CCTSI COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PILOT GRANT APPLICANTS' WEBINAR

November 2, 2026
12:00pm – 1:00 pm MT

WHO WE ARE

CCTSI Community Engagement Core

- The Community Engagement (CE) Core was created in 2008 as part of the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CCTSI) with funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- The **Partnership of Academicians and Communities for Translation (PACT)**, within the CE Core, is dedicated to advancing community engagement in research as a critical step in narrowing the gap between what we know based on research discoveries and what we do to improve health and healthcare.

Trailhead Institute

- Denver-based public health organization that collaborates with community and community organizations across Colorado.
- CE Community Partner organization
- Fiscal partner and administrator for all community co-PI's

CE PILOT GRANT PROGRAM

- Provides infrastructure and funding to support community-academic partnerships to engage in community engaged and driven research.
- Creates a forum for bi-directional exchange by facilitating community input into the research agenda and linking community with investigators interested and capable of partnering with community and conducting community-based participatory and translational research
- Educates investigators and communities on principles of community-based participatory research (CBPR)

IMPORTANT DATES

10/19/2026:	RFA Release Date
12/11/2026:	Mandatory Intent to Apply Form Deadline (due by 5pm MT)
01/19/2026:	Application Submission Deadline (Due by 5pm)
06/2027:	Notice of Selection
08/2027:	Mandatory Training (for both partners)
08/2027:	Financial Webinar
08/01/2027:	Notice of Award/ Start Date
04/30/2028:	*Partnership Development Award End Date*
07/31/2028:	*Joint Pilot Award End Date*

GOALS OF THE PILOT GRANT PROGRAM

- Support pilot studies that will strengthen community-academic relationships and produce preliminary data for future competitive grant applications
- Build capacity in community-academic partnerships to conduct translational (T3/T4) research using community-based participatory research (CBPR) principles to translate established efficacy into effective implementation at the community or clinic level
- Improve health in all Colorado communities by fostering partnerships and centering community research agendas

