SSH DISCOVERY AWARD

RESEARCH PROPOSAL
SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Award Objectives

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) is proud to announce the 2026 call for full research proposals to receive the **SSH Discovery Award.** As the Society has grown in its support of research in healthcare simulation, the importance of funding larger, longer-range projects led by experienced researchers in the field has been recognized. Beginning with the 2025 Award Cycle, The Society has added the SSH Discovery Award to its highly successful research award program.

Funding Available
One research award of up to $30,000. This is an open application process and all submissions will be reviewed. SSH reserves the right to withhold the awarding of this funding if no suitable proposals are submitted (eg of sufficient quality).

Research Priorities to Consider
Below are priorities identified by the Research Committee for the 2026 year's funding cycle; however, the Committee does not restrict funding only to these priorities and will consider high-quality proposals that advance theoretical and applied knowledge in healthcare simulation research.

1. Studies that consider and investigate the balance between physical realism and resource utilization (cost, sustainability, and scalability) in simulation education.
2. Studies comparing factors related to high vs. low-fidelity simulations and simulators.
3. Studies investigating simulation-based factors (debriefing method, fidelity, learning modalities, etc.) that lead to optimization and acceleration of competency and learning in teams.
4. Studies investigating optimal dose, frequency and interval of simulation training sessions for competency-based training.
5. Studies comparing variables (faculty presence, feedback methods, etc.) that influence and inform the setting of standards and assessment methods used in competency-based training.
6. Studies that investigate the relationship of simulated participant methodology and emerging technologies, including hybrid strategies.
7. Studies measuring the impact (emotional, learning, retention, etc.) of in situ simulation events on participating professionals and/or care teams and patients not involved in the event.
8. Studies comparing Extended Reality (XR) based simulation with non-XR based simulation modalities, as it applies to training effectiveness/efficiency, learner outcomes, and mitigation of learner cybersickness.
9. Studies comparing the effectiveness of various debriefing techniques on learner competency, retention or other psychometric parameters.

How to Apply

Step 1: Submit a Full Proposal

Submit a full proposal that describes your research project, including the following elements (described in detail below):

- Ethics Review and Human Subject Protection
- Background/Executive Summary
- Knowledge Gap
- Applicability to the Research Priorities
- Research Question/Hypothesis
- Research Methodology
- Project Timeline
- Budget
- Resources
- Key References

And submit the following:

- CV, IRB Approval Letter (if completed), Letters of Support

Deadline for Full Proposals: Friday, October 17, 2025 (1700 ET US)

All proposals will be reviewed by the SSH Research Committee and highest-quality proposals shall be moved forward to interviews and final deliberation.

Step 2: Live video review

Finalists will be scheduled for a live video review to describe their project in detail and answer questions from the review team.

Schedule for Live Video Reviews: Will be scheduled during the week of December 01, 2025.
Notifications to all finalists are planned for mid-December.

Award Announcement

The winning project will be announced at the *26th International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare (IMSH 2026)*, which will be held in San Antonio, Texas, USA, from January 10 to 14, 2026.

Award Stipulations

Period of Funding
Project must be completed within 24 months from the date of receipt of the funds.

Progress Report
Principal Investigators receiving this Award must submit a progress report at 12 months and a final report at the end of the 24 months.

Publication Requirements
Manuscripts resulting from awarded studies must be submitted FIRST to *Simulation in Healthcare*, the official journal of the Society for Simulation in Healthcare. If a manuscript is not accepted to Simulation in Healthcare during the peer review process, the authors are free to submit it to other journals of their choice.

Any presentations resulting from the project must be submitted to either an SSH-sponsored educational meeting or be presented via an SSH-sponsored educational webinar.

Applicant Eligibility
- Applicants must be prepared to list all sources of grant/award funding received in the past. Indicate on your CV if the funding sources were internal or external.
- Only one project submission will be accepted by each principal investigator.
- Co-investigators other than the project mentor are encouraged, though optional.

Scope of Project
- Innovative studies with strong potential for a positive impact on the simulation field are encouraged.
- Award funding may be used for PILOT projects to lead to more extensive investigations.
- A comprehensive range of sound empirical research methods (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods) will be considered.

Exclusions to funding
- Award funding is not intended for current or future academic research required for degree completion (e.g. master's level, PhD)
- Studies in receipt of additional funding from non-SSH sources will not be considered.
- Award funding is not intended for review projects (e.g. scoping reviews, meta-analysis, systematic reviews).
- Award funding is not intended for projects related to curricular development in simulation

Budget Parameters
The SSH Discovery Award is designed to be the only source of external funding for submitted projects. Projects for which non-SSH funds are being used in addition to external funding sources are not be eligible.

Internal institutional support is allowed and must be reported to SSH.

