



The ABMS Research in Certification Grant Program 2026-2028

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Martin V. Pusic, MD, PhD

ABMS Research and Education Foundation

Welcome!



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 30-minute presentation.

Staff

- 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

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



REF Background

Overview

- 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



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 Scholars Program

ABMS Scholars 2025-2026

The ABMS Scholars Program™ (formerly ABMS Visiting Scholars Program) is a year-long, part-time research program that supports early-career physicians and researchers in their research and facilitates their evolution as health care leaders within and across the ABMS community.



REF Sponsored Scholars (2025-2026)

- **Daniel Sartori, MD** – New York University Grossman School of Medicine
 - **Project:** *Implementation and Evaluation of an AI-informed Diagnostic Performance Feedback System for Internal Medicine Residents*
(Sponsored by The ABMS Research and Education Foundation and The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation)
- **Lijia Xie, MD, MS, FACP** – Stanford Health Care Tri-Valley Hospital
 - **Project:** *Advancing Diagnostic Equity Through Incorporating Reflection on Implicit Bias into Standardized Clinical Reasoning Workshops for Undergraduate Medical Education*
(Sponsored by The ABMS Research and Education Foundation and The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation)
- **Maria Martinez-Lage Alvarez, MD** – Harvard Medical School
 - **Project:** *Virtual Sign-Out: A Competency-Based Assessment Pilot in Neuropathology*
(Sponsored by The ABMS Research and Education Foundation and The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation)
- **Ruchi Thanawala, MD** – Oregon Health and Science University
 - **Project:** *Self-Assessment: The Hidden Competency Underpinning CBE*
(Sponsored by The ABMS Research and Education Foundation)

Scholars Program

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: scholars.abms.org



Grant Overview

Research is...

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



Theoretical
(Basic/Academic)
Research

Applied Research



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Higher standards. Better care.®

General Certification Theme

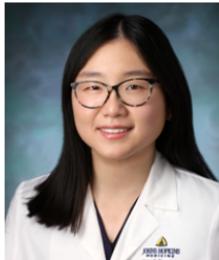
ABMS Mission

“...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

2025 Projects



JENNY X. CHEN, MD, EDM

Assistant Professor

Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

Project: *Developing and Validating a Professionalism Instrument for Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery*



ALISON N. HUFFSTETLER, MD

Assistant Professor

Virginia Commonwealth University

Project: *Morbidity and Mortality for Birthing Individuals: Understanding the Impact of Family Medicine Perinatal and Obstetric Fellowships on Perinatal Care in the US (MUM)*

2025 Projects



BRENESSA M. LINDEMAN, MD, MEHP

Assistant Professor; Assistant Dean for Graduate Medical Education
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Project: *Entrustable Professional Activities to Inform Competency-Based Board Admissibility in Surgery*



YOON SOO PARK, PHD

Ilene Harris Professor; Department Head of Medical Education
University of Illinois College of Medicine

Project: *Enhancing Residency-Fellowship Transition: Exploring the Role of Board Certification and Milestones Competency Ratings as Feedback for Learner Preparedness*

Supporting Independent Research



The screenshot shows the ABMS website. At the top left is the ABMS logo with the tagline "Higher standards. Better care.®". The top right features a search bar and links for "FOR PATIENTS", "FOR CREDENTIALERS", "FOR PHYSICIANS & SPECIALISTS", and "FOR HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS". Below the header are navigation links for "Board Certification", "Medical Specialties & Boards", "Programs & Services", "Research & Grants", and "News, Publications & Events". A large banner on the left side of the main content area features the text "CONTINUING BOARD CERTIFICATION" and "ACHIEVING the VISION". The main content area title is "ABMS Board of Directors Announces Plan to Implement Recommendations from the Continuing Board Certification: Vision Commission Final Report". The date "On March 19, 2019" is listed below the title.

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

On March 19, 2019

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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of Medical Specialties
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Eligibility

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

300K to
distribute

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: ➤ Statistics ➤ Qualitative Interviews	e.g. 0.2 FTE = \$30,000	Advanced skills