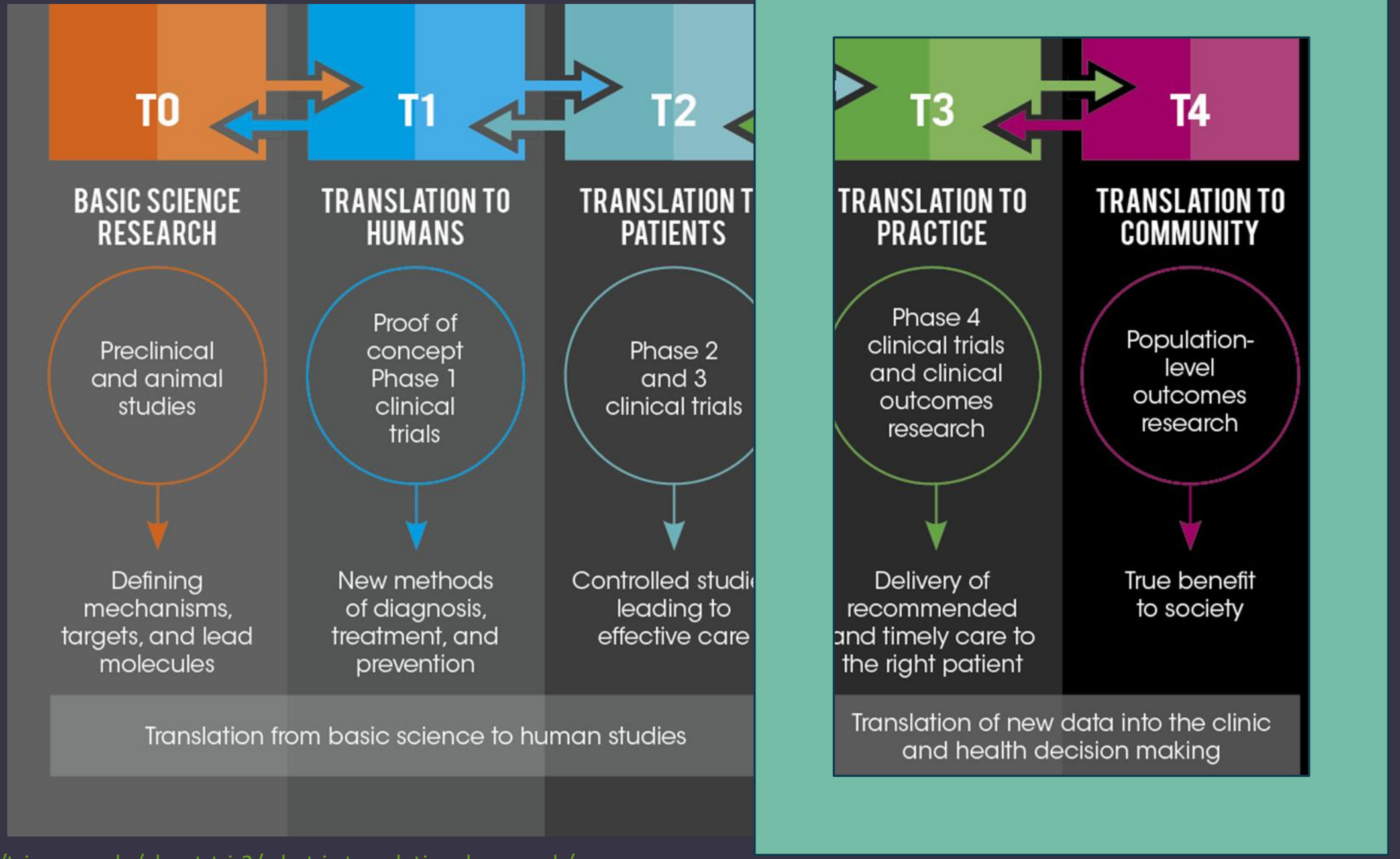


CE PILOT GRANTS PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

All grant applications must identify

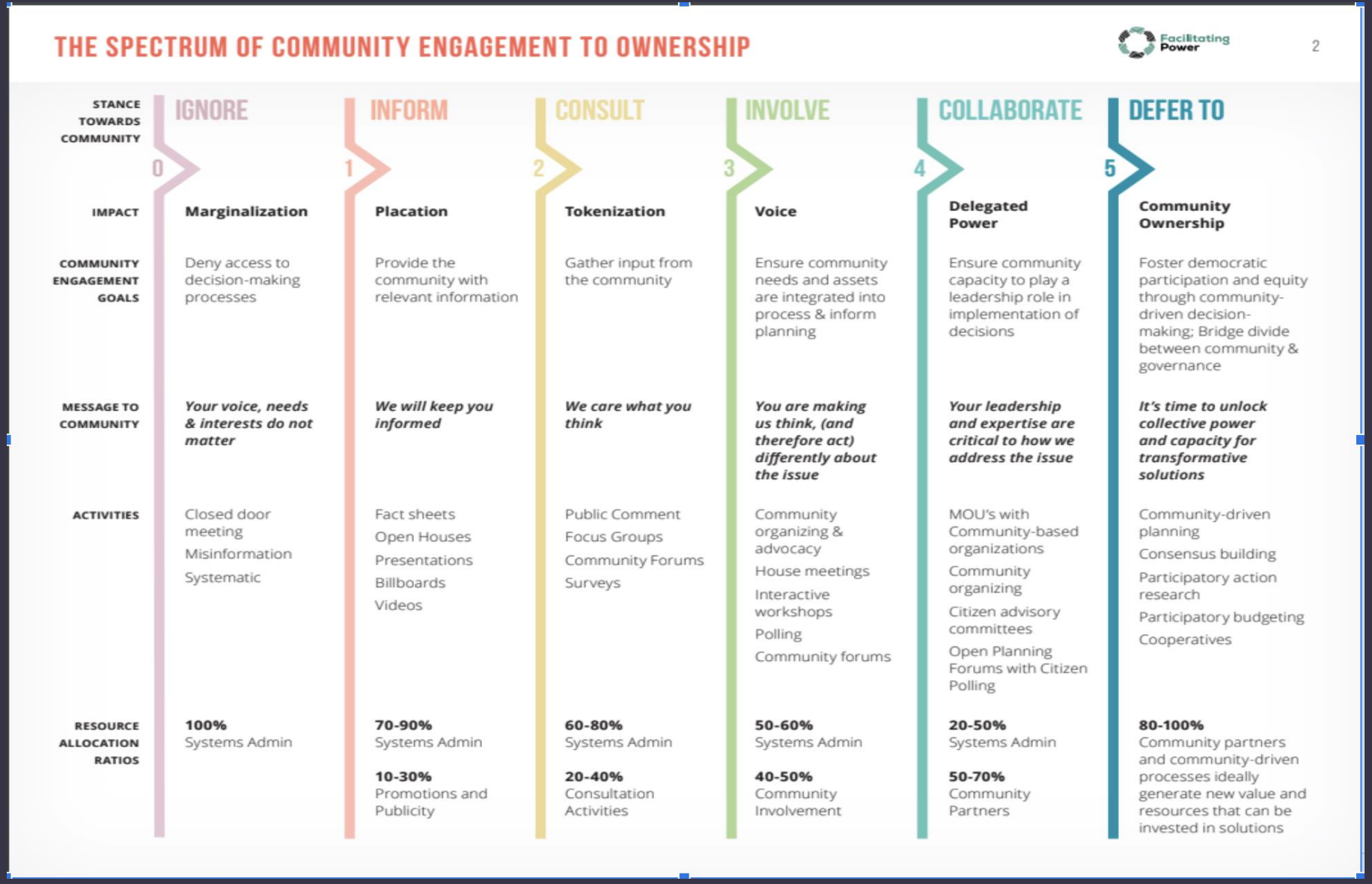
- An Academic co-PI
- A Community co-PI

- These co-PIs are viewed as **equal partners,** and both hold the responsibility of **managing the project** and their respective **budgets**



Source: http://tri.uams.edu/about-tri-2/what-is-translational-research/

SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP

Facilitating Power

2

STANCE TOWARDS COMMUNITY	IGNORE	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	DEFER TO
	0	1	2	3	4	5
IMPACT	**Marginalization**	**Placation**	**Tokenization**	**Voice**	**Delegated Power**	**Community Ownership**
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS	Deny access to decision-making processes	Provide the community with relevant information	Gather input from the community	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process & inform planning	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions	Foster democratic participation and equity through community-driven decision-making; Bridge divide between community & governance
MESSAGE TO COMMUNITY	***Your voice, needs & interests do not matter***	***We will keep you informed***	***We care what you think***	***You are making us think, (and therefore act) differently about the issue***	***Your leadership and expertise are critical to how we address the issue***	***It's time to unlock collective power and capacity for transformative solutions***
ACTIVITIES	Closed door meeting Misinformation Systematic	Fact sheets Open Houses Presentations Billboards Videos	Public Comment Focus Groups Community Forums Surveys	Community organizing & advocacy House meetings Interactive workshops Polling Community forums	MOU's with Community-based organizations Community organizing Citizen advisory committees Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling	Community-driven planning Consensus building Participatory action research Participatory budgeting Cooperatives
