



BRIGHT IDEAS GRANTS

2026-2027 Request for Proposals

Deadline: March 10, 2026

The Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association Foundation ([POMAF/Foundation](#)) is a nonprofit organization created to advance clinical, educational, or community service innovations that align with the mission of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association ([POMA](#)). Through its grantmaking, the Foundation seeks to further the osteopathic philosophy.

1. Background

Osteopathic medicine is based on a holistic view of each patient as a whole person, unifying body, mind, and spirit. The Foundation's grantmaking is informed by the distinct qualities of osteopathic practice and principles, and the scholarly work that it generates. All projects funded under this initiative will be consistent with the [principles of osteopathic medicine](#):

- The body is a unit; the person is a unit of body, mind, and spirit.
- The body is capable of self-regulation, self-healing, and health maintenance.
- Structure and function are reciprocally interrelated.
- Rational treatment is based upon an understanding of the basic principles of body unity, self-regulation, and the interrelationship of structure and function.

Part of osteopathic medicine's holistic approach includes a long history of and commitment to making a difference in the lives of their patients and the communities where they live and work. This grant program is driven by that commitment to the profession and to the public.

2. Overview

The **Bright Ideas Grant** program supports proposals that address one or more of these strategic themes – wellness, technology, osteopathic philosophy, medical education, and public health – in the following program areas:

- Community-based programs: *projects providing direct services benefiting the community*
- Quality improvement/education: *projects focusing on practice-level changes that improve the quality of patient care*
- Scholarly activity: *projects advancing knowledge of the basic principles of research, specific to osteopathic principles and practice*

Bright Ideas Grant projects are developed and led by Pennsylvania osteopathic professionals to benefit communities, showcase the profession, and develop skills and leadership of individual osteopathic students, residents, and/or physicians.

3. Proposal Review and Timetable

RFP Release Date: February 10, 2026

Proposals Due: March 10, 2026

(*Hard deadline: 11:59pm EST, technical assistance is available until 4pm EST*)

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|---------------------|---------------|
| Funding Decisions: | May 2026 |
| Project Start Date: | July 1, 2026 |
| Project End Date: | June 30, 2027 |

4. How to Apply

To apply for a grant, register and login to the [Foundation's grant application system](#). Proposals must be completed and submitted with all required responses and attachments in order to be considered for funding in this grant cycle. Please use the access code **POMAF** to access the application.

5. Eligibility Criteria

All applicants must be located in Pennsylvania or propose a project with specific applicability to the Commonwealth. The same project may not receive funding from both Bright Ideas and Community Enhancing Grants programs for overlapping grant project periods.

Applicants can be:

- Nonprofits
- Individuals
- For profit entities, such as medical practices

If the applicant is **not** a 501c3 nonprofit, grant funds awarded will be considered taxable.

All applicant organizations must adhere to strict standards of non-discrimination. All grants are made at the discretion of the POMA Foundation Board of Directors. Decisions are not subject to appeal by applicants.

6. Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be considered in the review process:

- Project will impact Pennsylvania communities
- Project will address a pressing need or timely issue, OR presents a unique approach to an “every day,” ongoing challenge
- Project is consistent with the basic principles of osteopathic medicine
- Project has potential for broader impact or replication
- Project will address one or more focus areas of the Foundation's strategic plan:
 - Wellness
 - Technology
 - Osteopathic philosophy
 - Medical education
 - Public health

Applicants must describe the problem or situation to be addressed; the approach, and expected outcomes of the work. Applicants must attach a program budget. If relevant, please also include details on the status of IRB approval.

Community-Based Grant Selection Criteria

The project will:

- be led by an osteopathic medical student or a DO studying, training, or practicing in Pennsylvania with demonstrated knowledge of or experience with implementing the type of project described
- identify the specific community/population to be served and the specific need(s) to be addressed
- involve members of the identified community, when applicable
- develop an evaluation plan that corresponds to defined objectives and defined outcomes, and includes the method(s) to collect data for measurement of progress toward those targets

Quality Improvement/Educational Grant Selection Criteria

The project will:

- be led by DO studying, training or practicing in Pennsylvania
- identify quality measures and analysis of related measures of quality
- help the resident applicant develop the habits of mind required to pursue continuous quality improvement
- implement changes with the goal of practice improvement and using quality measurements to improve patient care
- prepare the applicant to provide the highest level of clinical care with a focus on the safety, individual needs, and humanity of patients

Scholarly Activity Grant Selection Criteria

The project will:

- be implemented by an osteopathic medical student or DO studying, training, or practicing in Pennsylvania
- further develop the Principal Investigator's research skills (conducting, evaluating, explaining to patients, and applying to patient care)
- identify a need, problem, or gap that will be addressed
- demonstrate interest in, knowledge of, or experience with implementing the type of project described
- clarify the project's contributions to research, literature, or osteopathic medicine

7. Grant Award Amounts & Number of Awards

The Foundation expects to award grants based on the number of quality submissions received. Historically, grants have averaged between \$1,000 and \$2,000. The maximum grant size is \$5,000. The Foundation expects to award 5 to 7 grants for each of the three grant sub-categories: community-based, quality improvement/education, and scholarly activity.

8. Evaluation and Reports

Projects should have a plan for evaluation that defines desired short- and long-term outcomes and steps to measure those outcomes. Projects may also incorporate processes for feedback and assessment of ongoing work that will allow for mid-course corrections if necessary. Grantees are expected to submit a final narrative and financial report, as well as an interim report for overall project performance monitoring and management.

9. Use of Grant Funds and Restrictions

Grant funds may be used for the following expenses: project staff salaries and benefits, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, supplies, project-related travel, and other direct project expenses. Please note, projects with established programs may use grant funds for a new product, service or opportunity for the program recipients or beneficiaries, but not for salary and benefits of current staff, unless their time is being redirected to a new project.

The Foundation will not make grants to exclusively cover the costs of publication fees for research that has already been completed but will consider requests that include a line item for such expenses as part of the overall project costs. According to Foundation's policy, grant funds may not be used for any of the following:

- Unrestricted general operating expenses
- Ongoing programs or existing staff, unless their time is being redirected to a new project
- Purchase of equipment and other capital expenditures
- Memberships to professional associations
- Endowment funds
- Religious purposes
- Fundraising activities or events (e.g. annual fund drives, phone solicitations, benefit tickets)
- Lobbying or political activities
- Activities related to litigation, arbitration or other dispute resolution
- Tuition or fees for medical education at the undergraduate or residency training levels
- Any activity inconsistent with the Foundation's status as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization

If awarded a grant, please plan to acknowledge the Foundation in any publications and to include the Foundation's logo on any grant-related materials. Further details will be provided during the award process.

10. Program Contacts

Questions about this RFP or the Foundation in general should be addressed to Angie Halaja-Henriques, POMA Director of Foundation Affairs, at angie@poma.or or 717-939-9318 x150. Technical questions about the online application should be directed to Skylar Brown (sbrown@gmafoundations.com).