SERVICE BLUEPRINT · CONSOLIDATED

FREIDA: one applicant, first search to rank list

Scenario: a medical student arrives on public FREIDA, builds a program list, joins the AMA to compare, applies and ranks, while program coordinators keep listings current on their own schedule. Columns are steps in time; rows are who or what does the work. Purple dashed lines mark the line of interaction, the line of visibility and the line of internal interaction. Items marked † are inferred from outside AMA and must be validated with AMA operations, the GME Track team and West Monroe.

Applicant and coordinator lanes · Backstage and support · Failure points and gaps · Not in this step

Lane	01 · ENTRY Arrive	02 · EXPLORE Search and filter	03 · EXPLORE Read a program page	04 · EXPLORE Verify elsewhere	05 · BUILD LIST Create account and save	06 · BUILD LIST Try to compare	07 · JOIN Join the AMA	08 · BUILD LIST Return and compare	09 · BUILD LIST Resume on another device	10 · APPLY Track applications	11 · RANK Build the rank order	12 · DATA Program updates its listing
Physical evidence What the applicant or coordinator sees, touches or receives	• Google result, advisor email or AMA article link • Public FREIDA home with a search bar	• Filter panel with up to 35 filters • Result list with a program count	• Program page with tabs • Lock icons on member-only fields	• Blank or "N/A" field with no date • Program website, Reddit, IMG forums, her own spreadsheet	• "Sign in / create account" modal • Saved programs indicator	• Locked dashboard • Upsell page with generic benefit copy	• ama-assn.org membership checkout • Receipt email	• Dashboard with compare table • Export to worksheet	• Mobile login screen • Laptop browser with a fresh search page	• Dashboard status fields and notes • ERAS and her calendar, outside FREIDA	• Rank field on saved programs • Worksheet export; NRMP rank-order list outside FREIDA	• Program administration portal • GME Track survey
Applicant actions The medical student. Every step but the last is theirs; Omar and Marcus variants noted	• Clicks through from search or an advisor's email • Scans the home page for where to start	• Picks specialty and states • Adds size or setting filters (Omar starts with visa sponsorship)	• Opens eight programs in tabs • Compares fields by switching between tabs	• Leaves FREIDA to check the program site • Copies details into her spreadsheet	• Clicks save and creates a free AMA account • Saves 60–80 programs over several weeks	• Clicks compare on her saved programs • Reads the upsell; goes back to her spreadsheet or considers joining	• Chooses the student tier • Pays	• Signs back in • Compares programs side by side; adds notes and ratings	• Checks a program on her phone between patients (Marcus's whole pattern) • Picks up on the laptop that evening	• Updates application status • Writes interview notes after each visit	• Ranks using compare and notes • Talks it through with a partner or advisor • Enters the final list in NRMP	Not in this step
Program coordinator actions Second actor. Maintains the listing; never interacts with applicants in FREIDA	Not in this step	Not in this step	Not in this step: data was submitted months earlier	Not in this step, and never learns an applicant found a gap	Not in this step	Not in this step	Not in this step	Not in this step	Not in this step	Not in this step	Not in this step	• Completes the annual GME Track survey • Edits the listing in the portal year-round
LINE OF INTERACTION												
Frontstage What FREIDA shows the applicant: pages, gates, states	• Public landing page, no sign-in required • Search entry for specialty and location	• Filtered list and count • Sort by name or location, not by fit	• Fields shown exactly as the program submitted them • Member-only fields locked	No touchpoint: the applicant is outside FREIDA	• Account gate on first save • Save succeeds after login	• Member gate listing benefits in general terms	• Leaves FREIDA for AMA checkout, with a different look and no return path	• Dashboard unlocks if entitlement has synced • Side-by-side compare, notes, export	• Asks to sign in again • Filters and recently viewed are reset	• Member dashboard with status fields and notes	• Rank field on saved programs • Export only; no share link	• Updated fields appear after approval • No change indicator for applicants who saved the program
LINE OF VISIBILITY												
Backstage Services, data and rules the applicant never sees	• Page served; analytics tag fires † • Anonymous session cookie set †	• Query against the program index † • Null-handling rules decide whether blank fields match a filter †	• Program record fetched from the published dataset † • Tier check hides gated fields †	No backstage activity: the applicant is off-site	• AMA identity account created † • Saved item stored against the user ID †	• Entitlement lookup returns "non-member" † • Saved programs already on record, unused by the gate †	• Order processed by the membership system † • Member record created †	• Entitlement propagated to the FREIDA session or cache † • Compare view built from saved items †	• Filter state held client-side only † • No server-side view history; short mobile session timeout †	• Status and notes saved per program †	• Rank order saved † • Export file generated †	• Portal edit queued for AMA review, 1 to 3 business days • Batch publish in August, October and February
LINE OF INTERNAL INTERACTION												
Support processes Systems, teams, vendors and data sources the backstage depends on	• SEO and AMA marketing content • Medical school advisors who link to FREIDA • Web hosting and CDN †	• Program index built from GME Track / National GME Census • ACGME accreditation data	• GME Track survey data • Membership entitlement service †	No backstage activity: the applicant is off-site	• AMA identity / SSO platform † • FREIDA database †	• Membership entitlement service †	• Payment processor † • AMA membership operations and CRM †	• Identity, membership and FREIDA integration †	• AMA identity session policy †	• FREIDA database † • ERAS (AAMC), not integrated	• NRMP rank-order system, not integrated	• GME Track / National GME Census (AMA + AAMC) • AMA data review team • Coordinator time and workload
Failure points and gaps Where lanes disconnect, degrade silently or depend on one thing	• Nothing on arrival asks what stage the applicant is in, so a first-time M3 and a second-cycle IMG get the same page	• Blank visa and IMG fields are silently included or excluded by filters, with no signal † • A count is not a fit: 186 results and no way to tell which matter	• No "last updated" date or completeness indicator on the page	• Verification happens entirely off-site; the correction never comes back • Optional survey fields are often never completed †	• The account gate arrives before she understands what an account gets her	• The gate promises "compare and rank" in general terms while the backstage already holds her saved programs	• Hand-off out of FREIDA at the most valuable moment • No deep link back to the comparison she was trying to open	• One action depends on three systems syncing: paid and still locked breaks trust † • No confirmation inside FREIDA that access is ready	• Every session starts from zero • Save control sits below the fold on mobile	• Status lives in two places: ERAS is the record, FREIDA is manual re-entry • Advisors can't see the list to help	• No share link: she exports and emails a spreadsheet to her advisor • No reassurance that the list is balanced before she certifies it	• Batch refreshes don't line up with application season • An applicant's "this is wrong" has no route to the coordinator

