UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
CENTER for
AIDS RESEARCH

Funding Opportunity Announcement FY27

Miami Center for AIDS Research (CFAR)

Request for Applications: Generating Access & Progress (GAP) Funding Opportunity

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Request for Applications: Generating Access & Progress (GAP) Funding Opportunity

Miami CFAR Mission

The Miami Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) is committed to advancing innovation in HIV/AIDS research by providing exceptional scientific leadership and fostering a collaborative, multidisciplinary infrastructure that integrates basic, clinical, implementation, and behavioral/social sciences. Our mission is to promote education, mentorship, and community partnerships that will drive progress in the prevention, treatment, and eventual cure of HIV. With an unwavering commitment to ending the HIV epidemic (EHE), Miami CFAR is positioned to make transformative contributions to the global fight against HIV/AIDS.

Purpose of GAP Awards

The purpose of the Generating Access & Progress (GAP) awards is to support innovative HIV/AIDS research, related travel, and/or publication costs. Applications are encouraged across the spectrum of HIV/AIDS research including basic, clinical, social/behavioral, and implementation sciences. The GAP award funds are meant to better position projects for extramural funding with a clear path articulated. *For FY2027, priority will be given to applications that are seeking support for projects with preexisting data in: 1) implementation science research and/or 2) using AI in research.*

Applicant Eligibility

All eligibility criteria must be met as of the date of submission.

Who Can Apply:

- Researchers who recently earned a doctoral degree and are beginning their careers.
- Trainees at the Ph.D., M.D., or M.D./Ph.D. level, postdoctoral fellows, and clinical fellows (e.g., M.D., D.D.S., D.V.M., Pharm.D., or Ph.D.).
- Early-career investigators with novel HIV-related research ideas not tied to existing R01 or U-series funding where they are the Principal Investigator (PI).
- Established investigators new to HIV research (i.e., no prior NIH funding for HIV/AIDS research of any type).
- Applications will be accepted from faculty at external universities if they have an identified University of Miami faculty mentor.

Additional Requirements and Restrictions:

- Studies using existing, archived clinical specimens or data are encouraged.
- **Individuals who have previously received a Miami CFAR GAP award cannot apply** again until three (3) years after their award end date.
- Per NIH guidance, **clinical trials are not allowed**. To determine the difference between clinical studies and clinical trials, please refer to https://grants.nih.gov/policy/clinical-trials/definition.htm.
- Applications with foreign components are ineligible.
- Projects that have already received funding through another school initiative are ineligible.

Mentoring

Applicants are required to identify a mentor who can provide career guidance. **External applicants are required to have at least one UM mentor on their application.** For interested applications who do not yet have a mentor, the Miami CFAR can connect you with an established investigator from the Miami CFAR Mentor Cohort at cfar@miami.edu.

Prerequisites/Considerations

Required Prior to Submission:

- Applicants are required to meet with the Miami CFAR Biostatistics Sub-Core prior to submission. To schedule the meeting, please complete the Miami CFAR Clinical Core Service Requests form.
- Applicants focused on implementation science research are required to meet with the Miami CFAR Implementation SWG prior to submission. To schedule the meeting, please email the Miami CFAR at cfar@miami.edu.
- Applicants proposing a project using AI in research are required to consult with UM's DSAC Committee and/or UM's ITS AI team as appropriate. **External candidates are encouraged to meet with equivalent review teams at their respective institutions.**
- All applicants in community-based participatory research should identify a community partner that can be engaged at varying levels with corresponding budget allocation based upon scope of work prior to submission. A letter of support must be provided by the community partner.

Strongly Encouraged:

- All applicants are encouraged to use Miami CFAR core resources prior to submission and should consider how to utilize core resources post-award.
- Interested candidates are encouraged to discuss the responsiveness of their proposal with the Developmental Core directors: Dr. Claudia Martinez, Dr. Mario Stevenson, and Dr. Emmanuel Thomas.

Post-award Expectations:

- Awardees are expected to participate in the activities organized by the Miami CFAR mentoring program (i.e. speed review, mentoring seminars, and workshops) and complete evaluations of their mentoring relationship as specified by the Miami CFAR.

Funding Amount and Award Period

Miami CFAR GAP award recipients will be awarded up to **$10,000** each (direct costs only), for a 6-month project period (approximately February 1, 2027 to July 31, 2027).

Application Process and Timeline

Please follow NIH guidelines on application formatting at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply- application-guide/write-application.htm.

Timeline:

RFA Issued	October 5, 2026
Full Application Due Date	November 30, 2026 at 5:00 PM ET
Funding Decisions Announced	January 8, 2027
Award Period	February 1, 2027 – July 31, 2027

Application and Submission Information

Full Application

Font type Arial, size 11 point, single-spaced.

