



American Board  
of Medical Specialties

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

# The ABMS Research in Certification Grant Program 2026-2028

Rachel A. Knapp, MLIS  
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



American Board  
of Medical Specialties

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

# 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](https://scholars.abms.org)



American Board  
of Medical Specialties

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

# 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

# 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



Theoretical  
(Basic/Academic)  
Research

Applied Research

# General Certification Theme

---

## ABMS Mission

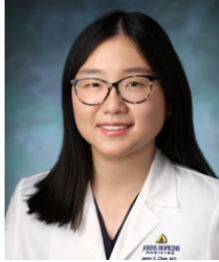
“...to serve the public and the medical profession by improving the quality of health care through setting professional standards for lifelong certification in partnership with Member Boards.”

## 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



American Board  
of Medical Specialties  
*Higher standards. Better care.®*



FOR PATIENTS

FOR CREDENTIALERS

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.**

# 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Statistics</li><li>➤ Qualitative Interviews</li></ul>	e.g. 0.2 FTE = \$30,000	Advanced skills



American Board  
of Medical Specialties

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

# Grant Details

# Grant Features

---

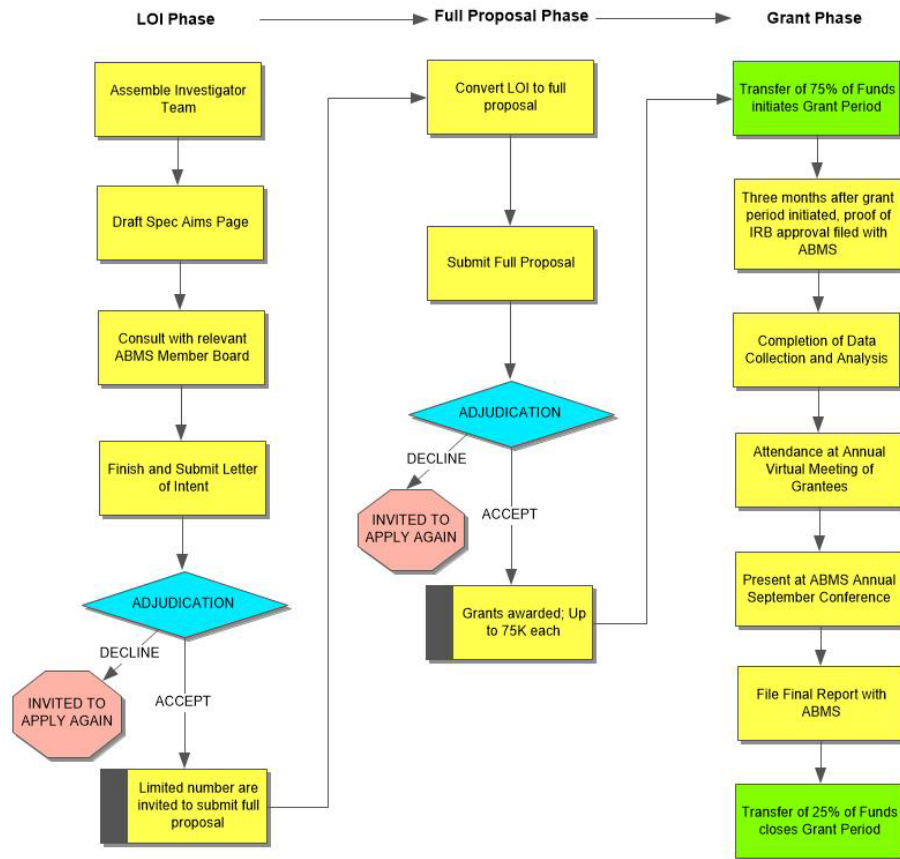
- Duration – up to 2 years
- Reporting
  - Twice a year grantees meeting
  - Final report to ABMS
  - Mandatory presentation at the ABMS Conference
  - Submission for Publication
- Adjudication
  - Peer education scholars from beyond ABMS
  - Public Member Oversight and Input

# 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 Blitzner
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

abms.org/research-and-education-foundation/grants/

Suggested Sites Imported From IE ScholarOne Manus... SPARCS Save to Mendeley Research Navigator Geezer soccer Web Slice Gallery Box | Simple Online... Google Advanced S... All Bookmarks

 American Board of Medical Specialties  
Higher standards. Better care.®

FOR PATIENTS FOR CREDENTIALERS FOR PHYSICIANS & SPECIALISTS FOR HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS

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

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



FOUNDATION



American Board of Medical Specialties  
Higher standards. Better care.®





American Board  
of Medical Specialties

*Higher standards. Better care.®*

# Thank you!

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

or email [REF-Grants@abms.org](mailto:REF-Grants@abms.org)