**2025 Application**

***Mayday Pain & Society Fellowship:***

***Communicating Science & Improving Care***

**Introduction**

The Mayday Fund has long supported and encouraged pain experts to assume public leadership roles to help end human suffering from pain through public discourse about research, best practices in care and policy. Since 2004, The Mayday Fund has supported a public engagement and leadership training program through the “Mayday Pain & Society Fellowship: A Media and Policy Initiative” and the “Mayday Pain & Society Fellowship: Communicating Science & Improving Care,” which provided 108 Fellows with communication and public outreach skills. This vision behind the Mayday Fellowships is that with tools to communicate more effectively, experts can help lead the conversation to share evidence-based science and practices in pain management to ensure better care for patients.

The Fellowship will provide a three-day communication workshop in Washington, D.C., for clinicians, researchers and other experts who are passionate about improving pain care and who are dedicated to building communications skills and strategies aimed at reducing human suffering from acute and chronic pain. The Advisory and Selection Committee is seeking applicants who are already working on research and evidence-based approaches to advance what is known about pain and how best to relieve it.

Such work by successful applicants might include:

* Sharing critical research on the science of pain and on emerging evidence-based treatments,
* Fixes for how pain is addressed in the health care system,
* Training for frontline clinicians treating pain, or
* Addressing disparities in pain care.

**Who Should Apply?**

**The *Mayday Pain & Society Fellowship* begins accepting applicationson Friday, May 2nd. The deadline to apply is Friday, May 30th .**

The Advisory and Selection Committee is seeking applicants living in the U.S. or Canada with a clear passion for communicating evidence-based pain management strategies or research on basic and translational pain science. Applicants will be judged on both their existing work to improve pain care and a demonstrated experience and interest in bringing their expertise to bear on public discourse, policy discussions, or in support of more research to improve knowledge about and access to pain treatment.

We are looking for a clear interest in using the skills developed through the Fellowship training to advance the field, not only their careers or individual projects. We seek Fellows who are able to commit dedicated time to the training and a commitment to public engagement after the Fellowship workshop. We are seeking both established and emerging leaders. Applicants from all backgrounds and practices (rural, urban, academic, and community) are invited to apply.

This program requires Fellows to provide a significant amount of their time beyond the required three-day workshop (launching with a dinner on Sunday and finishing mid-day on Wednesday), including pre-workshop virtual sessions and actively engaging in communications and advocacy activities following the workshop as part of the coaching program. For eight months, Fellows will have access to a set number of hours of consultation with professional communications advisors (the “coaching faculty”) to achieve a communications activity that is identified during or after the workshop.

The Mayday Fund believes that the success of this program comes from the commitment of Fellows in the workshop and following the workshop to practice and implement these skills. At minimum, all Fellows will write at least one op-ed/thought leadership piece that will be shared with the Mayday Fund Board whether it is published or not. Fellows will work with their communications “coach” following the workshop to craft their piece about the topic and issue that aligns with their personal communications goals.

In addition to this piece, each Fellow will be expected to work with their coach to complete **at least** one additional task from the list below (or a public outreach activity that is similar):

* + Write an op-ed or commentary for a media outlet
  + Meet with a policymaker (state, federal, agency, etc.)
  + Speak at a public-focused forum (i.e., a TEDx, or local forum intended to reach lay audiences)
  + Speak to a health care provider audience (without expertise in pain) about pain management (this could include speaking at a Grand Rounds or staff meeting)
  + Write a letter to the editor
  + Meet with journalists timed to the release of research or event of media interest
  + Produce video or online materials to engage a broader audience in your work

**NOTE:** Fellows will speak only on their own behalf and/or on behalf of their institution and not on behalf of The Mayday Fund or its Trustees.

**To be eligible, applicants must meet the following criteria:**

* Ability to attend the **entire training** in Washington, D.C., starting at 5 p.m. on Sunday, November 2, 2025, and ending around 2 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5, 2025**.** **Applicants who are unable to attend the training and/or participate in the coaching will not be considered.** These are critical components to the award of the Fellowship.
* Be willing and able to engage in communications activities after the workshop and with limited support from the coaching faculty throughout the six-month coaching period.
* Be a health care professional and/or a behavioral, biological, social or basic science researcher based in the United States or Canada. Employees of pharmaceutical and medical device companies are not eligible.
* Be affiliated with or a member of an organization, agency or institution — such as academic institutions, government agencies, nonprofit professional associations, or private clinical practices, such as hospitals and nursing homes.
* Be able to speak publicly about your work as an individual or on behalf of your institution or organization.