Grant Details

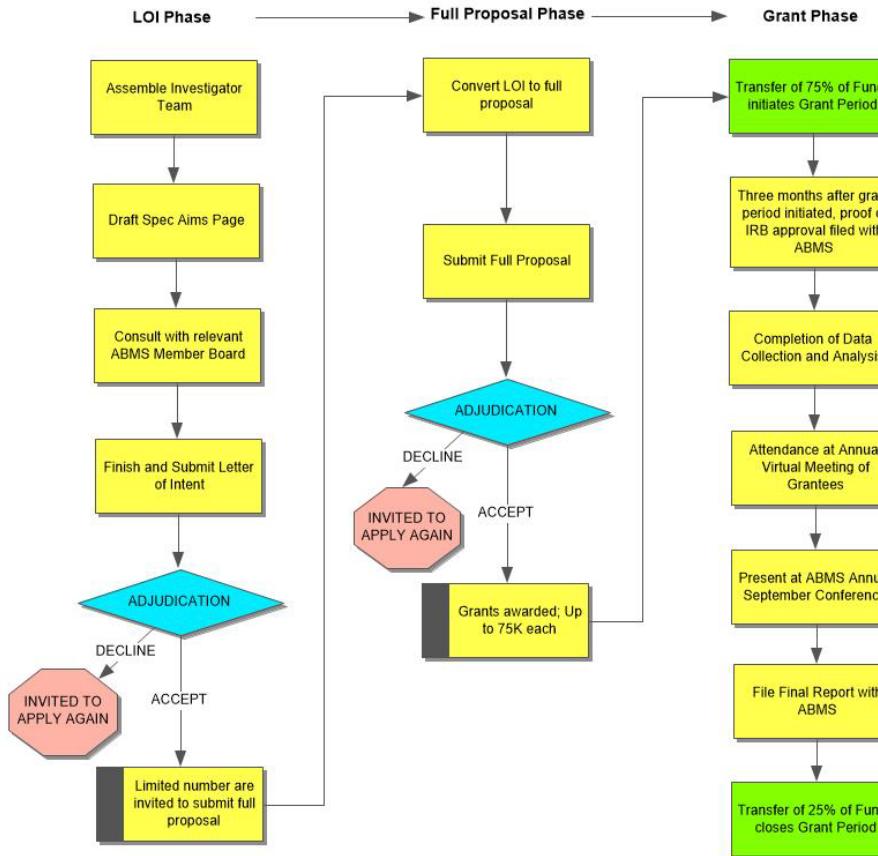
Grant Features

- 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

- Letter of Intent (LOI)
 - Deadline: January 30, 2026
 - Notifications: February 27, 2026
- Full submission
 - Deadline: May 1, 2026
 - Notifications: June 19, 2026
- Start of Grant Project: August 31, 2026

Grant Submission Flow Diagram



Member Board Representatives

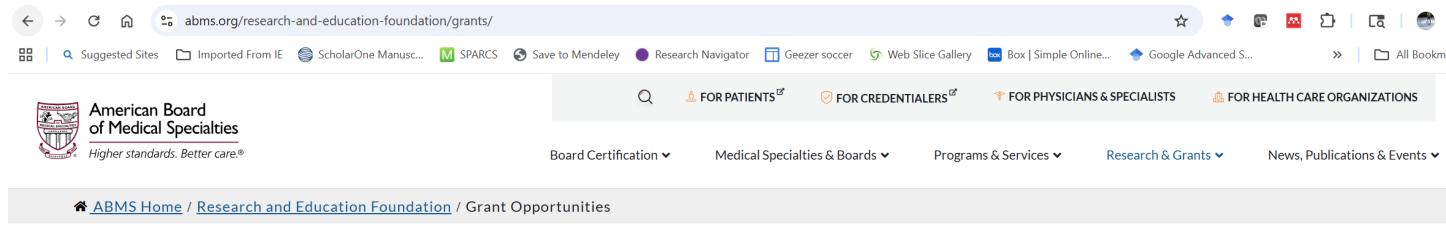
Member Board	Representative
Allergy and Immunology	Michael Nelson
Anesthesiology	Susan Hibbard
Colon and Rectal Surgery	Thomas Read
Dermatology	Erik Stratman
Emergency Medicine	Lyndsay Tyler
Family Medicine	Dana Price Andrew Bazemore Robert Phillips
Internal Medicine	Rebecca Lipner
Medical Genetics and Genomics	Mimi Blitzer
Neurological Surgery	Marjorie Wang
Nuclear Medicine	Maria Watts
Obstetrics and Gynecology	Anthony Sparks
Ophthalmology	Sarah Schnabel

Member Board	Representative
Orthopaedic Surgery	Mona Sanei David Elstein
Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery	Brian Nussenbaum
Pathology	Ty McCarthy
Pediatrics	David Turner
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	Mikaela Raddatz
Plastic Surgery	Keith Brandt
Preventive Medicine	Clare Foreman
Psychiatry and Neurology	David Shin
Radiology	Brooke Houck
Surgery	Andrew Jones
Thoracic Surgery	Beth Winer
Urology	Lindsay Franklin

Summary

- **Example Areas of Focus**
 - Professional Standards for Lifelong Certification
 - Public Health
 - Disparities in Healthcare
 - Equity or AI in Assessment
 - Competency Based Medical Education
- **Funding**
 - 75K
 - To include up to 10% Indirect costs
 - For example, 5% Indirect costs on 75K = \$71,250 direct + 3,750 indirect
- **Application Deadline**
 - January 30, 2026

REF Grant Website



The screenshot shows the homepage of the ABMS Research and Education Foundation Grants website. The URL in the address bar is abms.org/research-and-education-foundation/grants/. The page features the ABMS logo and the tagline "Higher standards. Better care.®". The main navigation menu includes links for FOR PATIENTS, FOR CREDENTIALERS, FOR PHYSICIANS & SPECIALISTS, and FOR HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS. Below the menu, there are links for Board Certification, Medical Specialties & Boards, Programs & Services, Research & Grants, and News, Publications & Events. The page title is "ABMS Home / Research and Education Foundation / Grant Opportunities".

Research and Education Foundation

Grant Opportunities

Research Projects

REF Foundation Board of Directors

Grant Opportunities

ABMS Research and Education Foundation

LETTERS OF INTENT MUST BE SUBMITTED BY JANUARY 30, 2026.

Join us for an Informational Webinar

Learn about applying for an REF research grant by registering for the webinar at 4:30 pm (ET) on Tuesday, December 16, where you will hear an overview of the grant program and the application process, and you will have time to ask questions.

[REGISTER FOR WEBINAR](#)

The American Board of Medical Specialties Research and Education Foundation™ (ABMS REF) announced grants totaling \$300,000 in June 2025 that were disbursed in



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Thank you!

For more information visit ref.abms.org

or email REF-Grants@abms.org