

ISN Programs

# Sister Transplant Centers Program

**ISN TTS STC**  
**Application Guidelines**



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## NOMENCLATURE

*Pair applications:* The Emerging Center (EC) is the center from low and middle income country. The Supporting Center is the experienced training center usually from a high income country (as per the World Bank List of Economies)

*Trio applications:* In a trio application; the Emerging Center is the new addition to the recently graduated ISN-TTS STC partnership. The previously called Emerging Center becomes the Supporting Center and the formerly Supporting Center now acts as the Mentor Center in the new trio partnership.

### STEP 1 - ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- The Emerging center has to be from a low and middle income country [as per the list of the World Bank of Economies [here](#)
- If application successful, both centers should become at least one ISN member or TTS member

They need to submit a detailed action plan and budget proposal, and a clear description of how the collaboration will develop the services of the emerging center and positively reflect the supporting center

### BECOME AN ISN-TTS STC PAIR

The ISN-TTS Sister Transplant Centers Program is a joint partnership set up between ISN and The Transplantation Society (TTS) to create new kidney transplant centers and develop existing kidney transplant programs in low and middle income countries. Following the success of the ISN Sister Renal Centers Program, this initiative encourages transplant centers to work together to increase opportunities for kidney transplant patients in high income countries.

An experienced transplant center in the developed world lends its support to an emerging transplant center to facilitate vital multidisciplinary training and encourage both centers to exchange their knowledge and expertise.

The results are beneficial to both sides. Supporting centers get involved in global health, spread ethical and competent transplantation to regions of the world with limited or no current access to transplantation. Emerging centers connect with a multidisciplinary team of international experts in transplantation from a world-leading center

The deadline for applications is **October 1** each year.

#### Every Level has a status:

**Level C is the first stage within the program.** Sister Transplant Partnerships jointly enter the program at level C for a period of two years. They receive basic annual funds from ISN / TTS to help develop and support training links. These centers are eligible for an upgrade to a level B position if the Final Progress reports are satisfactory.

## BECOME A ISN-TTS STC PAIR (end)

**Level B is the second stage within the program.** Sister Transplant Centers which have shown significant progress in level C can move to level B after two years.

**Level A is the final stage.** Level B centers can apply competitively for an upgrade to Level A after two years. These upgrades are reserved for those few partnerships whose emerging sister centers show the most promising development towards centers of excellence in their region.

**Honorary B.** Failed upgrade requests from B to A become Honorary B (HB) level. Honorary B levels have one additional chance to apply for an upgrade. The Sister Transplant pairs at honorary levels must re-apply after a one year to the A. If they are not successful they drop out of the program.\*\*

Although no funding is attached to these categories, honorary pairs continue to benefit from access to the ISN publications and priority consideration when applying to the Fellowship, CME and Educational Ambassadors programs.

*\*\* As an exceptional option and at the discretion of the ISN-TTS STC committee, please note that pairs at Level B who have not upgraded, could stay at Level B and be funded for another year*

## WHAT OPTIONS ARE THERE AFTER LEVEL A?

The new ISN TTS STC trio program allows graduating EC/SC pairs to remain involved in the program and for the EC to diffuse their know-how to other centers in their region.

In this system, the recently graduated Emerging Center would form a new pair with another local renal center and would work with the original SC to support the EC in a ISN TTS STC Trio.

The graduated Supporting Center (which would act as a Mentor Center - MC) in fact would support the newly formed STC pair by providing guidance and any other possible means of support. For instance, if the pair upgrades and receives a budget this would also partly be the responsibility of the Mentor Center seeing as visits would be conducted between them and both the centers in the same region – i.e. a funded expert from the UK would visit both centers in the same visit or ensure that personnel from one center are present at the other to benefit from training.

The applications from these ISN TTS STC trios will be reviewed in the same competitive process as all other applicants and be subject to the consideration of balanced regional distribution.