**Applicants will be judged on the following criteria:**

* Demonstrated expertise and track record of rigorous, evidence-based work on pain in any of the following areas: clinical practice, research or education.
* Demonstrated record of self-development as a leader, communicator and educator on pain with the public, the media and policymakers. Must be committed to making a measurable and lasting impact on the pain field.
* A passion for and track record in public engagement work.
* A clear vision of what would be done during the coaching period of the Fellowship.

**Application Requirements:**

1. The Mayday Pain & Society Fellowship application (see below).
2. A letter approving your participation in the program from your immediate supervisor or chairperson. In the letter, your supervisor should explicitly indicate that you will be able to attend the training and have dedicated time to engage in public communications following the training. This letter may also serve as a letter of recommendation.
3. A copy of your Curriculum Vitae.

Finalists may be asked to participate in an interview with members of the selection committee and coaching faculty.

**Fellowship Training and Coaching**

Once selected, Fellows will participate in a **three-day training workshop in Washington, D.C., from Sunday, November 2, 2025, to Wednesday, November 5, 2025. Following the workshop, each Fellow will receive** eight hours of coaching support from a member of the coaching faculty at [Burness](http://www.burness.com/) to identify communications activities that they will complete within six months of the training.

*There are no tuition costs.*

*All travel, seminars, and communications coaching will be covered by The Mayday Fund.*

**Mayday Pain & Society Fellowship Application**

Please complete all elements of the five sections below.

**Section 1: Basic Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name: |  |
| Degrees: |  |
| Organization: |  |
| Title: |  |
| E-Mail Address: |  |
| Primary Discipline: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Website: |  |
| Telephone: Work: |  |
| Cell: |  |

**Section 2: Professional Background**

Please attach a brief (200 words or less) biography and Curriculum Vitae.

**Section 3: Disclosures**

Please disclose in writing all relevant financial relationships with pharmaceutical and/or medical device companies, as well as the nature of the relationship in this application. If you have none, please indicate that here as well.

**Section 4: Essay Questions**

Please provide brief answers to the following (no more than 350 words each).

1. Why are you interested in applying to be a Mayday Pain and Society Fellow?
2. Briefly tell one story that explains why you choose to work in the pain field.
3. How would you describe your work in the pain field to a lay audience?
4. Please list and briefly describe any relevant work in the pain field you will be involved in during the coming year (e.g., studies that will be released, leadership appointments at your institution or an association, media opportunities, policy initiatives, etc.)
5. What do you believe are the important, specific messages about your work in the pain field that need to be heard by the public and policymakers? Why do these messages need to be heard now?
6. Please describe a time that you went beyond the day-to-day requirements of your work to assume a leadership position in the pain field. This could be advocating for a policy or program in your institution or beyond.
7. Tell us why, at this particular stage in your career, you would benefit from this fellowship and how you will integrate communications and/or advocacy into your work.
8. Is there anything else you’d like the committee to know about your work, your goals, or the people you serve or hope to reach?
9. Would you like to share anything about your lived experience to help the Selection Committee better understand you, your perspective, or your experiences?

**Section 5: Communications Plan and Goals**

In this section, we hope to hear about how you would thoughtfully approach this Fellowship opportunity to have the greatest possible impact in the year coaching period and beyond.

We want to ensure that each Fellow is committed to becoming a more prominent and effective voice in the pain field. The section below does not commit you to a specific course of action but is a chance to share with the selection committee some specific ideas about how you would approach your work during the Fellowship. Please keep each answer to 300 words or fewer and be as specific as possible.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Who is the primary audience you want to reach in your communications in the future?**  *Please be as specific as possible.* |  |
| **What specific communications activities might you pursue during the Fellowship?**  *Note: This should be something you are not already doing actively.* |  |
| **What does success look like in your outreach and communications work?** |  |

**How did you hear about the Mayday Fellowship (check all that apply)?**

**\_\_\_** Colleague  
\_\_\_ Previous Mayday Fellow

\_\_\_ Social Media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

\_\_\_ Pain Meeting

\_\_\_ Professional Association

\_\_\_ Journal or Other Publication

\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Please forward a completed application and your supervisor’s letter of support by e-mail to Samantha Millar at** [**smillar@burness.com**](mailto:smillar@burness.com) **by Friday, May 30th 2025, by 11:59 p.m. ET.**

**Questions? E-mail Gideon Hertz at** [**ghertz@burness.com**](mailto:ghertz@burness.com)**.**