RESOURCE ALLOCATION RATIOS	**100%** Systems Admin	**70-90%** Systems Admin **10-30%** Promotions and Publicity	**60-80%** Systems Admin **20-40%** Consultation Activities	**50-60%** Systems Admin **40-50%** Community Involvement	**20-50%** Systems Admin **50-70%** Community Partners	**80-100%** Community partners and community-driven processes ideally generate new value and resources that can be invested in solutions

CBPR GOES BEYOND TRADITIONAL RESEARCH FROM DESIGN TO DISSEMINATION:

Utilizes full participation of community in identifying issues that are relevant and important

- Community is intimately involved in designing the projects
- Community members provide guidance for recruitment and retention
- Instruments and interventions are developed with community input and tested in similar populations
- Data is collected, shared, and interpreted with community members
- Community members assist in identifying appropriate and relevant venues to disseminate results

2027/28 RFA

This RFA was designed with the following federal guidance in mind:

- **Advancing NIH's Mission Through a Unified Strategy** (2025-08-15): *Going forward, the NIH will prioritize research that goes beyond measuring health disparities to focusing on solution-oriented approaches.*
  - https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/nih-director/statements/advancing-nihs-mission-through-unified-strategy
- **Revised NIH Policy and Guidelines for Inclusion of Women and Members of Racial and/or Ethnic Minority Groups in Clinical Research** (implemented 2025-08-16):
  - https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-25-131.html
- **Leading in Gold Standard Science** (2025-08-22).
  - https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/nih-director/statements/nih-publishes-plan-drive-gold-standard-science
- **Department of Justice Memo by Attorney General Bondi** (2025-07-29)
  - https://www.justice.gov/ag/media/1409486/dl
- NIH's **Notice of Civil Rights Term and Condition of Award**
  - https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-25-090.html

