

You have up to three chances to apply for a fellowship training under the same host mentor.

You should return home for at least a period of 3 years before applying a second time to the Program. You are then only eligible for a short-term training or should submit a special request to the ISN Fellowship Program Chair if you are interested in a long-term training.

**More information and relevant application documents can be found at [www.isn-online.org](http://www.isn-online.org)**