## STEP 2 - HOW TO APPLY

All applications need to be received by **October 1<sup>st</sup>, each year**

**The relevant information and forms to fill will be sent to you by email 3 months before the deadline**

1. NEW APPLICATIONS (LEVEL C)	2. UPGRADES APPLICATIONS (LEVEL B & A)
<b>Forms to be submitted:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application form</li> <li>2. Annual budget proposal for year 1 / year 2*</li> </ol>	ISN-TTS STC pairs or trios will be invited to apply for upgrade if they are eligible: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Final report of last 2 years partnership***</li> <li>2. Annual Budget proposal for year 1 / year 2*</li> </ol>
<b>How To Submit Your Budget</b>	
<p>By October 1<sup>st</sup>, each ISN-TTS STC partnership is requested to make a budget plan for 2 years with corresponding estimated breakdown for the activities. The budget proposal should be submitted in USD. The budget allocated at C level is 1,500 USD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b><u>Budget amount:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Please submit a budget in accordance to your allocated ISN-TTS STC budget, i.e. the budget proposal should be consistent with the level you are applying to (for example if you are applying to level C, please submit a total budget that amounts to 1.500 USD, <b><u>not more or less</u></b>)</li> <li>o do not indicate in the form any activities you are planning to undertake with exterior sources of funding. (These can be reported in the Final report).</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b><u>Budget restrictions:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The ISN-TTS STC Program is bound by a limited budget which it cannot exceed</li> <li>o Please note that only 10% of your ISN-TTS STC budget can be allocated to travel supplement to attend Nephrology Conferences (so up to 150 USD for pairs applying to level C)</li> <li>o The ISN-TTS STC grant is an educational grant and not a service grant. It is therefore highly discouraged to plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>By October 1<sup>st</sup>, Each ISN-TTS STC partnership is requested to make a budget plan for 2 years with corresponding estimated breakdown for the activities. The budget proposal should be submitted in USD. The budget you are entitled to at A level is 15,000 USD and 10,000 USD at B-level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b><u>Budget amount:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Please submit a budget in accordance with your allocated ISN-TTS STC budget, i.e. the budget proposal should be consistent with the level you are applying for (for example if you are applying to level A, please submit a budget that amounts to 15.000 USD, <b><u>not more or less</u></b>)</li> <li>o do not indicate in the form any activities you are planning to undertake with exterior sources of funding. (These can be reported in the Final report).</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b><u>Budget restrictions:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The ISN-TTS STC Program is bound by a limited budget which it cannot exceed</li> <li>o Please note that only 10% of your ISN-TTS STC budget can be allocated to travel supplement to attend Nephrology Conferences (so up to 1,200USD for pairs applying to level B and 1,500 USD for pairs applying to level A)</li> <li>o The ISN-TTS STC grant is an educational grant and not a service grant. It is therefore highly discouraged to plan to Budget for equipment (such as regular patient care or</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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- Your budget MUST be spent in the current year (**by end of December**) and unclaimed budget will not be added to your budget of the next program year, except for EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES such as sickness, visa refusals or acts of God (late organisation is not an extenuating circumstance) ISN-TTS STC partnerships that did not spend all the money awarded out to them will be requested to reimburse the unused fund to the ISN at the end of the year. Non-compliance with this may result in the removal from the program in the following year.
- It is of crucial importance that you keep a record of all expenses in order to detail them in your annual reports.
- Extra funding: The ISN offers 4 other very exciting Programs: the Fellowship, the Educational Ambassador, the CME, the Clinical Research and the Mentorship Program. We would like to encourage you to use these programs to fund some of your STC activities. As a ISN-TTS STC partnership, you have priority points when applying to these programs and this would allow you to use the STC money for other educational activities. For instance, the Fellowship Program could fund short terms visits (2-6 months) from the EC to the SC/MC. Visit the ISN website for more information: <http://www.theisn.org/programs>
- Initial plans may be subject to change due to visa issues, acts of god, personal and health situations, etc. Changes to the initial plan and alternative suggestions for the use of funding (of an educational nature) can be accommodated only under exceptional circumstances at the ISN-TTS STC Chairman's discretion and as long as the HQs staff is duly informed.
- **Surplus Funds:**  
Pairs who have some surplus as per the October accounting report (due to activities costing less than foreseen or other justifiable reasons) may re-allocate the funds towards journal subscriptions, textbooks, registration/attendance to CMEs and congresses, or any other items of educational merit as long as these are paid for in the same program year and submitted for approval.

