UT San Antonio
The University of Texas at San Antonio

2027-2028 ROBERT FERRER
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SMALL PROJECT GRANTS FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

OVERVIEW

The Institute for Integration of Medicine & Science (IIMS) and College for Health, Community, and Policy (HCaP) at UT San Antonio are seeking proposals for the Robert Ferrer Community Engagement Small Project Grants, which provides funding for one-year projects.

The program was recently renamed in honor of Dr. Robert Ferrer in recognition of his longstanding leadership and commitment to advancing community-engaged research, improving community health, and strengthening community-academic partnerships.

The goal of this program is to promote, develop, and expand community- academic research partnerships that support the translation of scientific discoveries from basic discovery, to clinical practice, to public health benefit.

Funds may be used to develop or expand collaborative projects in one or more of these areas:

1. Community-engaged research or assessment
2. Education or training
3. Dissemination of research results, program features, or policy implications

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement can take many forms, involving organized groups, agencies, institutions, or individuals working together toward shared goals. Collaborators may participate in efforts related to health promotion, research, or policy development. Meaningful community engagement serves as a foundation for building trust, identifying resources and allies, enhancing communication, and improving health outcomes, helping successful projects grow into lasting partnerships.

Proposals should reflect that there is a mutually beneficial and bidirectional relationship between partners. Community partners should be involved in the planning and implementation of each phase of the project.

We highly encourage partnerships to use these community engagement resources to plan their proposed work:

- Community Engagement Assessment Tool
- Principles of Community Engagement
- The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be accepted from newly formed or established **community-academic health research partnerships** in South Texas. Each team must include at least one academic representative and one community representative. Academic representatives may be affiliated with UT San Antonio or another institution; however, at least one UT San Antonio investigator must be included on the research team. Applicant teams may determine the designation of principal investigator (PI) and co-investigator(s) based on their respective roles and responsibilities within the partnership.

We define (**academic partners** as faculty and/or students) who provide technical and/or research support for the development of projects that address community-identified health priorities. Academic partners may represent one or more of the following institutions:

- UT San Antonio
- South Texas Veterans Health Care System
- Texas Biomedical Research Institute
- Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC)
- UT Austin College of Pharmacy
- UT Austin Dell Medical School
- Other local universities

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We define **community partners** as key stakeholders who play a vital and meaningful role in the development and implementation of projects. Community partners should be directly involved in addressing barriers and identifying solutions to health concerns. Community partners **should not** represent the same institution as the academic partner and vice versa. Community partners may include, but are not limited to:

- Practice-Based Research Networks (PBRNs)
- Translational Advisory Boards (TABs)
- Other community groups and/or agencies including community health centers, county health departments, non-profits, schools, social services agencies, and/or volunteer groups.

Please note that specialized IRB training (*CITI Community Research Partner Training*) is available for community representatives. Additional information will be provided to selected awardees during orientation.

Student applicants are required to identify a UT San Antonio faculty sponsor. Students and faculty sponsors are responsible for working together to develop and complete their proposed project. Also, the faculty sponsor will help identify and request administrative support from within their department.

PROPOSAL TOPICS

Topics are unrestricted community-identified health priorities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to publicly available health assessments such as the Health Collaborative's Community Health Improvement Plan.

FUNDS

We anticipate that $35,000 will be available to fund 7 or more proposals. The maximum award is $5,000. Smaller budgets will be considered. One award will be reserved for a community-academic partnership co-led by a faculty principal investigator from UT San Antonio HCaP.

Due to liability issues, we *will* not issue checks directly to awardees. Instead, awardee accounts will be centralized at the IIMS (or UT San Antonio HCaP). Budgeted expenses will be supported via supply orders and payment vouchers. Other budgeted expenses may require the submission of an invoice. Funds for budgeted expenses of projects co-led by other non-UT San Antonio academic partners will be disbursed as invoices are received. Faculty sponsors will be responsible for awards granted to their student awardee(s). Expenses will require the approval of both the student awardee and faculty sponsor. Preference will be given to budgets that include benefit(s)/compensation for community partners.

Allowable expenses include:

- Research incentives[1]
- Consumable supplies and equipment
- Consulting fees
- Journal publications ($500 maximum)
- Software
- Staff salaries ($2500 maximum)
- Conference registrations
- Other justifiable and essential expenditures

Non-allowable expenses include:

- Door prizes
- Facilities and administrative expenses
- Faculty salaries
- Indirect costs
- Meals
- Gift card reimbursements
- Professional or societal memberships

[1] Research teams led by faculty from UT San Antonio Health Science Center who are seeking participant incentives are required to follow HOP Chapter 7. ClinCard setup and reloading fees should be included in budget, if applicable. For more info regarding participant incentives, contact the Clinical Trials Office at UT San Antonio Health Science Center.

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SUBMISSION, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS

Submit your application at https://apply-uthscsa.smapply.io/ under ***2027-2028 Robert Ferrer Community Engagement Small Project Grants*.** The deadline is March 31, 2027. Use 11-point Arial font and at least 0.5" margins. Incomplete applications will NOT BE REVIEWED. Proposals should be organized as follows:

1. Electronic Application (on Survey Monkey Apply, HERE)
    a. Proposed Project Plan and (max. of 4 total pages with 1 page for Specific Aims and Background/significance
2. History of Community and Academic Partnership (maximum of 1 page)
3. Community Engagement Plan (maximum of 1 page)
4. Detailed Budget Form (maximum of 1 page)
5. Budget Justifications (maximum of 1 page)
6. CV or Resume of Principal Investigator (maximum of 4 pages)
7. CV or Resume of Co-Investigators (maximum of 4 pages)
8. Literature Citations (maximum of 1 page)
9. Letters of Collaboration and Support

Awards will be announced in late spring. Funds will be made available starting on **Sept. 1, 2027**. Funds **will not** be disbursed until (1) a copy of an Institutional Review Board approval letter and (2) *CITI Human Subjects - Community Engaged Research, Community-Based Participatory Research, and Community Research Partner Training* proof of training is submitted to the IIMS. Awards may be revoked from awardees who excessively delay providing copies of these documents.

Awardees are required to present a poster at the 2028 IIMS Community Engagement Symposium. A 6- and 12-month final report will be required. Those who do not submit meaningful and timely reports may be ineligible for future funding. The IIMS Community Health Advisory Board and IIMS Community Engagement will support the awardees by providing guidance during planning/implementation, analysis, and dissemination as needed.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

IIMS investigators and community partners will review applications. Applications will be scored based on:

1. Significance, novelty, and innovation
2. Strengths of the project design, feasibility, integration with ongoing projects
3. History and productivity of the community and academic partnership
4. Contribution to career development of the researcher(s) and/or community partner(s)
5. Extent to which the project meaningfully expands a community-campus partnership
6. How the community-campus partnership will together address community identified barriers to health.
7. Potential for ultimately improving health outcomes

AWARDEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Awardees are required to:

- Abide by NIH rules and regulations
- Abide by IIMS-CTSA and CTSA partner policies and procedures
- Submit complete and timely progress reports
- Acknowledge support from the IIMS in all project-related publications and reports

CONTACT INFORMATION

For past awardees click here. Contact Elisabeth de la Rosa at (210)562-4087 or IIMS-CE@uthscsa.edu for details.