Applications not aligned with federal funding priorities - at the time of award - or those not eligible to be accepted by your home institution if funded, cannot be funded.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

Principal investigator: the individuals who have the level of authority and responsibility to direct the project or program supported by the grant and who are responsible for the scientific and technical direction of the project. Our grants require an academic co-principal investigator and a community co-principal investigator. They are both responsible for co-writing, co-submitting and co-managing all aspects of the grant, including financial management.

- **Academic co-Principal Investigator:** Any researcher who holds a faculty appointment or it's equivalent with a CCTSI affiliated institution.
- **Community co-Principal Investigator:** An individual from community with strong ties to the affected community and/or belongs to a community-based organization that is serving the affected population.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

- **Community Based Participatory Research:** **A collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings.** CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change to improve community health and eliminate health disparities.

- **Community Engagement:** Community engagement is **a collaborative process through which communities and researchers work together to solve mutually recognized problems and build on strengths that each party brings to the collaboration.** Community engagement involves engagement of the affected populations and/or patients within the community. The methods for community engagement include community service, service-learning, community-based participatory research, training and technical assistance, coalition-building, capacity-building, and economic development.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

- **Community:** "Community" refers to community members, **persons affected by a condition/issue** being addressed or studied, and **working partners**, including **community-based health practitioners** and **community-based organizations.**

- For these grants, the community Co-PI can be:
  - An individual part of the community affected by a condition/issue
  - Community based organization that serves a certain population or those affected by a condition/issue
  - Clinical partners (i.e. primary care practice, hospital, community clinic)

APPLICATION CATEGORIES: PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Intended to support **new or potential partnerships.**
- **9-month award period, funded at $8,000**
- Dedicated to relationship building, exploration of shared areas of interest, creation of a partnership structure, identification of a specific research collaboration

APPLICATION CATEGORIES: JOINT PILOT PROJECTS

- Intended to support applicants who have an **established community-academic partnership.**
- **12-month award period, funded at $30,000**
- Partnership seeking funds for a well-defined joint research project that produces preliminary data for future competitive grant applications (from governmental, nonprofit, and private funding sources).

