



ACGME *Back to Bedside* Initiative Request for Grant Proposal (RFP) 2024-2026

Project in a Box - Focused Innovation Proposal

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) announces continued support of its *Back to Bedside* initiative for a fourth funding cycle to begin August 1, 2024. The aim of *Back to Bedside* is to empower residents and fellows to develop transformative projects that foster meaning and joy in work and allow them to engage on a deeper level with what is at the heart of medicine: their patients. Ultimately, the goal of this initiative is to improve clinical learning environments in equitable and impactful ways with lessons that can be widely disseminated and solutions that can be implemented broadly.

The basis of the Project in a Box option is to provide a successful project example to inspire residents and fellows from all specialties to innovate. Proposed projects should be interventions designed for the resident's/fellow's specialty, practice location, patient population, etc. Successful project proposals will include a tangible item delivered to the patient, such as a memento, token, or any imaginative artifact that aims to foster connection between the resident/fellow and the patient.

Through three cycles of the *Back to Bedside* initiative, common themes of challenges/resistors were identified. The Project in a Box aims to reduce the barriers to project success by providing:

1. The project framework from a successful prior *Back to Bedside* project
2. An approved Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol to participate in a cooperative quantitative and qualitative research study through the ACGME (awardees may still need IRB approval at their home sites)
3. Collaborative meetings for project and Resident/Fellow Project Lead development

For the fourth funding cycle for the Project in a Box, the ACGME is soliciting project proposals that innovate based on the successful Cycle 1 project, "Resident Trading Card Program."

Resident Trading Card Program Description

The team has created the Resident Trading Card Program, which features cards, similar to baseball cards, with fun pictures of each resident, as well as fun facts, such as favorite ice cream flavor, where the resident is from, and hobbies. The inpatient teams can use these cards to introduce themselves to their patients,

who are then given the opportunity to create their own trading cards to teach their physicians about who they are and what they like.

All successful project proposals will be funded at the **\$5,000** level.

Key Dates

Announcement	December 4, 2023
RFP Submission Deadline	April 22, 2024
Awardees Notified	June 12-14, 2024
Acceptance Deadline	June 21, 2024
Public Announcement of Awardees	June 24, 2024
Award Start Date	August 1, 2024
Learning Collaborative 1	August 4-5, 2024
Virtual Check-In 1	January 2025
Virtual Check-In 2	May 2025
Learning Collaborative 2	October 2025
Virtual Check-In 3	January 2026
ACGME Annual Educational Conference	February 19-21, 2026
Award End Date	July 31, 2026

Principal Aim of *Back to Bedside*

The overarching aim of *Back to Bedside* is to cultivate joy and meaning in work by improving the physician-patient relationship. Recognizing that residents and fellows are uniquely equipped to identify areas for improvement in graduate medical education (GME), *Back to Bedside* supports residents and fellows across a diverse range of Sponsoring Institutions and programs to lead transformative projects that address the ongoing desire for learners to connect deeply with patients despite a rapidly changing health care environment. In addition, *Back to Bedside* creates a Learning Collaborative for the awardees to support programmatic and institutional change while establishing a framework to scale innovations for national dissemination.

Back to Bedside hopes to support processes, initiatives, curricula, projects, or other activities designed and implemented by and for residents and fellows. By fostering activities that build a sense of meaning in work and reminding residents and fellows of the reason they entered the profession in the first place, this initiative hopes to

encourage all residents and fellows to look at how they can improve their learning environment.

Background

In May 2016, the ACGME Council of Review Committee Residents (CRCR) held a meeting with the focused topic of “Meaning in Work.” The session opened with an introduction to the theories of Daniel Pink, among others, on internal motivation and personal satisfaction. Central to these theories is that satisfaction in work and life is attained when three conditions are met: (1) personal autonomy; (2) potential for or attainment of mastery; and (3) meaning in work.¹ The CRCR undertook an exploration of how residents and fellows can find meaning in their daily work. A consensus emerged that the patient-doctor relationship was central to meaning in work during medical education and training and professional life, and the *Back to Bedside* initiative was born.

The success of *Back to Bedside* has been overwhelming. Eighty-four projects at GME programs across the country have been funded in the first three cycles. The outcomes of projects have been disseminated through numerous presentations, posters, and peer-reviewed publications, fueling the growth of *Back to Bedside* into a larger movement to keep joy and meaning through patient connection at the forefront of GME.

1. Pink D. *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*. Riverhead Books; 2009.

Opportunity Description

The ACGME seeks proposals for funding awards to support two-year projects. These projects must study the implementation of a resident-/fellow-developed intervention to enhance meaning in clinical learning environments by fostering the physician-patient relationship.

Awardees will receive mentorship and education from the ACGME in the form of two Learning Collaborative meetings held at the ACGME office in Chicago, Illinois. These interactive gatherings are designed to build necessary skills for project management and implementation, as well as to facilitate opportunities for networking and collaboration with other awardees and with ACGME leaders. The awardee group will convene one last time at the 2026 ACGME Annual Educational Conference in San Diego, California.

Awardees will also participate in virtual check-ins in between Learning Collaborative meetings.

Awardees and mentors will be expected to implement their projects, provide quarterly project updates, attend all Learning Collaborative meetings, and report on their findings at the 2026 ACGME Annual Educational Conference.

Assessment Criteria for a Proposed Activity

Initiative Goal: Promote resident- or fellow-initiated projects to improve the meaning in daily work through enhancing the patient-physician relationship.

