



American Board  
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# The ABMS Research in Certification Grant Program 2025-2027

Rachel A. Knapp, MLIS  
Martin V. Pusic, MD, PhD

ABMS Research and Education Foundation

# Welcome!

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Thank you for joining us to learn about the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Research and Education Foundation (REF) Grant Program!



Please note that this session is being recorded.



We ask that you hold questions until the end of this short (10-15 minute) presentation.

# Staff

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- Director

- Martin V. Pusic, MD, PhD

- Joined the REF in May 2023
    - Leads the REF Research Mission and Grant Program
    - Facilitates the identification of important MOC and CME relevant research to disseminate to Boards and other stakeholders

- Information and Data Research Manager

- Rachel A. Knapp, MLIS

- Joined the REF in September 2022
    - Supports Grant Program
    - Provides literature research support
    - Generates reports for ABMS/Member Board activities

# Overview of Today's Webinar

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- ABMS Research and Education Foundation (REF)
  - Mission and Key Strategies
  - Visiting Scholar Funding
- Current Grant Overview
  - Funded Projects
  - Grant Description and Logistics
- Time for Questions



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# REF Background

# Overview

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- Not-for-profit organization founded in 1971
- Support the ABMS mission of improving health care quality and the continuous professional development of physician specialties
- Engage in a variety of research and education initiatives
- Develop and promote research programs through collaborative partnerships with **Academic Health Centers, Universities, Hospitals, Health Systems, etc.**

# Key Strategies

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Conducting and facilitating education initiatives for improving physician performance, protecting patient safety, and setting higher standards to achieve improved health care



Guiding, facilitating and collaborating in research concerning certification from national and international perspective



Developing relationships and securing funding to expand key activities for accomplishing its mission

# REF and the Visiting Scholars Program

## Visiting Scholars 2024-2025

*Eleven scholars will receive financial awards for research in competency-based evaluations, patient outcomes, diagnostic excellence, and diversity, equity, and inclusion as it relates to board certification.*



# REF and the Visiting Scholars Program

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- A. Reema Kar, MD, FACS – Rutgers/Robert Wood Johnson Medical School  
Project: *The Development of Confidence in Surgery: Can Confidence Be Taught and Learned?*



- Joshua Sheak, MD, PhD – Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center  
Project: *Representation of Indigenous Peoples in the Pediatrics and Pediatric Subspecialty Workforce*

# Visiting Scholars Program

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Scholars say the program helped shape their career path, advance their research, and forge long-term professional relationships.

## CONSULT

with certification, research and data science subject matter experts

## LEARN

from national thought leaders in medical education, certification, and health policy

## BUILD

a professional network of colleagues across the board certification community

## PARTICIPATE

in ABMS community meetings, events, and professional health care forums

## ENGAGE

with research mentors and thought leaders across the certification community

For more information visit: [visitingscholars.abms.org](https://visitingscholars.abms.org)



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# Current Grant Overview

# Research is...

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“The systematic investigation of phenomena through observation, experimentation, and analysis to advance understanding, solve problems, and contribute to scientific or academic knowledge.” - ChatGPT

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Theoretical  
(Basic/Academic)  
Research

Applied Research

# General Certification Theme

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## ABMS Mission

“...to serve the public and the medical profession by improving the quality of health care through setting professional standards for lifelong certification in partnership with Member Boards.”

## Example Areas of Focus

- Professional Standards for Lifelong Certification
- Public Health
- Disparities in Healthcare
- Equity or AI in Assessment
- Competency Based Medical Education

# Diagnostic Excellence Theme

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- Laura Burke, MD, Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/Harvard Medical School - **“Association Between Emergency Medicine Board Certification and Diagnostic Error in Emergency Care: A National Analysis”**
- Kiran Malhotra, MD, Clinical Informatics Fellow, New York University Langone Health – **“Automated Mapping of Visit Diagnoses to Specialty Board Clinical Domains for Enhanced Assessment, Certification, and Precision Education”**
- Ting Wang, PhD, Senior Psychometrician, American Board of Family Medicine - **“Enhancing Diagnostic Accuracy and Calibration via Automated Clone Item Generation and Personalized Feedback in Longitudinal Assessment”**

# General Certification Excellence Theme

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- Arch Mainous, PhD, Professor, University of Florida – **“The Impact of Continuing Certification on Quality of Patient Care”**
- Brigitte Smith, MD, MHPE, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin – **“A Mixed-Methods Investigation of the Relative Merits of Different Oral Certifying Examination Formats”**
- Daniel West, MD, Senior Director of Medical Education and Professor (Penn School of Medicine), Children's Hospital of Philadelphia – **“A Multi-Site Implementation and Effectiveness Study of a Protocol to Support Equitable Competency-Based Advancement Decisions and Resident-Driven Learning”**
- Fasika Woreta, MD, MPH, Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Wilmer Eye Institute/Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine - **Gender, Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Oral Board Examiners of Surgical Specialties”**

# Supporting Independent Research



FOR PATIENTS<sup>SM</sup> FOR CREDENTIALERS<sup>SM</sup> FOR PHYSICIANS & SPECIALISTS FOR HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS

Board Certification Medical Specialties & Boards Programs & Services Research & Grants News, Publications & Events

## ABMS Board of Directors Announces Plan to Implement Recommendations from the Continuing Board Certification: Vision Commission Final Report

On March 19, 2019

CONTINUING BOARD CERTIFICATION

ACHIEVING  
the  
VISION

### Recommendation on Independent Research

**ABMS and the ABMS Boards must facilitate and encourage independent research to build on the existing evidence base about the value of continuing certification.**



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# Eligibility

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Independent  
Investigators at Medical  
Schools or Academic  
Health Centers