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

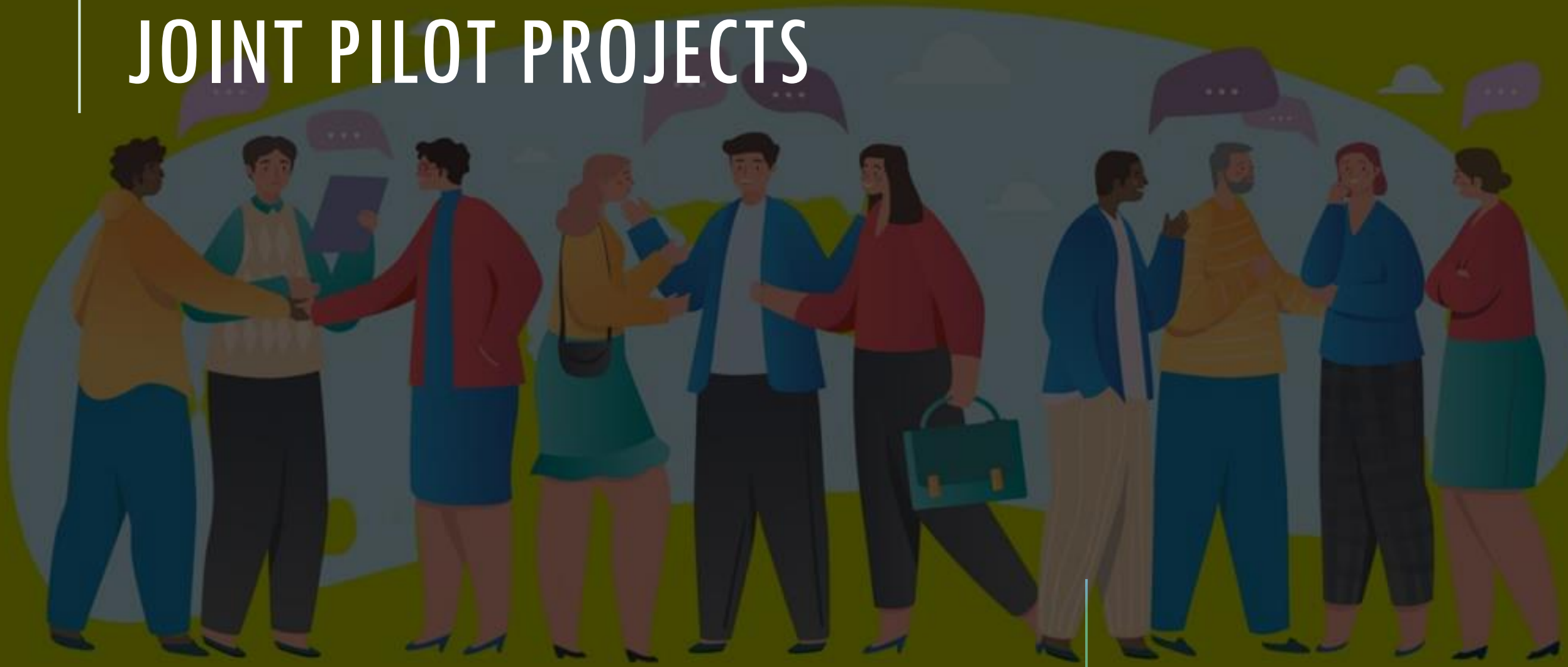
The ‘dating’ grant



PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMON ACTIVITIES

- Building relationships between partners *(e.g., facilitating formal and informal meetings for partners to learn more about each other, to explore the involvement of other potential partners, and to discuss how the partners will adopt and use equitable collaborative principles and operating norms).*
- Exploring shared research interests and identifying capacity building needs *(e.g., identifying partnership research priorities, determining nature of collaborative research approach that will be used, delineating capacity-building needs, participating in trainings and/or ongoing mentoring opportunities).*
- Developing an Advisory Committee and/or other appropriate partnership infrastructure mechanisms *(e.g., defining roles and responsibilities, developing communication and decision-making mechanisms, policies and procedures; developing a set of collaborative participatory research principles to guide decisions regarding various aspects of the research process).*
- Evaluating the partnership process *(e.g., collecting data to assess how and to what extent the partnership is achieving its goals, and the challenges and facilitating factors associated with developing, maintaining and sustaining the partnership).*
- Developing a research plan for a Joint Pilot Project

JOINT PILOT PROJECTS



JOINT PILOT COMMON ACTIVITIES

- Under the new NCATS guidelines, a pilot project should address overcoming a barrier or roadblock in **translational science** as well as a research question

- Data collection and/or analysis of community-specific information or other quantitative and qualitative data.

- Disseminating and translating research findings (e.g., development and implementation of appropriate dissemination tools, such as, fact sheets and policy briefs, to community and academic audiences and to policymakers) with an evaluation of the process.

- Develop a proposal for larger funding through the results of the research pilot

Examples of Translational Science Roadblocks

In the application, the co-PIs must state clearly what is your "translational science roadblock" addressed in your proposal:

- improved study design by improving rigor and transparency in major generalizable areas of translational discovery
- technical execution of complex mechanistic studies in humans or animal models
- challenges to data acquisition, integrity and analysis
- translational barrier from animal models to human trials; or between adult and pediatric patient populations
- timely participant recruitment and retention
- enhanced recruitments and engagement of participants with limited access



Translational Science Examples (PDF)

PROJECTS WE WILL NOT FUND…

- Projects designed to demonstrate that a health disparity exists
- Projects that fail to directly engage the community being impacted
- Projects outside of Colorado
- Junior Investigators who have NOT identified a mentor and included a Letter of Support in their application
- Academic Co-Principal Investigators who are currently post-docs/post-grads/fellows
- Project/program development
- Renewals or continuation funding requests from previously-funded Partnership Development or Joint Pilot Projects

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- All projects **must** have a community partner **and** an academic partner identified at the time the application is submitted. Both are considered co-Principal Investigators.