Award funding **may be used for**:

- Personnel costs - up to 40% (e.g. stipends for faculty/staff/graduate students/trainees, research assistants, project managers, statisticians, data analysts, subject matter experts, consultants, standardized participants (SPs).
- Equipment/material costs - up to 50% (e.g. VR headsets, task trainers, wearables, computers, software, printing, paper, cloud storage, questionnaires, licensed tools)
- Study participant support - up to 10% (e.g. gift cards, food and beverage support, parking)

Award funding **may not be used for**:

- Travel
- Conference and event fees
- Membership fees
- Professional development fees (e.g. tuition for educational programs or certification)
- Indirect costs (e.g. organizational administrative support, organizational equipment, rental of space, utilities).

Questions: Contact aspain@ssih.org

Submission Process

Applicants are required to enter the Letter of Intent into the SSH Submission Center using this link:

In order to access the proposal submission form, applicants will first need to login to the SSH website at ssih.org though membership in the Society is not required for application to the award program.

Applicants will receive a confirmation email when the submission has been completed and readied for peer review. Incomplete or nonconforming proposals will not be forwarded for peer review.

Submission Requirements

All submissions will be required to submit the following elements to be considered complete.

Ethics Review and Human Subject Protection (1,000-character limit includes spaces)

All proposals submitted must include evidence of submission to the Institutional Review Board or Ethics Board at all institutions where the proposed work will take place, regardless of whether human subjects are used. Documentation of approval or exemption of the project by the IRB or Ethics Board is not required at the time of proposal application but will be required before the funding of the project. For human subjects' usage definition and guidelines, please refer to Part 2 of the NIH PHS398 instruction set (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.doc).

For proposals that have not had the IRB or Ethics Board review completed, please included the expected timeline of completion.

Background/Executive Summary (2,000-character limit includes spaces)

Include a brief overview of the field to be studied, including what is known about the topic and what remains to be explored. Describe how and why the proposed research will advance understanding in the field or bridge gaps in knowledge. Any supporting theoretical or conceptual frameworks should be included.

Knowledge Gap (1,500-character limit includes spaces)

Please explain in detail the knowledge gap that will be addressed by the project, and how this knowledge gap was identified.

Applicability to the Research Priorities (1,000-character limit includes spaces)

Indicate how this project is a strong candidate to match the research priorities identified in the Discovery Award and/or how it will advance the science in healthcare simulation. This should support demonstrating the need for the project within the field of healthcare simulation. Projects that can be broadly applied to the field of simulation are encouraged.

Research Question/Hypotheses (2,500-character limit includes spaces)

Clearly describe the Research Question(s) driving the project. List the goals and objectives of your study, (i.e., to test the hypothesis of your research questions). The hypothesis must be clearly stated for quantitative research. For qualitative research a hypothesis is not necessary, but guiding research questions should be stated instead. Specific aims should also be clearly stated.

Research Methodology (2,500-character limit includes spaces)

Please describe in detail the research methodology planned for the project including the research framework intended. It is often helpful to organize this section by listing each aim and the specific methods used to accomplish it. Other essential components include proposed inclusion and exclusion criteria for subjects, well-defined outcome measures, proposed statistical testing, anticipated sample size, and the overall data collection and management strategy.

Project Timeline (2,000-character limit includes spaces)

Please provide a timeline of critical steps that demonstrates that you can feasibly complete the project within the 24-month award period.

Budget (2,500-character limit includes spaces)

A high-level budget summary must be included, followed by a detailed budget justification explaining how the award funds will specifically be used. The budget justification must demonstrate that adequate support and time will be dedicated toward the completion of the stated goals. Applicants are reminded that the Award will be in the amount of up to $30,000.

Award funding **may be used for**:

- Personnel costs - up to 40% (e.g. stipends for faculty/staff/graduate students/trainees, research assistants, project managers, statisticians, data analysts, subject matter experts, consultants, standardized participants (SPs).
- Equipment/material costs - up to 50% (e.g. VR headsets, task trainers, wearables, computers, software, printing, paper, cloud storage, questionnaires, licensed tools)
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Award funding **may not be used for**:

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Resources (1,500-character limit includes spaces)

This subsection must clearly outline the organizational resources available for the proposed project. Please briefly describe the relevant facilities and resources directly applicable to the principal investigator, such as space, computers, simulators, administrative support, etc. Do not include a detailed description of the institution's intellectual environment.

Key References (Up to 10)

Include the references of publications relevant to the proposed study using PubMed format (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/policy/cit_format.html).

Supporting Documents
The following items are to be included as separate PDFs:

CV's
A current CV, including all previous research grants received, whether internal or external and publication history, must be uploaded into the principal investigator's SSH profile. In addition, the project mentor must also complete an SSH profile and include a recent CV.

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter (if completed at time of application)
Note that in situations where IRB submission is preferred after the grant award notification, a final IRB approval letter must be submitted before funds can be disbursed.

Letters of Support
Include at least two (2) letters addressing the level of support and resources available to help with the research. One letter must be from the project mentor, and the other can be from another supporting project member, department chair, simulation director, etc. Each letter should be one page at maximum.