

Call for SDRME Research Review/Synthesis Papers Proposals * July 2017

The Society of Directors of Research in Medical Education (SDRME) is issuing a call for research review paper proposals. Specifically, SDRME is interested in supporting the writing of review/synthesis papers that make a substantial contribution to advancing **practice, theory, or research in medical education**. Papers are expected to be completed within two years from the time grant monies are received. The grant will award **up to \$4000** in total to the primary author: \$2000 when the project begins and \$2000 following dissemination of the paper in the public domain and a presentation at the annual SDRME meeting (see details below). We will pay expenses up to \$1000 for travel to attend the SDRME meeting to make this presentation, in addition to the grant award. **Proposals are due at 11:59pm Pacific Time on September 8, 2017.**

Eligibility:

- The first author (principal investigator) must be current faculty at an accredited allopathic or osteopathic medical school or residency program in the USA or Canada. As an exception, an international member of SDRME may be first author.
- An individual may be first author on only one application, but may be a collaborator/co-investigator on multiple applications.
- The first author does not need to be a member of SDRME (except for international applications).

Proposal and Submission Guidelines

1. Proposal

- a. Length: No more than **500 words and 2 pages**. Title, investigators, and references do not count in word limit (but do count in page limit). One table or figure may be included, but it counts in the 2-page limit.
- b. Structure: all proposals should have the following information, in order:
 - 1) Title, investigators, and primary investigator (first author) contact information
 - 2) Background
 - 3) Importance/impact of the topic to medical education practice, theory or research.
 - 4) Methods to be used to complete the review and your rationale for selecting that approach (e.g., meta-analysis, critical synthesis, or thematic review; literature sources to be searched; inclusion/exclusion criteria to be used.)
 - 5) Importance/Impact of review on the practice of medical education.
 - 6) Feasibility
 - 7) References
- c. Formatting: Single-spaced, minimum 0.5-inch margins and 10-point font, formatted to fit on 2 pages. Word, RTF, or PDF format are acceptable. Maximum 1 table or figure (counts in page limit). Title and references count towards the page limit.
- d. A model proposal can be found at <http://www.sdrme.org/scholarship.asp>.

2. Curriculum vitae: The principal investigator and each co-investigator must submit a **two page abbreviated CV**. The CV may include (within the 2-page limit) a brief narrative description of that author's experience conducting this type of review/synthesis. **All CV's must be merged into**

a single document, and each author's CV should start on a **new page**. The CV document can be merged with the proposal into a single document (proposal first, then CVs), or be submitted as a separate document.

3. The **FIRST AUTHOR** should submit the proposal and CV's **via e-mail (as an attachment)** to: David A. Cook, MD, MHPE, Chair SDRME Invited Review Committee (cook.david33@mayo.edu). The first author is the corresponding author, and the submission email should come directly from the first author unless local policies require that a grants specialist submit the application on behalf of the team.

Submissions that do not conform to guidelines may not be reviewed. Late submissions will not be accepted. A cover letter is **not** required.

Evaluation of Proposals and Selection of Awards

The SDRME Invited Review/Synthesis Committee is composed of 3 to 5 members of SDRME. The Executive Committee Member-at-Large serves as the Chair of the Committee and the Liaison between the Committee and SDRME. Committee members use the following criteria to evaluate proposals:

1. **Importance:** Importance of the topic to practice of medical education, including how this builds on prior work in the field
2. **Methods:** Soundness of the proposed methodology
3. **Impact:** Potential impact of the review/synthesis on medical education
4. **Feasibility:** Potential for completion in 1-2 years, including the collective expertise of the investigator team.

Applicants will be notified of decisions in early November.

Requirements after award

1. **Annual written update:** During the funding period, recipients will be required to provide an annual written update on progress.
2. **Present at annual SDRME meeting:** A member of the investigator team (preferably the first author) will attend the annual SDRME meeting (typically held in June or July) to provide an update and highlight results. SDRME will pay expenses up to \$1000 for travel to attend this meeting, in addition to the grant award. Investigators are welcome to share preliminary (rather than final) findings and receive feedback and suggestions from SDRME members to incorporate into the final manuscript.
3. **Acknowledge funding:** All manuscript(s) deriving from the review must acknowledge the Society of Directors of Research in Medical Education as a source of support.
4. **Dissemination in the public domain:** We expect the final paper to be made available in the public domain. Typically this involves publication in a **peer-reviewed journal**, but posting in a **permanent open-access online repository** is an acceptable alternative. We encourage author(s) to send a copy of the manuscript(s) to the Committee Chair (David Cook) upon completion or initial submission, to make sure it will fulfill requirements upon public dissemination. Author(s) *must* submit the **final manuscript** to the Committee Chair for definitive approval; this manuscript will be kept confidential within the SDRME Executive Committee. **The requirement of Dissemination will be met** upon a) receipt of the final manuscript and either b) confirmation of acceptance to a peer-

reviewed journal, or c) confirmation of posting in an online repository. A copy/link to the *published* product(s) will appear on the SDRME website.