- **Academic co-Principal Investigator:** Any researcher who holds a faculty appointment within a CCTSI Partnering Institution. See RFA or website for a list of CCTSI Partnering Institutions. This role is responsible, along with the community co-principal investigator, for co-submitting and co-managing all aspects of the grant, including financial management.

- **Community co-Principal Investigator:** An individual who serves as a representative for the community and/or belongs to a community-based organization that is serving the affected population. This role is responsible, along with the academic co-principal investigator, for co-submitting and co-managing all aspects of the grant, including financial management.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Academic researchers who are listed on pilot grant applications must become members of the CCTSI.
- If projects include Human Subjects Research, Institutional Review Approval (IRB) must be obtained and submitted to CCTSI staff.
- All Joint Pilot Projects* will need to submit IRB approvals, through the CCTSI staff, to the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS).
- IRB Approval and NCATS approval, where needed, must be received **prior to conducting any project activities involving human subjects.**



* Some exceptions may apply

BUDGET GUIDELINES

- Requested total grant funds should be equitably divided between Community and Academic Partners

  - Consider allocations of a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of requested funds to the community partner.
  - Funds allocated to the Community Partner flow through our partner organization, Trailhead Institute, and will go directly to the community partner.
  - Funds allocated to an Academic Partner come from the University and are managed by the academic investigator.
  - Once the allocations are made to each partner, they cannot be modified (i.e., money can't be shifted from the academic budget to the community budget and vice versa).

BUDGET GUIDELINES: UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

- Indirect costs are not an allowable expense for this grant program.
- Office furniture or other items not typically allowed on federal grants are not allowable expenses for this grant program unless otherwise stated in the RFA (i.e., food and other meeting expenses are allowed).
- Pilot funds cannot be used to pay for program implementation costs (i.e., costs related to program development, or for educational or dissemination programs)—funds CAN be spent on adaptation/research/evaluation of such programs or for other translational research.

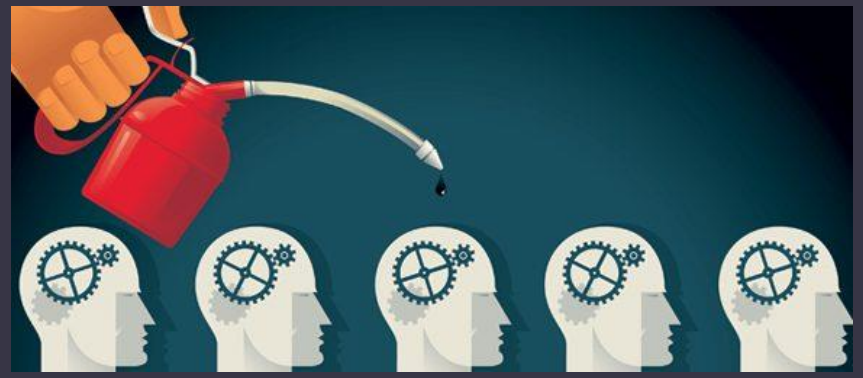
BUDGET GUIDELINES: ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

- **Applicants** may request funds for expenses related to developing and sustaining community-academic partnerships as outlined in the RFA, such as:

  - costs related to hosting meetings, including refreshments;
  - costs related to further developing the community-academic partnership (e.g., facilitation or training materials); and
  - costs associated with planning collaborative research projects and joint grant proposals (e.g., literature searches, printing articles, grant proposals).

BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

- Grantees agree by their acceptance of this funding to identify, and budget for time and travel to attend an in-person training.
- Grantees agree by their acceptance of this funding to identify, and budget for, an opportunity for the partnership to disseminate project outcomes back to the community and prepare a short presentation at a PACT Meeting.
- Budget for community dissemination methods



BUDGET EXAMPLE

	Academic	Community
Personnel		
Salary	$1,995	$1500
Other Direct Costs	$505	
Consultants		$1,800
Supplies		$100
Print/Copy	$500	
Meetings		$500
Participant Incentives		$800
Travel	300	300
Sub-Totals	$3,300	$5,000
Total		$8000

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Intent to Apply form must be submitted online no later than 5:00pm on December 11, 2026. You can find the button to submit at: https://cctsi.cuanschutz.edu/funding/cepilot

Applications must be submitted on-line no later than 5:00pm on January 19, 2027. The unique link to the online Application Form is included in the confirmation email that is sent after submitting the Intent to Apply Form.

