Subject: Call for Applications: James S. McDonnell Foundation's Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards in Studying Complex Systems

From the Office of Foundation Relations (http://web.mit.edu/ofr/)

Below you will find information on a call for applications for the James S. McDonnell Foundation's Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards in Studying Complex Systems.

Please forward to anyone who might be interested.

NOTE: The Office of Foundation Relations would be pleased to provide assistance to anyone applying for a grant from this program. It would also be helpful for us to know if someone has applied, whether or not we assist him/her. Thank you!

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DEADLINE: June 15, 2012

The Complex Systems program supports scholarship and research directed toward the development of theoretical and mathematical tools that can be applied to the study of complex, adaptive, nonlinear systems. It is anticipated that research funded in this program will address important questions in diverse fields. While the program's emphasis is on the development and application of the theory and tools used in the study of complex research questions and not on particular fields of research per se, JSMF is particularly interested in the continued development of complex systems science, and in projects attempting to apply complex systems approaches to coherently articulated questions. Proposals intending to apply complex system tools and models to problems where such approaches are not yet considered usual or mainstream are appropriate to the RFA but should be well justified as to why such approaches would be an advance.

The JSMF Fellowships in Complex Systems research are intended to provide students in the final stages of completing a Ph.D. degree more leeway in identifying and securing postdoctoral training opportunities in complex systems research (as defined above). The program, following review of applications, provides selected pre-doctoral students with "letters of intent to fund" that the student can use in negotiating with potential postdoctoral training institutions while the student is in the final phase of graduate school. The JSMF Fellowship is designed to provide students with an opportunity to seek potential postdoctoral research opportunities on the basis of the student's interest and desire to obtain additional skills and experience that will further their pursuit of careers in complex systems science.

JSMF Fellowships are not awarded until the student applies to and is accepted as a postdoctoral fellow at a qualified 501(c)(3) institution (or equivalent) and the qualified institution submits an acceptable application to JSMF. The likelihood of funding being awarded to the institution if JSMF's criteria are met, makes it possible for the student to identify and pursue post-doctoral training positions best aligned with his or her research interests and offering a genuine opportunity to gain novel research skills in a supportive environment without being limited to institutions with available funds.
The total amount of the JSMF Fellowship is $200,000 expended over 2 years. The amount of the award should be sufficient to support the costs of the full postdoctoral salary or stipend and fringe benefits. If the institutional postdoctoral salary scales are set such that there are funds in excess of what is needed for stipend and benefits, the excess funds can be used by the institution to support the Fellow's research. The Postdoctoral Fellow's stipend must be paid in full from the fellowship. Institutions cannot request that other funding sources be used to cover the Fellow's salary or stipend; JSMF Fellowship funds are not intended to be used primarily as a source of laboratory support.

James S. McDonell Foundation
Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards in Studying Complex Systems

Details of the JSMF Fellowship Program
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Eligibility
- There are no geographic or institutional restrictions. International applicants are welcome to apply.
- Applicants should not currently have a Ph.D. and should not receive a Ph.D. on or before June 15, 2012.
- Ph.D. student applicants should have theoretical and/or experimental training in Complex Systems Science.
- Applicants should expect to complete coursework and dissertation sometime in 2013.
- Ph.D. students that have already indentified a postdoctoral position and postdoctoral research mentor should not apply. Support for such positions is readily available through traditional funding mechanisms.
- JSMF Fellowships can be only be used to support postdoctoral training at a qualified institution with 501(c)(3) status or foreign equivalent that is already on file with the foundation.

Decisions and Notification
Applications are due June 15, 2012. Review by an expert advisory panel and recommendations for funding consideration should be completed by October. Final funding decisions will be announced late October or early November after the JSMF Board of Directors meets and considers the advisory board’s recommendations.

Fulfillment Instructions
When an application is recommended for JSMF funding consideration by the Fellowship Review Panel, the student receives a letter of intent concerning the possibility of receiving a fellowship award contingent on the fulfillment of two criteria:
1. A postdoctoral position is obtained at a qualified 501(c)(3) institution or foreign equivalent on file with the foundation, and
2. The institution is willing to submit an application acceptable to JSMF and agrees to administer the award if granted. The student can use the JSMF letter of intent during negotiations for a post-doctoral position. The JSMF letter of intent expires within 12 months (1 year) from the date of issuance.

Once the student accepts a postdoctoral position, and the sponsoring institution determines it will apply for the Fellowship funds, the institution submits a funding request according to the JSMF guidelines provided at the time including a proposed budget describing how funds will be used to support the Fellow. The JSMF Fellowship award will be made to the qualified institution with the Fellow named as the award’s PI.

**FAQ**

**Am I eligible to apply for a JSMF fellowship award?** Take the [eligibility quiz](#) to determine if you are eligible to apply for a fellowship award.

**Are references and image captions included in the word limit?** No.

**Will you accept a late application or letter of reference?** No. All materials must be received on or before the official deadline. Late applications and letters of reference will not be reviewed.

**I have two Ph.D. mentors. Should I have both submit a letter of support?** Yes.

**Who were the successful applicants in the 2011 competition?** [Click here](#) to see the list of applicants that received letters of intent to fund.

**I'm having a problem with an electronic application or a particular program guideline. Whom can I contact for help?** Send an email to [info@jsmf.org](mailto:info@jsmf.org).

**Are there font or margin requirements for the application?** There are no specific guidelines related to these types of questions. Use your best judgment, and understand that the file submitted needs to be easily readable.

**When will a letter of intent awarded in the current competition expire?**
Letters of intent awarded in the 2012 competition must be activated in 2013. If a letter of intent is not activated in 2013, it will expire.

**Where can I find a list of qualified institutions with 501(c)(3) status or foreign equivalent already on file with the foundation?** If awarded a letter of intent, applicants must select a postdoctoral position at a qualified institution (501(c)(3) or foreign equivalent) already on file with the foundation. Click here to view institutions [already on file with the foundation](#).