

*This Request for Application (RFA) is exploratory in nature. As we proceed, we'll make adjustments based on real-time learnings, best practices, and program needs.*

## **CTSI Trustworthiness Seed Funding Opportunity**

### **Request for Applications (RFA)**

**(Issue Date: February 17, 2026)**

**Mandatory meeting with Community and Stakeholder Engagement's director Dr. Denise Vidot –  
No later than March 30, 2026**

### **OVERVIEW**

The University of Miami Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) is excited to release this Request for Applications (RFA) aimed at enhancing trustworthiness between academic and community partners. The goal is to deploy effective partnership strategies that enhance trust and create impactful relationships, leading to productive initiatives that address health issues holistically and support further studies involving community, patient, or partner engagement.

### **BACKGROUND**

The mission of the Miami CTSI is to catalyze the development, demonstration, and dissemination of scientific discoveries to improve the health locally and nationally.

The Community and Stakeholder Engagement (CASE) module of the Miami CTSI facilitates long-term participatory research collaboration with the community. It assists investigators who conduct community-engaged research by offering guidance, best practices, and advice, and provides training in community-based participatory approaches, population health, and research on differences in health outcomes. Through this funding initiative, CASE seeks to address issues impacting communities with limited access to resources by building and developing trust between academic and community partners working in such communities.

The issue of trustworthiness in research is a persistent challenge and often a major barrier to organizations working meaningfully and collaboratively with community partners. Trustworthiness involves consistently earning the trust of community organizations and members through transparent, respectful, and fair interactions. This includes actively involving communities in decision-making processes and ensuring their voices are heard and valued.

To further enhance efforts to address trustworthiness, the [Association of American Medical Colleges \(AAMC\) Center for Health Justice](#) launched an initiative centered on ten overarching principles towards establishing and enhancing trustworthiness. The [AAMC Trustworthiness Toolkit](#) provides guidelines and resources for building and maintaining trust which can be applied to community-academic research partnerships. The toolkits offer honest community perspectives on important issues and suggest ways for academic health centers to become better community partners. They are not confined to a single method of use but rather are designed to provide different pathways for deployment, allowing for flexibility and adaptability to the specific needs and contexts of the community partners.

### **PURPOSE**

The CTSI Trustworthiness Seed Funding Opportunity has the primary goal of enhancing community-academic collaborations between the University of Miami and community partners. The purpose of this RFA is to deploy the AAMC trustworthiness framework with academic research teams and community organizations who already have an ongoing partnership. The RFA aims to ensure that the deployment of the trustworthiness framework is effective, accessible, and beneficial to all involved stakeholders. It also aims to bridge the trust gap by promoting transparency, mutual understanding, and collaborative decision-making.

## **AWARD DETAILS and REQUIREMENTS**

Award Amount: \$5,000

Number of Awards intended to be funded: 2-3

Award length: 12 months

The application is open to all faculty at the University of Miami possessing the necessary skills and experience to carry out the project.

Eligible applications must include at least one community partner (defined as a community organization or public agency) and ideally not more than two community partners.

Applicants are required to use the AAMC toolkit in their proposals, and the requested budget should facilitate the use of the toolkit between the collaborators. Prior to applying, applicants and community partners should familiarize themselves with the AA

MC toolkit and resources including the video guide, interactive discussion guide, community engagement action guide, and reflection guide, which are designed to help users translate the 10 Principles of Trustworthiness into actionable steps. These can be accessed [HERE](#).

Projects must focus on building community trust through engagement, transparency, cultural competence and partnership. In preparing proposals, applicants should consider the following:

- Clear plans are required. Investigators and community partners are expected to collaboratively devise a strategy outlining the use of the toolkit.
- Activities should not be a one-time event. Over the course of the 12-month grant period, ongoing engagement is expected.
- Teams will be expected to fill out a survey two times during the award period. The survey will be administered centrally by the Miami CTSI and is de-identified.

Prior to submission, the applicant partnership (UM faculty and community partner) must reach out to CASE Director, Dr. Denise Vidot, [by email](#) for a mandatory discussion regarding the suitability and feasibility of their proposal ideas. This conversation must take place no later than Monday, **March 30, 2026**.

## **DEADLINES & AWARD TIMELINE**

Information session – <a href="#">REGISTER HERE</a>	March 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2026, at 5:00 pm
Application due date	April 6, 2026
Award notifications	May 12 <sup>th</sup> 2026
Award start	June 8 <sup>th</sup> 2026

**HOW TO APPLY:**

The application is submitted online and consists of 10 project-specific questions with approximately 200-500 words expected in response to each question.

[APPLY HERE](#)

Due date for all applications is April 6, 2026. No late applications will be accepted.

**REVIEW CRITERIA:**

Applications will undergo review by both community and academic experts who have experience in community-engaged research. This ensures a comprehensive evaluation from diverse perspectives. Reviewers need tangible information to make informed decisions. Therefore, applicants should submit clear, detailed materials that present their project effectively. This includes providing relevant data, methodologies, and outcomes.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** For any questions, inquiries, or additional information please contact:

CASE Director: Denise Vidot ([dvidot@med.miami.edu](mailto:dvidot@med.miami.edu))

For any administrative, budget and / or general questions please contact:

Program Manager: Angelica Agati ([axr3115@med.miami.edu](mailto:axr3115@med.miami.edu))