



The Edward J. Stemmler, M.D. Medical Education Research Grant Program

2026 Funding Cycle: Letter of Intent Submission Content and Formatting Guidelines

Purpose and Mission

The goal of the Stemmler Grant Program is to provide support for, research on, and development of pioneering assessment approaches that will enhance the professional development of those preparing to, or continuing to, practice medicine through funding medical education and assessment communities to drive future innovation.

The Stemmler grants serve as an extension of the NBME's dedication to its mission: "advances assessment of health professionals to achieve optimal care for all" and its commitment to support assessment-related research and development conducted by medical school faculty. The grant program is not intended to fund projects designed to develop commercialized assessment products and services and will not consider any such proposals for funding.

Expected outcomes of funded projects include innovative advances in the theory, knowledge, or practice of assessment at any point along the continuum of medical education and practice. Both pilot projects and more comprehensive efforts are of interest. Collaborative investigations within or among institutions are encouraged.

Eligibility Requirements

Open Science Principles: The Stemmler Grant Program is linked to NBME's mission to advance assessment. As such, it is expected that investigators abide by Open Science Principles in data sharing and reporting. If you are unable to follow these principles, please include rationale in your materials for review by the Stemmler Grant Committee. In the absence of a compelling rationale, preference will be given to proposals who agree to follow Open Science Principles (see <http://opendefinition.org>).

Investigator Team: Each project team must include an early career investigator mentored by the principal investigator and other team members. The intent is for the junior member of the team to make substantive contributions to the project and thereby gain a broader understanding of medical education and assessment research.

Institutional Proposals: The Stemmler Committee will accept multiple Letter of Intent (LOIs) from a single institution. However, they will only invite a maximum of one LOI per institution to submit a full proposal.

Letter of Intent

Requirements: The LOI must follow the format below to provide a structured and succinct overview of your research that supports the mission of the Stemmler Grant Program. The document should contain no more than 1,500 words (sections 1-3), double spaced with no smaller than 10-point font. (Note: Section 4 and the Required Supplement are additional components with separate word counts.) You may include up to two appendices if they are critical to understanding your research; these will not be included in the word count. Videos, website links, and other forms of media are acceptable forms of appendices.

Submission Components:

Section 1: Study Purpose and Research Objectives

Include a concise statement describing the research project's fundamental purpose and the specific research problem(s) that will be addressed. The purpose statement should be followed by one or more research questions, one or more hypotheses to be tested, or the specific project objectives and deliverables.

The following is an example of a purpose statement and research questions from a prior project. It is not necessary that you follow this same format, but your statements should be similarly concise and explicit.

The purpose of this research is to determine whether a case diagramming technique can be used to assess students' clinical reasoning with respect to the concepts taught in an integrated course on mechanisms of disease. Two research questions will be addressed:

(1) Are scores based on a case-diagramming tool sufficiently reliable for classroom use?

(2) Do scores on the case diagramming tool measure clinical reasoning more effectively than standard multiple-choice questions?

Section 2: Background and Rationale

This section should consist of two parts: (1) a brief literature review that situates the research within current knowledge. This should place the research project in the context of appropriate literature and cited challenges in medical education assessment; and (2) a description of how this research is innovative and how it has the potential to impact assessment in medical education. A list of up to 10 references can be included in this section. References are excluded from the word count.

Section 3: Design, Methods, and Analysis

Clearly describe and justify each portion of the overall study design including, as appropriate, the study participants, assessment or measurement procedures, data collection methods, and the analytic procedures used to address each research question listed in Section 1. This section should also include the theoretical framework and constructs for the analyses and any validity and reliability arguments supporting the methods.

Sections 1-3 should total no more than 1500 words.

Section 4: Response to Previous Reviewer Feedback (If Appropriate)

If you have submitted your LOI in a previous cycle and received feedback from the Stemmler Committee, please address the points as a supplement at the beginning or as part of the main sections of your LOI. We ask that you note the cycle year of the original submission. You may use up to an additional 300 words beyond the 1,500-word limit for this section.

Required Supplement: Roles of Research Team Members

In no more than 1 page per person, identify the individuals who will be filling the following roles on the project:

- I. Primary Investigator
- II. Methodologist/Assessment Specialist
- III. Mentored Early Career Investigator (see above for description)

Include these individuals' affiliations, qualifications for their role, and anticipated time on the project (e.g., total hours or hours per month).

In no more than 1 page per person, please describe each additional research team member's (including any proposed consultants) qualifications for and contributions to the project. This should include the following:

- i. Name and Degree
- ii. Institutional Affiliation and Title/Position
- iii. Role on and contribution to the Project (including anticipated time on the project)
- iv. A paragraph describing their qualifications for the project/role

This section does not count toward the 1500-word limit.

Please refer to Submitting Your Completed LOI (below) regarding anonymization.

Letters of reference or character are not required. Please do not include them with your submission.

Submitting Your Completed Letter of Intent

Formatting an Anonymized Copy:

All documents for upload should be in PDF format and combined to be submitted as one document. You are required to submit two copies of the LOI to the Submittable site: one that is **fully identified** and one that is **anonymized**.

Anonymized versions should omit any identifying names of individuals and institutions (including such information as affiliations or region).

Other than the required redactions, please be sure that the anonymized version is identical to the fully identified version, including all necessary LOI components.

Submittable:

The Stemmler Grant Program utilizes the platform Submittable for all submissions. You may access our account here: <https://nbme.submittable.com/login>. If you have not used Submittable before, please create an account to access our page and complete the submission process: <https://nbme.submittable.com/signup>.

Note: If you have previously used the Stemmler Grant Program's online submission platform outside of Submittable, your submissions were connected to the user email address on file. Your submissions will appear on your dashboard labeled with the title of your submission and previous submission ID number.

Submission Deadline:

All submissions are due by **Monday, June 30, 2025, at 11:59 p.m.** (Eastern US).

Thank you for your interest in the Stemmler Medical Education Research Grant Program.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email stemmlerfund@nbme.org.