

Predoctoral Training FAQs

Do I need to be a WSU student to participate in the MPSI Fellows program?

Yes, you need to be currently enrolled in a WSU doctoral program in order to be a MPSI Fellow. At this time, MPSI is unable to extend membership to students in a terminal master's degree program. Some programs require their students to earn a master's degree as part of the doctoral program. Preference is given to students who have already earned a master's degree but a master's is not required as long as you are enrolled in a WSU doctoral program and are earning the master's as part of that doctoral program.

Am I eligible to apply to the Fellows program if my faculty advisor isn't currently a member of MPSI's faculty?

Yes, but if you are invited to join the program your acceptance is contingent upon your advisor's availability to join the MPSI training faculty. Participating as a MPSI training faculty member requires attending one meeting a year, typically held in late January or early February, to evaluate the progress of all the MPSI Fellows. Your faculty advisor will also need to serve as a member of a mentoring team for you. The mentoring team is composed of a minimum of two faculty members in addition to your advisor. The mentoring team helps you develop a MPSI Individual Development Plan (IDP) and guides your work over the course of the year. Check with your faculty advisor before applying to ensure that he or she is able to commit this time to the program.

What is the MPSI IDP?

Fellows are required to develop a plan with their mentoring team to guide their work during the year. There are three sections to the plan: research, skill development and training, and community engagement. For each section, Fellows will identify objectives and action steps. A report is submitted, typically in mid-January, summarizing your progress toward completing these actions steps and meeting these objectives. A final progress report is due in May.

I understand why research and skill development are part of the Fellows experience, but why do I need to include community engagement?

Community team-science and translational research are two inquiry approaches adopted within MPSI. Community-related activities, when well designed, promote professional preparation to conduct community-relevant research. Each Fellow develops

community engagement goals related to supporting their research skills. Community activities are available through MPSI or Fellows may identify opportunities independent of the Institute.

The Graduate School already requires an IDP. Do I need to complete two?

Yes. The Graduate School and MPSI IDPs should complement one another, but they are two separate plans.

Does the funding I receive for the MPSI Fellows Program prevent me from receiving funds from other sources?

No, and in fact it is expected that students will have other funding.

An expectation of the program is that I participate in the annual Lifespan Alliance Research Day. What is that? If I present a poster how do I pay for it?

Each year in partnership with the Institute of Gerontology, MPSI students have the opportunity to present a paper or a poster on their research to faculty and students. Papers are presented in the morning and after a lunch provided by the Institute, students participate in a poster session. Poster printing costs for Research Day are paid by MPSI. Research Day provides the opportunity for students to present their work in a supportive environment, exchange ideas, and receive feedback about their research.

How will I learn everything I need to know about the expectations and benefits of the program?

We hold an orientation at the end of August for all Fellows. Everything you need to do is explained. Continuing Fellows also participate, so advice is provided from students currently in the program.