Minor deviations from planned review methods are allowed, but important changes in the scope or methods should be discussed with the Committee Chair (David Cook) before they are pursued. Major changes may invalidate the award, and preclude the second disbursement of funds.

Disbursement of award

The first half of the award will be disbursed at the time of selection. The second half will be disbursed upon successful completion of requirements 1-4 above.

Answers to frequently asked questions:

- **Is topic X of particular interest?** Answer: The SDRME does not have a specific agenda of priority research topics, and thus we cannot comment in advance on the priority of specific topics. During the review process, we prioritize topics that will have a substantial and broad impact on the field. If a given topic represents a pressing problem for the education of health professionals, then that would be viewed favorably.
- **Is there a preference given to first authors with a more robust publication history?** Answer: One of the review criteria is “feasibility.” To the extent that experience will enhance the likelihood of success, we do consider experience as an important factor in our decisions. However, we do not look only at the first author, but rather at the entire review team. For example, if the first author has limited experience, but another core member of the team has experience with systematic reviews, the latter's experience would be viewed favorably (provided there is assurance that the experienced author will play an active role in the project).
- **Does the award cover indirect costs?** Answer: No. The award is a fixed amount, paid directly to the first author or to the first author's institution. We make no allowance for indirect costs or other grant processing fees.
- **My proposal was not funded last year. Can I revise and resubmit this year?** Yes.
- **Can I see examples of previously funded and published SDRME review papers?** Yes; go to <http://sdrme.org/scholarship.asp>.
- **May I forward this announcement on to other colleagues?** Yes.
- **Should the CV's be a separate document?** You may combine the proposal and the CV's into a single document, or you may have 2 documents (1 for the proposal, the other for all of the CV's merged). In either case, each author's CV should start on a new page.
- **Can faculty from a school of nursing or pharmacy apply?** Answer: Unfortunately, no (not as the first author / primary investigator). SDRME is a group of representatives from LCME-accredited medical schools. We appreciate the need for interdisciplinary collaboration, and know that health professionals can learn much from one another. However, we have only limited funds, and we feel that we need to focus our funding efforts toward those research questions that directly influence the training of physicians. Anyone may participate as a collaborator.
- **Can we "share" the first author / principal investigator role among two investigators?** Answer: Not really. The first author is always the corresponding author, and will be the person to whom the award check is sent. The investigator team can do whatever they feel is appropriate in giving credit and listing the application and the award on, for example, their own curriculum vitae. Only the first author will be listed as the recipient on our records and website.

- **Can an ineligible person (e.g., resident, student, non-faculty researcher, or non-SDRME international first author) be the first author as long as an eligible person is the "senior" author?** Answer: No. The first author is the corresponding author, and must be eligible as described above.
- **I initially planned to do a [systematic / scoping / realist / narrative] review, but after getting into the literature we plan to change our review approach. Can I do this?** Answer: Maybe, but proposed changes should first be discussed with the Invited Review Committee Chair. Major changes may invalidate the award, and preclude the second disbursement of funds.

Tips for success

- Be sure to follow instructions for proposal format (2 pages, 500 words). Merge all CV's into a single document. Each CV should start a new page.
- Clearly indicate how your review will meet all four evaluation criteria (see above).
- Indicate what reviews or summaries have already been published on this topic, and how your review will improve upon these.
- In the Methods, explain (among other things) how you will identify relevant primary studies, and how you will synthesize/integrate the information learned from these studies. (Simply citing another source, e.g. published guidelines, will rarely suffice.)
- Highlight the team's collective expertise in conducting reviews (hint: the CV *narrative* is a good place to do this).
- Be realistic in what you can accomplish, and if possible present evidence that the project will be feasible in a reasonable length of time.
- Avoid unsupported platitudes such as "We are confident this review can be completed within 12 months" or "This review will be of great importance to medical education." (These are fine if they are supported by specific evidence/information.)
- Teams are nearly always more successful than single investigators (both in the grant application, and in the conduct of the review).
- If planning a systematic review (note: reviews do **not** need to be "systematic"), you might consider incorporating the suggestions from the following resources:
 - Cook DA, West CP. Conducting systematic reviews in medical education: a stepwise approach. *Medical Education* 2012; 46:943–952.
 - Hammick M, Dornan T, Steinert Y. Conducting a best evidence systematic review. Part 1: From idea to data coding. BEME Guide No. 13. *Medical Teacher* 2010; 32:3-15.
- The following resource contains suggestions relevant to literature reviews of any type:
 - Cook DA. Tips for a great review article: crossing methodological boundaries. *Medical Education* 2016;50:384-7.