



China Medical Board

2026 CMB Seed Grants for Bilateral Learning Program

Proposal Guidelines

In the 2026 CMB Seed Grants for Bilateral Learning Program, the Chinese principal investigator (PI) and the United States (U.S.) PI must develop and submit a joint proposal. Applicants should clearly articulate the evidence base, objectives, activities, innovation, and robustness of the proposed project. Additionally, the proposal should highlight the potential impact and significance of the project. It is important to include relevant previous collaborative experience and detail the capacity of the project team. Furthermore, the proposal must provide a comprehensive plan outlining the requested funding and its intended use, along with a timeline of activities to demonstrate the project’s feasibility.

The proposal should be prepared using the headings listed in this guideline and based on the instructions provided below. All content must be included in a **single** PDF document; do not submit multiple documents. *Text in italics* within this guideline is for explanatory purposes only and does **not** need to be included in the proposal. The table below lists specific requirements for the file format.

Formatting	Requirements
File Format	Grant proposal document must be saved and submitted as a PDF file
Page Size	A4
Footer	Page number must be included in the footer
Font	Times New Roman, font-size 12pt
Line Spacing	Single
Language	English (unless otherwise specified)
Maximum Number of Pages	
• Cover Letter	1 page
• Cover Page	1 page
• Project Summary in English	1 page
• Project Summary in Chinese	1 page
• Project Proposal	10 pages
• References	2 pages
• Budget	2 pages
• Team Capability	2 pages
• CVs of PIs	3 pages per CV
• Letter of Institutional Support (U.S. only)	1 page

I. Cover Letter (1 page)

The cover letter should not only briefly introduce the proposed project but, more importantly, attract the attention and interest of reviewers. It should be jointly developed by the Chinese and US PIs and written in a narrative letter format rather than using bullet points. It may include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- *Introducing yourselves and your organizations, as well as your connections to the CMB (if any)*
- *Stating the reasons for applying for this grant and explaining how the idea for the proposed project originated*
- *Providing a brief overview of the purpose and plan of the project*
- *Explaining how the proposed project is linked to your previous and/or current work*
- *Outlining how the Chinese PI and the U.S. PI know each other and the reason for collaborating on this project*
- *Describing how this project would contribute to the PIs' future work and long-term career development*
- *Outlining how the project's outcomes would benefit related communities/fields and be applied in practice, with specific emphasis on applicability in both China and the U.S.*

II. Cover Page (1 page)

Project Details:

- Project Title:
- Proposed Total Budget:
- Project Duration (start date - end date):

Information of Chinese PI:

- Full Name (in English and Chinese):
- Contact Information (phone number & email address):
- Professional Title:
- Institution:
- Institution Address:

Information of U.S. PI:

- Full Name (in English):
- Contact Information (phone number & email address):
- Professional Title:
- Institution:
- Institution Address:

III. Project Summary Statement in English (maximum 400 words, 1 page)

The summary should accurately and concisely encapsulate the proposal. It should describe the aim of the project, the methods to be adopted, and the activities to be carried out, along with outcomes to be measured and potential implications. The summary should be presented as a single paragraph rather than in bullet points.

IV. Project Summary in Chinese (1 page)

A Chinese version of the project summary statement. This should be a translation of the project summary from the English version into Chinese.

V. Project Proposal (maximum 10 pages)

The proposal should address the essential components of your project and may include the following components where appropriate:

- **Background and Rationale:** *Provide a rationale for the project and describe the issues to be addressed.*
- **Aim and Objectives:** *Describe the overall aim and specific objectives of the project, including a clear statement of any hypotheses to be tested (if applicable). The overall aim should be articulated in a single, concise sentence. The objectives, which could be multiple, should align with the activities and outcomes described in the subsequent sections.*
- **Project Design:** *Present the project plan in detail, giving a comprehensive description of the design of the proposed project. This may include all the activities to be carried out to achieve the objectives of the project, methods and techniques to be adopted, ethical considerations, human subjects and informed consent, as well as innovation/creativity. Discuss the strengths and limitations of the project. A flow chart illustrating each step of the project may also be included in this section.*
- **Collaboration Plan:** *Describe the collaboration activities between the Chinese and U.S. teams. Any prior history of collaboration between the two Principal Investigators (PIs) should be clearly stated. The application must explain how the collaboration for the proposed project will be executed, including: the communication plan between the two PIs and their respective teams (e.g., frequency and mode of meetings); the manner in which project tasks will be shared and divided; the procedures for managing and resolving disagreements or conflicts; the approach to handling collaborative discoveries and publications (e.g., authorship, data ownership); and whether ongoing collaboration activities are anticipated or planned beyond the duration of the project.*
- **Outcomes, Dissemination, and Sustainability:** *Describe the outcomes to be measured and provide a plan to disseminate research findings. Highlight potential impact on communities, practices, and policies. Include consideration for implementation and sustainability of findings that may improve health and health outcomes in both China and the U.S. Additionally, describe how the collaboration between the China and U.S. teams will continue beyond the grant period, including plans for sustained partnership, joint publications, and future funding opportunities.*
- **Feasibility and Risk Assessment:** *Provide an assessment of the project's feasibility. Describe the potential obstacles or risks that might prevent you from achieving the objectives, and more importantly, explain the strategies you intend to use to mitigate these risks, including cross-national implementation considerations.*
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** *Describe the methods you will use to monitor the project progress and ensure quality control, as well as how you will evaluate the project to determine whether the stated objectives have been accomplished.*

- **Timeline and Milestones:** Provide a detailed timeline for the proposed activities and expected outcomes of the project, along with justification for the requested duration. A Gantt chart in this section is strongly recommended.