Other organizations –  
contact us

ABMS Member Boards  
can apply but only in  
collaboration with an  
independent PI

# Funding

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300K to  
distribute

50-75K per  
grant

Funding  
provided by  
ABMS

# Cost of Research

Line Item	Amount	Comment
Release time for investigator	e.g. 0.1 FTE = \$25,000	Need to professionalize research amongst physician-educators
Research Assistant	e.g. 1 FTE = \$75,000	The daily work of research = recruitment, data collection, IRB, analysis, reporting
Methods Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Statistics</li> <li>➤ Qualitative Interviews</li> </ul>	e.g. 0.2 FTE = \$30,000	Advanced skills

# Grant Features

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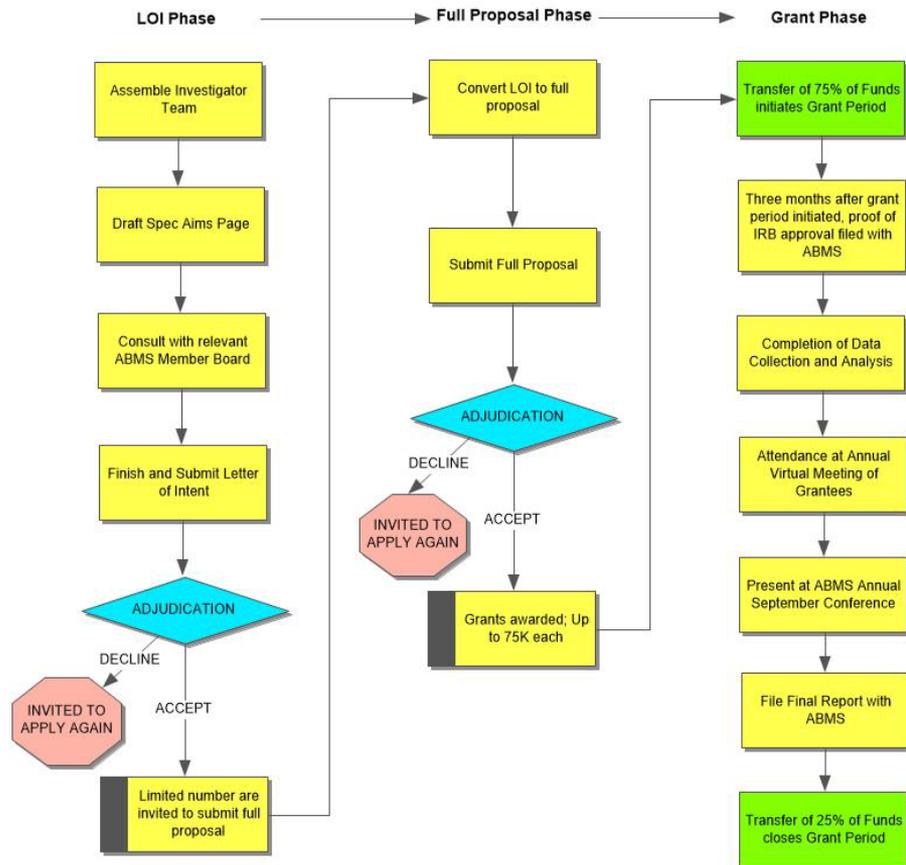
- Duration – up to 2 years
- Reporting
  - Twice a year grantees meeting
  - Final report to ABMS
  - Mandatory presentation at the ABMS Conference
  - Submission for Publication
- Adjudication
  - Peer education scholars from beyond ABMS
  - Public Member Oversight and Input

# Grants Program Timeline

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- Letter of Intent (LOI)
  - Deadline: January 31, 2025
  - Notifications: February 28, 2025
- Full submission
  - Deadline: May 2, 2025
  - Notifications: June 20, 2025
- Start of Grant Project: September 1, 2025

# Grant Submission Flow Diagram



# Member Board Representatives

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- Allergy and Immunology
- Anesthesiology
- Colon and Rectal Surgery
- Dermatology
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Medical Genetics and Genomics
- Neurological Surgery
- Nuclear Medicine
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery
- Pathology
- Pediatrics
- Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
- Plastic Surgery
- Preventive Medicine
- Psychiatry and Neurology
- Radiology
- Surgery
- Thoracic Surgery
- Urology

Michael Nelson, MD  
Susan Hibbard  
Thomas Read, MD  
Erik Stratman, MD  
Chadd Kraus, DO, MPH, Dr.PH  
Andrew Bazemore, MD, PhD; Robert Phillips, MD, MPH  
Rebecca Lipner, PhD  
Miriam Blitzer, PhD  
Marjorie Wang, MD  
Maria Watts  
Anthony Sparks, PhD  
Sarah Schnabel, PhD  
Mona Saniei; David Elstein  
Brian Nussenbaum, MD  
Ty McCarthy  
David Turner, MD  
Mikaela Raddatz, PhD  
Keith Brandt, MD  
Clare Foreman  
David Shin, PhD  
Brooke Houck, PhD  
Andrew Jones, PhD  
Beth Winer  
Lindsay Franklin

# Summary

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- Example Areas of Focus
  - Professional Standards for Lifelong Certification
  - Public Health
  - Disparities in Healthcare
  - Equity or AI in Assessment
  - Competency Based Medical Education
- Funding
  - 50-75K
- Application Deadline
  - January 31, 2025
- For more information visit [ref.abms.org](https://ref.abms.org) or email [REF-Grants@abms.org](mailto:REF-Grants@abms.org)



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# Thank you!

# Q&A Participation Instructions

- Use the “Hands Up” to notify staff of a question, the presenter will invite you to unmute your line and ask your question.
- You can also put questions in chat

