



2026 Research Grants Program Meredith C. Thomas Memorial Fellowship

The Myositis Association's (TMA) Research Grant Program provides financial support to qualified investigators and clinicians for basic, translational, and clinical research across the spectrum of myositis diseases and specialties with the goal of advancing our understanding of the underlying causes and pathophysiology, means of prevention, early detection, accurate diagnosis, effective treatments, and methods for curing myositis and related diseases and complications.

In the 2026 grant cycle, TMA offers a fellowship award for a project related to **antisynthetase syndrome and interstitial lung disease (ILD)**.

TMA's Meredith C. Thomas Memorial Fellowship is an award of \$107,500 that will be granted to a fellow pursuing a disease-specific, targeted project that meets the following guidelines:

- Advances the understanding of the cause, prevention, detection, treatment, or cure of antisynthetase syndrome and/or myositis interstitial lung disease.
- Treatment may extend beyond medication management into health-related quality of life, such as assessments and interventions that help patients manage physical symptoms, maintain employment, and navigate any mental health or social effects of their illness.
- Priority is given to fellows in rheumatology, pulmonology, critical care, or related fields (neurology, dermatology, and other specialties involved in myositis science and care).
- All applicants must exhibit demonstrable commitment to antisynthetase syndrome and/or lung disease as a primary focus within their clinical, research, and career priorities.
- Priority is given to interdisciplinary projects that emphasize a collaborative approach, including partnering with patients and care partners.

TMA fellowships are designed to support early-career physicians, scientists, and investigators who have a career interest in research and/or a clinical practice focused on rare autoimmune disease; hold a terminal degree (MD, MD/PhD, PhD, or equivalent); and are enrolled in a formal fellowship program with a myositis experienced mentor. Eligibility extends to residents planning to enroll in a formal fellowship program with a myositis experienced mentor, or fellows interested in an advanced fellowship with a myositis experienced mentor. Mentors will be required to provide a letter of support affirming their involvement and approval.

TMA's mission is to improve the lives of persons affected by myositis, fund innovative research, and increase myositis awareness and advocacy. TMA thanks the donors whose generosity made possible this funding cycle, including the Thomas Family and all the donors to [Meredith's Legacy](#).

Learn more about [TMA's research portfolio](#) and [donate](#).

Applications will be evaluated primarily based upon relevance to myositis, alignment to this RFP, scientific quality, and feasibility. Additional criteria are innovation, collaboration, and patient centricity.

Grant Application Process

The application process proceeds in two steps, which are summarized below. TMA's [Research Guidelines](#) provide more specific directions and detailed requirements. Following is a summary of key dates and requirements:

- A one-page letter of intent (LOI) is required by **May 20, 2026**. This includes a cover letter with administrative information, a three-paragraph description of the proposed project, a letter of support from the mentor, and a biosketch of the applicant in [NIH format](#).
- The LOI must be submitted through our [electronic submissions platform](#).
- The LOI will be screened by TMA representatives shortly after receipt, and a select number of applicants will be invited to submit a full application.
- Full applications must be submitted through our [electronic submissions platform](#) by **June 29, 2026**.

Timeline for the 2026 Research Grant Program

- Letter of intent due **May 20, 2026**
- Invitation for full application by **June 3, 2026**
- Full application due **June 29, 2026**
- Notification of awards **October 2026**
- Funding to begin after **November 2026**

Funding Details

The \$107,500 will be disbursed within an 18-to-24 month funding period that is mutually agreed to by the fellow and TMA. The funding period will begin no earlier than November 2026 and no later than June 2027.

Fellowship funds are intended to provide compensation for early career investigators as well as travel support for attendance at three (3) events. The fellow is required to attend and speak at MyoCon: TMA's Global Myositis Patient Conference, and the Meredith's Legacy Fundraiser. They should also plan to attend and speak at a scientific or medical conference of the fellow's choice where they report on this work.

About The Myositis Association

The Myositis Association is the leading international nonprofit organization committed to the global community of people living with myositis, their care partners, family members, and the medical community. TMA provides patient education and support,

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advocacy, clinician education, and has awarded nearly \$8.5 million to help advance the field of myositis research. Learn more at www.myositis.org/.

TMA's Meredith C. Thomas Memorial Fellowship

Meredith Thomas was diagnosed with antisynthetase syndrome and interstitial lung disease, and passed away at age 33 in November 2023. In her honor, her family created [Meredith's Legacy](#) and this Myositis Research Fellowship to fund research grants for early-career clinicians focused on learning more about how best to treat antisynthetase syndrome and interstitial lung disease.

Questions? Please contact Linda Kobert, TMA's Research and Communications Specialist at linda@myositis.org.

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