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## Scoring Process

In order for the ISN-TTS STC Committee to evaluate the level of activity and commitment between the sister Centers as well as to assess the appropriate use of the funding,

The ISN-TTS STC Committee will review all annual budget requests based on the educational merit and benefit for the EC. If necessary they will seek the advice of our respective Regional Board Committee to evaluate the appropriateness and relevance of the proposed activities. The budget requests will either be discussed with the pair if further explanations/modifications are needed, or approved.

The ISN-TTS STC program aims at enhancing the clinical practice of nephrology at emerging centers through a variety of training exchanges between SC (and/or MC) and EC. Applications must be in line with ISN-TTS STC Program objectives described below

1. **Visits:** Multidisciplinary training exchanges between the EC and the SC/MC, senior scholarship visits from the SC/MC to the EC - will account for up to 40% of the score.
2. **Projects:** Local and regional CMEs, provision of educational materials at the EC, attendance on training courses whilst on training attachments at the SC/MC - will account for up to 40% of the score.
3. **Motivation and Plan for Development** (this will account for 20% of the score)

### Bonus points

This will be added to the general scoring if the institution and/or liaison office has taken part in any existing ISN Programs, (including ISN-TTS STC Program) in the last 2 years

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Levels C and B centers are required to submit a final report at the end of **the 2-year partnership**. The report constitutes the basis for granting priorities or upgrades at a later stage as well as releasing further funding.

Suitability for upgrade will be determined considering the following:  
**Key 3 criteria (see section 1):**(this accounts for up to 80% of the score)

1. Visits
2. Projects

**Motivation and plan for development:** (this accounts for 20% of the score)

Please note that the ISN-TTS STC Committee has the possibility of extending the duration of the STC Level of an individual pair or trio for longer than 2 years under exceptional circumstances at the Committee's discretion.

Please note that the ISN-TTS STC reports constitute the primary basis to review pairs and trios' achievements. The STC committee takes into account the final report and the proposed budget plan at the time of reviewing applications for upgrades. Therefore we remind you that the scoring parameters for upgrades are greatly influenced by previous activities and results.

**IN JANUARY:**  
Notification of Approval

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- IN FEBRUARY:**
- Receipt of 2 year partnership **Certificate**
  - **Signature of Grant Agreement**

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ISN-TTS STC partnerships will receive a Grant Agreement in which you guarantee to use the funds allocated to you in the sole goal of advancing nephrology in the EC's region. The grant agreement will need to be signed by the SC or MC

The financial support system has been modified in 2010 to allow funding for level pairs and trios as well as greater flexibility and autonomy for the pairs; **in return ISN requires the pairs to be responsible by respecting the formalities and deadlines.** ISN staff will not send multiple reminders and follow-ups in order for ISN to be able to provide you with a unique opportunity for support and development via funding.

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**How To Receive Your Grant**

The money will be sent to you as a grant and in the course of February. **It will preferably be sent to the Supporting Center for ISN-TTS STC Pairs** and to the **Mentor Center for the ISN-TTS STC Trios** (unless explicitly requested and approved by the Mentor Center that the money can be sent to the Supporting Center). It is then the Supporting or Mentor Center who distributes the money according to the incurred expenses. Please make sure to indicate the bank details of the Supporting or Mentor Center of your link in the Annual Budget form.

Please note the following:

- **The financial support (budget) and services (in-kind donations) provided by ISN are only intended to provide a framework among the Centers and to reinforce the goodwill that stems from the Supporting Sister Center.** ISN's funding is not intended to form the sole basis of what should ideally be a long lasting and fruitful collaboration among the Centers. The grant funds must only be used for the educational activities agreed upon jointly by the Sister Renal Centers and carried out at the initiative of either the Emerging Center or Supporting Center in the context of the Sister Renal Centers Program and cannot be used for the private benefit of any institution. ISN's support cannot carry all expenses linked to the development of an Emerging center and the joint activities undertaken among centers.