Key Elements

1. Resident- or fellow-developed and -led
2. Patient-centered
3. Sustainable
4. Utilizes the framework of the Resident Trading Card Project
5. Supported by the program's residents/fellows and leadership
6. Supported by an ACGME-accredited Sponsoring Institution or clinical site with ACGME-accredited programs (see FAQ for details of expected support)
7. Supported by a Faculty Mentor (see FAQ for definition of this role)

Award Distribution

Fifty percent of funds will be distributed on August 1, 2024. The remaining funds will be distributed on August 1, 2025, contingent upon completion of quarterly updates, participation in virtual check-ins, attendance at Learning Collaboratives, and overall project progress.

Evaluation and Assessment

All project teams will be required to utilize a tool, provided by *Back to Bedside*, to evaluate their project. Data from this evaluation tool will be made available when teams meet a threshold of response rate.

Proposals may also include an additional evaluation of the intervention impact, however additional local IRB approval or quality improvement designation will be required and the group evaluation tool will still be required.

Sponsoring Institution Responsibilities

Sponsoring Institutions, participating sites, or programs must support these innovations through investment in time, mentoring, facilities, and funding.

Specifically, institutions will be asked to provide confirmation of a commitment to support awarded residents/fellows with:

- allotted time and administrative resources commensurate with project needs;
- funds for travel and lodging for the Resident/Fellow Project Lead and Faculty Mentor to attend two Learning Collaborative meetings (two days in length) with other awardees at the ACGME office in Chicago, Illinois over the course of the award funding period; up to three additional resident/fellow project members may attend; and,
- funds for registration fees, travel, and lodging expenses for the Resident/Fellow Project Lead and Faculty Mentor to attend the 2026 ACGME Annual Educational Conference in San Diego, California; the Sponsoring Institution is encouraged to support additional team members' attendance.

Submission Instructions

Use the template below to draft your proposal and submit final answers via [THIS SURVEY](#) by 11:59 p.m. on April 22, 2024. Late submissions will not be accepted.

To be considered responsive to this RFP, each applicant must answer all the questions in the Survey Monkey linked above and ensure that each answer does not exceed the specified length (word total) noted, or to indicate if a question does not apply.

This is a competitive award process. Awards will be based on the strength of the proposal and the needs of the *Back to Bedside* initiative.

The proposal must include the following sections:

I. Contact Information

1. Project Title
2. Resident/Fellow Project Lead Contact Information
 - a) Name
 - b) Address
 - c) Specialty/Program, PGY/total years required to complete specialty education
 - d) Email (work)
 - e) Email (personal)
 - f) Phone
3. Resident/Fellow Project Co-Lead Contact Information (if applicable)
 - a) Name
 - b) Address
 - c) Specialty/Program, PGY/total years required to complete specialty education
 - d) Email (work)
 - e) Email (personal)
 - f) Phone
4. Resident/Fellow Team Members (for each team member, include permanent email and PGY)
5. Faculty Mentor Contact Information
 - a) Name
 - b) Title
 - c) Address
 - d) Specialty/Program
 - e) Email (Permanent)
 - f) Phone
6. Sponsoring Institution

- a) Name
- b) Address
- c) ACGME Sponsoring Institution Code

II. Initiative Narrative

7. Describe your concept for innovating on the original Resident Trading Card project to apply to your local program with the goal of fostering meaning in work and getting residents and fellows *Back to Bedside*. Include a plan for how you will get program resident/fellow buy-in. (Limit 500 words)
8. Describe how you will consider inclusivity and equity in your project and within the project team. (Limit 250 words)
9. Detail your plan for evaluation of the progress of your project. Consider applicable measurement tools (qualitative and/or quantitative study methodologies) in your project design. Provide specific survey or study tools intended for use and details for other evaluation tools. Note that at least three time points for data collection, including baseline assessments, are encouraged. (Limit 250 words)
10. Describe your plan for dissemination of your project and outcomes to impact other residents and/or fellows. Consider internal and external audiences and the community that will be impacted. (Limit 250 words)
11. Describe the project succession plan, with particular attention to addressing resident/fellow turnover during the entire cycle of the project. (Limit 250 words)

Upload the following as one single PDF document:

Use 12-point font and one-inch margins; include the budget (required), letters of commitment (required), and letters of support (optional).

III. Budget Instructions and Forms

Provide a detailed budget for use of the **\$5,000** award over the two-year project period. The submitted budget must be detailed and specific. The budget may include:

- Support for data management and research personnel (e.g., statistician, research assistant)
- Materials and supplies
- Licensing fees for measurement tools (e.g., Maslach Burnout Inventory)
- Publication costs
- IRB costs
- Technology development or capital expenses

The budget for award money may *not* include:

- Support for travel and lodging for project-associated meetings (support must be committed by the institution as outlined above)
- Institutional overhead
- Indirect costs

IV. Letters of Commitment (Required)

1. A letter of financial commitment from the designated institutional official of your institution that explicitly states that the institution will contribute support, including time, administrative resources, and funds for:
 - travel and lodging for at least two (and up to five) project members, including a Faculty Mentor, to attend two Learning Collaborative meetings (two days in length each) with other awardees at the ACGME office in Chicago, Illinois over the course of the award funding period; and,
 - funds for registration fees (estimated at \$550), travel, and lodging expenses for at least two project members, including a Faculty Mentor, to attend and present at the 2026 ACGME Annual Educational Conference in San Diego, California.
2. A letter of support from the program director indicating approval for the project to be implemented, local buy-in from program residents/fellows, and support for the attendance of Resident/Fellow Project Lead and up to three additional project members at the activities listed above.

V. Letters of Support (Optional)

Applicants **may** submit up to three additional letters from leaders within the Sponsoring Institution, clinical site, or program in support of the proposal. Such letters should not exceed two pages.