



Independent Medical  
Education Grants

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Before You Submit

#### Requests for Proposals

All requests for proposals are listed in the disease state tabs listed above.

#### Funding Restrictions

- These restrictions are designed to ensure that educational grants supported by Spark comply with the standards, rules, and guidances pertaining to Educational Grants, including, without limitation, the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Standards for Commercial Support, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Content Integrity Standards for Industry Support in Continuing Nursing Educational Activities, the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards for Continuing Pharmacy Education, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) Compliance Program Guidance for Pharmaceutical Manufacturers, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Guidance on Industry Supported Scientific and Educational Activities, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) Code on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals, the ethical opinions of the Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs (CEJA) of the American Medical Association (AMA), the AMA Code of Medical Ethics, the Physician Payment Sunshine Provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and fraud and abuse and anti-kickback laws.
- **Acceptable Grant Types:** Spark funds independent educational grants to inform and educate HCPs and patients.
- **Bona Fide Purpose:** All grants must have a clearly defined, legitimate educational, scientific or health-related purpose.
- **Non-Promotional and Non-Product Specific:** Grant funding must be used solely to support a bona-fide, independent medical education program or activity that fosters medical and scientific education to the

healthcare community to improve patient care. Grants may not be used as a promotional tool to induce customers to purchase or use Spark products or services, or to reward customers for past purchases or to promote use of Spark products.

- **Independent / Controlled by the Grant Recipient:** Grant funding may be provided only to support medical education programs that are controlled by the Grant recipient (organizer) as to the content, faculty, speakers, moderators, audience, attendee identification, invitations and all other aspects of the medical education program, independent of any Spark influence.
- **Properly Requested:** All grants must be requested through the Company's dedicated online portal at <http://www.sparkeducationalgrants.com/>, supported by the required documentation.
- **Financially Sound:** The medical education grant funds provided must be limited to a reasonable estimate of the cost of the grant-funded activities and outlined in a budget document at time of request.
- **Acceptable Grant Recipients:** In general, educational grants will be provided to accredited CME/CE providers (national- or state-level accreditation), whose mission includes professional and public health education. Grants may not be awarded to individuals, including a physician, researcher or private physician practice.
- **Non-Accredited Independent Educational Activities:** Educational activities without CME/CE or other continuing education credits (e.g., grand rounds programs) will be considered for grant funding if they are independent and not brand specific. However, Spark will apply the same standards of independence and scientific rigor articulated in all related CME/CE standards and guidelines.
- Spark may provide grants for financial assistance for scholarships or other educational funds to permit medical students, residents, fellows and other healthcare professionals in training to attend major educational, scientific or policy-making conferences or meetings. The selection of individuals who will receive the funds must be made by the academic or training institution and not by Spark.
- **Independent from Commercial Influence:** There may be no interactions between Spark employees and Grant applicants regarding the development of specific Grant requests. Spark employees may not assist requestors with their Grant applications or contact Medical Affairs or Grant Review Committee (GRC) members on behalf of requestors. In addition, commercial employees may not be involved in the review and approval of a grant request.
- **Unacceptable Grant Types:** Under no circumstances may an educational grant be supported with the intent of, directly or indirectly, influencing, developing a relationship with, or rewarding any Grant Recipient, HCP, individual, or entity with respect to the purchase, prescription, recommendation, or formulary placement of any Spark

product or service; influencing any Grant Recipient's conduct or decisions regarding clinical or other research or the dissemination of medical or scientific data; assisting in the development of any Grant Recipient's business; and/or promoting an Spark product or service.

- **Program Formats:** Acceptable program formats include live events, web-based programs, printed materials, and all other formats utilized by Grant Recipients to deliver certified and non-certified independent healthcare education programs.
- **Program Development:** The Grant Recipient assumes sole responsibility for the content, faculty, audience selection, announcement materials, and all other aspects of the educational program. Spark will not, directly or indirectly, take part in any activities that are intended to, or have the potential to, bias or influence the design or content of the program or presentations, or selection of the faculty or audience. Spark may not provide any materials or review any materials to be used during the program or provide speaker or attendee suggestions, even if asked to do so by the organizer of the program.
- **Meals:** In accordance with the PhRMA Code on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals and the Physician Payment Sunshine Provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, only modest, buffet-style meals are permitted at live educational events supported by the Company grant funding and any meals provided must be organized entirely by the Grant Recipient with no involvement by Company Personnel.
- **Recreation:** Spark may not fund recreational events or entertainment for meeting attendees and must approve all meeting venues.
- **Program Announcements:** In rare cases, Spark may permit Company Personnel to distribute invitations to Spark-funded IME programs on a case-by-case basis. This must be in response to a request by the Grant Recipient.
- **Grant Disclosure:** The Grant Recipient is required to disclose all support provided by Spark in accordance with all applicable standards, rules, and guidance related to CME/CE activities.
- **Grant Application:** The Grant Recipient is required to complete and submit the grant application in accordance with guidance provided on the Spark website or in response to an RFP. The grant application must include a reasonably detailed description of the educational program for which funding is requested, including the accreditation status of the Grant Recipient (if applicable) the program title, a statement of educational need, description of the topic, an agenda or table of contents, the date of event(s) (if live), learning objectives, instructional methods, evaluation plan, appropriate faculty profile and experience, number and type of attendees, and detailed budget.
- The Grant Recipient must also disclose any conflicts of interest or financial relationships between the Company and the Grant Recipient

and/or any Educational Partners that the Grant Recipient may engage to plan and execute the funded educational activity.

## Decision Making

Requests for Proposal Notifications (RFPs) have specified deadlines for application submission and will be posted on this website periodically throughout the year. For other funding requests, Spark has a rolling review policy when evaluating funding requests for independent medical education, which means that we do not have a specific deadline for which funding requests must be received. This allows qualified requestors the opportunity to apply anytime during year. We do, however, recommend that you submit your request as early as possible. To ensure adequate opportunity for review, decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. You will usually hear back from Spark prior to the project/program start date.

## Letter of Agreement (LOA)

All grants must abide by the terms in the Spark Letter of Agreement (LOA), which is issued to an authorized signer of your organization once the application is approved. You must agree to the terms of the LOA before any funding is issued. If you have any questions on the agreement terms, please contact us at [educationalgrants@sparktx.com](mailto:educationalgrants@sparktx.com).

## Post Payment Actions

- You will have the opportunity to provide a project status update and program outcomes throughout the course of the program development and implementation. This can be accessed on the homepage of the grant management application system after you log in.
- When your project end date has passed, you will receive an email requesting that you reconcile your projected budget with actual expenditures. You must supply reconciliation information within 90 days of the request.