Completed applications will include:

- **A.** Abstract (300 words or less)
- **B.** Statement explaining how funding will assist with your HIV/AIDS research study/experiment, publishing, and/or the likelihood of securing external funding (300 words or less)
- **C.** Statement on how the proposal addresses NIH HIV/AIDS Research Priorities (300 words or less)
- **D.** Mentoring statement (300 words or less)
- **E.** Research Plan (maximum of 2 pages) *should include:*
  - **a.** Specific aims
  - **b.** Significance (background and planned post-award outcomes)
  - **c.** Innovation
  - **d.** Approach (Design and Methods)
- **F.** Detailed Budget and Budget Justification
  - **a.** Use the PHS 398 continuation format page and detailed budget for initial budget period at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html
- **G.** Description of the Research Environment (1/2 page)
- **H.** Bibliography and references cited
- **I.** Current NIH-sciENcv Biosketch for all key personnel listed (i.e., PI, mentor, collaborator).
  - **a.** *A biosketch does not need to be provided for research staff and/or students listed on the budget.*
- **J.** Miami CFAR Core Usage Plan (see below)
- **K.** Letters of Support (i.e., collaborators, Department Chair, Mentor)

Link to submit a Full Application: https://redcap.miami.edu/surveys/?s=W7EXRE9X8JTNF48C

Miami CFAR Core Usage

All Miami CFAR-funded pilot projects are encouraged to use relevant CFAR Cores. Please visit the CFAR website to familiarize yourself with these cores and services.

- Projects with a laboratory component (Immunology, Virology, Genomics) are required to meet with the Miami CFAR Laboratory Core before their final application is submitted to review laboratory services and feasibility.
- For IRB protocol assistance contact the Miami CFAR Clinical Core.
- For assistance with recruitment and retention of subjects contact the Miami CFAR Population Engagement Core.
- All awarded pilots are required to participate in the Miami CFAR Developmental Core Mentorship Program.

Budgetary Restrictions

GAP projects are awarded up to $10,000 each (direct costs only). Expenses should be restricted to laboratory supplies, participant incentives, technical supplies, publishing costs, and travel support.

Non-allowable Costs include:

- **Computers**
- **Equipment**
- **Salary support**
- **Indirect Costs**

Provide a detailed budget justification for each person and item listed in the budget (at least 1-2 sentences per line item). The names and positions of all personnel must be individually listed with their corresponding percentage of effort and calendar months to be devoted to the project even when no salary is requested. If an individual is listed on your grant with effort but no salary support, then they should be a mentor or other significant contributor.

The Miami CFAR Program Administrator (cfar@miami.edu) will be available for budget consultation to ensure the proposed costs are allocable, allowable, and reasonable and effectively reflect the proposed project needs.

NIH Prior Approval

CFARs are not allowed to fund clinical research studies that include randomization to one or more low risk interventions to evaluate the effects of those interventions on health-related biomedical or behavioral outcomes. Please visit https://grants.nih.gov/policy/clinical-trials/definition.htm for details.

For clinical studies that involve a vulnerable population (children, pregnant women, sex workers, etc.) and/or is more than minimal risk, the full research protocol and informed consents are required to be submitted to the Developmental Core Program Manager at cfar@miami.edu.

For studies that involve live vertebrate animals, the full research protocol and IACUC approval are required to be submitted to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) for prior approval at the University of Miami.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications submitted to the Developmental Core are evaluated for scientific and technical merit through the Miami CFAR review process. Reviews will be based on scientific merit and the likelihood of attracting future NIH or similar funding. All applicants will receive feedback on their proposals.

Specific criteria include:

- Innovation and significance to HIV/AIDS Research
- Scientific merit
- Probability of subsequent NIH or other peer review funding
- Proposed impact, role, compensation, and feasibility of proposed collaborations with a community partner/agency
- Feasibility of study completion within the award period

Review and Selection Process

Each application will be evaluated by reviewers with expertise related to the science addressed by the application.

1. Applications will undergo:
   a. Scientific and technical merit review by ad-hoc reviewers selected by Miami CFAR Leadership per NIH Factors 1-3 criteria.
      - Factor 1: Importance of the Research (significance, innovation), scored 1-9
      - Factor 2: Rigor and Feasibility (approach), scored 1-9
      - Factor 3: Expertise and Resources (investigator, environment), to be evaluated as either sufficient for the proposed research or not (in which case reviewers must provide an explanation)
   b. Biostatistics, Ethics, and/or Regulatory Review at the discretion of Miami CFAR Developmental Core Directors and/or reviewers
   c. Budget and administrative review
2. Applications within the funding range will undergo a programmatic review.
3. Incomplete applications or applications that do not follow the stated requirements may be administratively withdrawn without scientific review.

Conditions of Award

Miami CFAR award recipients are required to submit progress reports. To monitor the progress and success of each pilot, recipients of Miami CFAR-funded awards must submit a progress report each February, whether interim or final, until the project's completion. Miami CFAR award recipients will be asked to present on their funded research at one of the following: a CFAR seminar, annual CFAR forum, or annual HIV/AIDS symposium.

Miami CFAR Acknowledgement

Acknowledgment of the Miami Center for AIDS Research is required (P30AI073961).

In accordance with NIH requirements, all publications, presentations, press releases and proposals supported in whole or in part by the Miami Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) and/or its services are required to cite the Miami CFAR grant and comply with the NIH Public Access Policy (*submission to PubMed Central*).

For questions, contact the Miami CFAR at cfar@miami.edu.