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**Payment**

To receive your **payment**, the Supporting Center / Mentoring Center need to submit  
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<p>- the signed <b>W8 form</b> or the signed <b>W9 form</b> (for USA only)</p> <p>Grant recipients must provide the name and contact details of a Finance Coordinator or Grants officer of their institution. ISN-TTS STC grant recipients are also responsible for liaising with the Finance Coordinator or Grant officers of their institution and ensuring that they are aware of the status of ISN Sister Renal grants and payments. ISN will provide a payment confirmation after the grant has been paid. Grant recipients should transmit this document to the Finance office.</p> <p>The payment will be following your level: <b>Level C: \$1,500</b></p>	<p>- the signed <b>W8 form</b> or the signed <b>W9 form</b> (for USA only)</p> <p>Grant recipients must provide the name and contact details of a Finance Coordinator or Grants officer of their institution. ISN-TTS STC grant recipients are also responsible for liaising with the Finance Coordinator or Grant officers of their institution and ensuring that they are aware of the status of ISN Sister Renal grants and payments. ISN will provide a payment confirmation after the grant has been paid. Grant recipients should transmit this document to the Finance office.</p> <p>The payment will be following your level: <b>Level B: \$10,000</b> <b>Level A: \$15,000</b></p>
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### In-Kind Support Items / Benefits

<p>The successful ISN-TTS STC pairs will receive the following:</p> <p>- <b>ISN / TTS JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:</b> The EC will receive a subscription to <b>KI, KI Supplements</b> (which is not a membership) and a new open access journal called Kidney International Reports. We would like to stress that the journals are to be made freely accessible to all those for whom the journals are intended (physicians, student etc.) and that they are to be kept in a place accessible to all; the journals are not being granted for the benefit of only one or two selected individuals. The password and ID are communicated upon joining the program; these remain the same for every following year that is spent in the program. The Journal will be sent to the attention of the liaison officer who is responsible for ensuring that the journal is shared and accessible. The EC (is a TTS member) will also receive, as TTS membership package, access to <b>the electronic version of TTS Transplantation Journal</b> during the time spent in the program</p> <p>- <b>CERTIFICATES</b> Certificates are issued to both the EC and SC when they are first accepted into the program (as well as with each upgrade to a higher level). The certificate is valid for two years or for as long as the center pair is active in the same level.</p> <p>- <b>OTHER ISN PROGRAMS-PRIORITY:</b> <u><b>CMEs</b></u> Requests submitted by an ISN-TTS STC pair to organize and host a CME, via the CME request form, will receive priority consideration by the CME Program Chairman; an application however does not guarantee</p>	<p>The successful ISN-TTS STC pairs will receive the following:</p> <p>- <b>ISN / TTS JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:</b> The EC will receive a subscription to KI, KI Supplements (which is not a membership) and a new open access journal called Kidney International Reports. We would like to stress that the journals are to be made freely accessible to all those for whom the journals are intended (physicians, student etc.) and that they are to be kept in a place accessible to all; the journals are not being granted for the benefit of only one or two selected individuals. The password and ID are communicated upon joining the program; these remain the same for every following year that is spent in the program. The Journal will be sent to the attention of the liaison officer who is responsible for ensuring that the journal is shared and accessible. The EC (if TTS member) will also receive, as TTS membership package, access to <b>the electronic version of TTS Transplantation Journal</b> during the time spent in the program</p> <p>- <b>CERTIFICATES</b> Certificates are issued to both the EC and SC when they are first accepted into the program (as well as with each upgrade to a higher level). The certificate is valid for two years or for as long as the center pair is active in the same level. Graduated A level pairs also receive a certificate.</p> <p>- <b>OTHER ISN PROGRAMS-PRIORITY:</b> <u><b>CMEs</b></u> Requests submitted by an ISN-TTS STC pair to organize and host a CME, via the CME request form, will receive priority consideration by the CME Program Chairman; an application however does not guarantee that the</p>
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that the meeting will be sponsored. Proposals for CMEs must be received at least 3-6 months in advance and reflect a serious organization of a meeting or course which fulfills an educational purpose, an appropriate scientific program and aim to gather a minimum of 50 persons. If the CME is approved for support; the economy travel of a maximum of 3 speakers will be covered by the ISN CME Program; accommodation of the speakers is to be provided and covered by the organizers. The CMEs are to be organized in conjunction between the EC and the SC usually as part of an ISN-TTS STC Program event.