VI. References (maximum 2 pages)

All references should be numbered in sequence as they appear in the text, using the 'Vancouver Style' for formatting. Limit the references to a maximum of 40 and ensure that they do not exceed two pages.

VII. Budget (maximum 2 pages)

For each selected proposal, the US\$100,000 grant will be divided equally and disbursed to the respective home institutions of the two PIs. Therefore, the Chinese team and the U.S. team should develop separate budget plans (including budget tables and narrative explanations of budgetary items), with the amount for each not exceeding US\$50,000.

1. Budget Table

The budget should be made in U.S. dollars and must be linked to the goals and activities of the project. It should be divided into categories and by project year, as shown in the example below. Expenditures on personnel cost, consultants, and domestic/international travel must comply with the relevant policies and rules of PIs' institutions. All requests for equipment, materials, and supplies must align with the objectives of the project. The administrative/overhead charge for the Chinese institution cannot exceed 5% of its US\$50,000 budget, while that for the U.S. institution cannot exceed 10% of its US\$50,000 budget.

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Personnel and Consultants				
Equipment, Materials, and Supplies				
Travel				
Conferences				
Publication and Dissemination				
Administrative/Overhead Costs				
Total				

2. Narrative Explanation of Budgetary Items

Provide detailed justifications for how the budget items are calculated (i.e., unit cost and number of units per item) and how these budget items are linked to the objectives and activities of the project.

3. Other Monetary Support (if applicable)

List all other sources of funds you have applied for, received, or expect to receive in support of the proposed project, including the starting and ending dates for the funding. Failure to report other monetary support may affect future funding from CMB.

VIII. Concise CVs of PIs

Both the Chinese and U.S. PIs must provide their CVs in English (maximum of three pages per CV). Additionally, the Chinese PI is required to submit a CV in Chinese. The CVs should emphasize activities related to the proposed project and include a list of major publications and funding received by the PIs. CVs of other investigators are not necessary.

IX. Team Capability (maximum 2 pages)

1. Narrative Description of Project Team

Use no more than one page to describe the composition and capability of the joint China-U.S. project team. This description should include an outline of the relevant expertise of the key members and how their skills and experience align with the project's objectives. Additionally, describe the interdisciplinary nature of the project team and how collaboration among members from different disciplines and institutions will benefit the project. Furthermore, please explain the working mechanism of the Chinese team and the U.S. team in conducting this international collaborative project, including how communication and coordination will be managed between the two teams.

2. Information about Key Members

Include the table below to list the basic information of the PIs and other key investigators.

	Name	Highest Degree	Institution	Professional Title	Specialty	Role and Responsibility in the Project	% of Work Time on the Project
Chinese PI							
U.S. PI							
Team member							
Team member							
Team member							
Team member							
Team member							
Team member							
Team member							

X. Letter of Institutional Support (U.S. only)

The application is required to include a letter of institutional support from the institution of the U.S. PI. The letter should be from and signed by the official at the U.S. PI's institution who is authorized to represent the institution in the acceptance of sponsored support to the institution. The letter should indicate that the grant proposal and supporting materials have been reviewed by the official and that the institution understands that the project will involve collaboration between a U.S. based PI and a Chinese based PI who will conduct the project in collaboration with each other. The letter should further state that the institution approves the project.

XI. CMB Proposal Writing & Formatting Checklist

Academic Writing & Language

- *Verb tense and voice should be consistently applied across sections and aligned logically with the project timeline.*
- *Scientific and academic terminology should be precise, idiomatic, and used consistently throughout the proposal.*
- *Writing style should be consistent across all sections.*
- *Sentences should be clear, concise, and well-structured to enhance readability.*

Writing Tone

- *A third-person, objective academic tone should be used throughout the proposal.*
- *First-person pronouns (e.g., “we”, “our”) should be avoided in all narrative sections, except for the Cover Letter.*

Structure & Paragraph Formatting

- *Paragraph formatting should be applied consistently throughout the document.*
- *When first-line indentation is not used, a full line break should be inserted between paragraphs.*
- *The entire document should be single-spaced.*
- *Body text should be consistently aligned (either left-aligned or justified).*

Tables & Numerical Formatting

- *Formatting of tables should be consistent and meet standard academic presentation requirements.*
- *Currency and numerical representations should be standardized throughout the proposal (e.g., “US\$1,500” with appropriate thousand separators).*
- *Alignment within tables should follow a consistent structure:*
 - *Table headers: center-aligned*
 - *Text: left-aligned*
 - *Numerical values: right aligned*
- *Content in tables should be clearly aligned with corresponding descriptions in the main text.*

Institutional Names & Titles

- *Institutional names should appear in full at first mention, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses (e.g., China Medical Board (CMB)).*

- *English titles of books, reports, and documents should follow standard academic formatting conventions (e.g., italicization where appropriate).*

Bullet Points & Lists

- *Bullet points should be consistently formatted, including symbols, indentation, and alignment.*
- *A single bullet style should be used throughout the document.*

Font & Technical Formatting

- *Font settings should follow standard requirements (e.g., Times New Roman, 12 pt for English text).*
- *Formatting of Chinese and English text (full-width vs. half-width characters) should be applied consistently.*