Reading the blueprint

Five things the lanes surface when read together

1 The paywall asks before it shows

Saved programs sit in the backstage from step 05, but the compare gate at 06 lists generic benefits instead of previewing her own list. The conversion moment is also where FREIDA sends her to another site with no way back.

2 Membership access depends on three systems agreeing

Identity, membership and FREIDA entitlement all have to sync between steps 07 and 08. Nothing tells a new member that access is ready, and a delay looks like paying for nothing. Make this the first engineering validation session.

3 Filters promise completeness the data doesn't have

Visa and IMG fields are optional in the survey, so filters at step 02 quietly include or drop programs. The applicants with the most at stake pay the most for the gap.

4 Every exit is lost signal

Steps 04, 07, 10 and 11 all send the applicant out of FREIDA: to program sites, checkout, ERAS and email. Corrections, intent and outcomes never come back to the backstage.

5 The coordinator lane and the applicant lane never meet

Programs update on their own schedule (step 12) and applicants find gaps on theirs (step 04). A "report outdated info" loop is the only thing that would connect them.

PROJECT
AMA FREIDA redesign
Design Lead: Bill Bulman

SOURCES
FREIDA public site and FAQ (program data, member features, update cycles)
NRMP 2026 Main Residency Match results
FREIDA discovery workshops: Rose / Thorn / Bud, Playing Field, Perfect Future
User interviews

STATUS
Draft v2 · December 2025
As-is blueprint; to-be direction in the companion doc
† items inferred from outside AMA; not yet validated

VALIDATE WITH
AMA membership and identity ops (steps 05 to 09)
GME Track and AMA data review team (steps 02 to 04, 12)
FREIDA engineering team (every † item)

RELATED
Personas:
Priya Raman
Omar Haddad
Marcus Bell
Linda Okafor
Persona overview and sheets: ledger set, pages 1 to 5

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