**Fellowship, Clinical Research and Educational Ambassadors Program**

Applications, submitted by individuals from a participating ISN-TTS STC Program, will receive priority consideration in the review process by means of bonus points. The grants related to successful applications will be on top of the budget already received through the ISN-TTS STC program. Please be aware that an application is not guaranteed a successful outcome since the criteria of the Fellowship, Clinical Research and EAP programs prevail and they remain competitive in nature. In the unfortunate event that the ISN-TTS STC is unsuccessful at upgrading to the next level, it will not affect if a fellow from the EC has been accepted in the ISN Fellowship Program to train at the SC.

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**WCN Travel Grants:**

Pairs and trios at level A and B are guaranteed *priority* to receive some travel grants for WCN provided they directly apply to the WCN organizers via the official WCN website.

The amount of the grant may change depending on WCN organization. ISN-TTS STC partnerships benefitting from a travel grant are requested to showcase a poster at WCN in order to display their achievements and promote the ISN ISN-TTS STC program. This will give the ISN-TTS STC Committee members the opportunity to meet with the pairs/trios and visualize their activities.

- A level centers pairs or trios may select one nephrologist from the EC and one junior nephrologist from the SC (unless agreed that both grants should go to the EC).
- B level centers pairs or trios may select one young nephrologist from the EC

Please note that the maximum number of travel grants that any individual may receive in a life time is now restricted to 3. This is a new policy designed to enable different persons to benefit from the grants.

The official WCN grant will be made available at the congress; the actual arrangements and confirmations are announced via a personal letter and depend on the WCN organization.

A new opportunity has arisen for levels A and B to receive a travel grant to

go to TTS Congress to present a poster summarizing the activities undertaken under their partnership. The TTS will contact the pairs to offer the opportunity.

## Reports

In order for the ISN-TTS STC Committee to evaluate the level of activity and commitment between the sister Centers as well as to assess the appropriate use of the funding, the centers are required to submit a final report at the end of **the 2-year partnership**.by October 1<sup>st</sup> . The report constitutes the basis for assessing performance and potential for granting priorities or upgrades at a later stage as well as to determine releasing of further funding.

Again, this report does not need to be accompanied by invoices/receipts anymore. Only a detailed description of the activities undertaken in the course of the 2 previous years as well as a brief reconfirmation of the activities foreseen for the remainder of the year will be required. An analysis of what has been achieved and how the status of the EC has progressed would provide a very helpful insight to the ISN-TTS STC Committee.

The Final reports will be very short (maximum 1000 words) and will address the following items:

- Names of persons involved
- Budget breakdown for each activity and brief description (visits & projects)
- Confirmation of forthcoming activities (incl. names, dates, required budget)
- Motivation and Plan for development

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## OTHER

### FAQ

**What to do if I need a visa letter?:**

If necessary, it is highly recommended that the traveller(s) make arrangements for a **visa** procurement as soon as possible since this often takes several months and is in some unfortunate cases declined. Please be aware that the **ISN Global Operations Center staff** can provide an official letter for the embassy/consulate if necessary; please provide the first and last name, place and date of birth, country of origin and passport number and expiry date for the preparation of this letter.

**What happens if an incident occurs during my travel or my stay abroad**

Please note that upon an individual's acceptance to travel and volunteer on behalf of ISN they acknowledge and accept that the International Society of Nephrology (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 traveller; they or their relatives cannot hold the Society (ISN) responsible in the event of untoward events or experiences.

For more information and assistance, please contact:

**ISN Global Operations Center**

Rue des Fabriques 1B  
1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel: +32 2 808 04 20  
Fax: +32 2 808 44 54  
E-mail: [stc@theisn.org](mailto:stc@theisn.org)