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

Applications:

- Requires some information to be completed **online** with the REDCap system.
  - Co-PI contact information, a 250-word maximum abstract, and a summary of the funding request
  - Selection of where in the IAP2 Community Engagement Spectrum your proposal fits
  - The 250-word abstract must include: the health issue that is being addressed with **evidence of the impact on affected populations**, basic description of the partnering community, and a statement of objectives.
- The remainder to be completed **offline and uploaded in PDF format to REDCap**.
  - **must** be written in Arial, 11- point font.
  - **must** be single-spaced with one-inch margins.
  - **must** include page numbers in the footer.
- Application files must follow this naming convention: CE-PD/JP-LastNameAcademic-LastNameCommunity

FORMATTING GUIDELINES CONTINUED

Applications may not exceed 7 pages; not including the bibliography and additional appendix materials.

- The first page of your application must list the following: Project Name, Academic Name and Organization, Community Partner Name and Organization, Academic Funds Requested, Community Funds Requested.
- **Must include a bibliography** with all references cited throughout your application
- Appendix items
  - Must be compiled and merged into one PDF.
  - Up to two letters of support/commitment
  - Up to two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)
- Academic co-Principal Investigators will be required to submit a current NIH Biosketch.
- Junior Investigators must submit a letter from a Mentor outlining the support the Junior Investigator will receive from the Mentor

FORMATTING GUIDELINES CONTINUED

- **CU Boulder Investigators:** Applies to all proposals involving a CU Boulder investigator. The CU Boulder investigator must contact their cognizant Proposal Analyst in CU Boulder's Office of Contracts and Grants (OCG) prior to applying by completing a Proposal Submission Request form: https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/prepare-proposals/online-psr-form. A signed proposal transmission letter from OGC is required to be submitted with the CCTSI Pilot Grant Application.
- **CSU Investigators:** Applies to all proposals involving a CSU investigator. Applicant must complete the institutional proposal review process prior to applying, which includes review by the CSU PI's department research administrator and the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) Research Administrator. A signed proposal transmission letter from the CSU Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is required to be submitted with the CCTSI Pilot Grant Application. Please contact Jessica Hunter, jessica.hunter@colostate.edu for details.

REVIEW CRITERIA

- Applications should be well written, precise, succinct, and should **answer all applicable questions in the order in which they are presented in the application.**

- A Review Committee comprised of academic and community reviewers experienced in community engaged research will review grant applications.
  - Preference to those that represent true co-creation of community and academic partners in the research process, improve research translation at clinic or community level, while meeting the criteria outlined in this RFA.



REVIEW CRITERIA

NIH CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Factor 1	(Significance) If this project is successful, does it have the potential to change the world. (Innovation) What's new and unique
Factor 2	(Approach) Partnership growth, Activities, Methods/Study Design, Outcomes, Dissemination (Rigor) How will you assess and monitor the project (Feasibility) Barriers and challenges
Factor 3	(Investigators) People and background and skills. Tell us about yourself (Environment) Resources available to each co-PI. The capacity of each co-PI

REVIEW CRITERIA

- Scoring criteria for both categories will use:
  - NIH scoring: Scores range from 1-9, with the lower the score the better.
    - 3 categories in criteria scores
    - Overall Impact Score:
      - Overall impact, for a research project, is the project's likelihood to have a sustained, powerful influence on the research field(s) involved, but may be defined differently for different types of applications

Overall Impact or Criterion Strength	Score	Descriptor
High	1	Exceptional
	2	Outstanding
	3	Excellent
Medium	4	Very Good
	5	Good
	6	Satisfactory
Low	7	Fair
	8	Marginal
	9	Poor

PRE–AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Prior to the release of a letter of award and prior to the release of funding for Human Subjects Research:

- Awardees must submit their projects to an accredited Institutional Review Board (IRB) and must comply with IRB training requirements. IRB approvals must be on file with CCTSI.
- *(applies to some awards)* Institutional Review Approval must be obtained and submitted, through CCTSI staff, to the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) for approval **prior to the release of a letter of award and prior to the release of funding**

POST–AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Awardees **must participate** in project-specific trainings, Facilitated Coaching Sessions, and technical assistance activities:

- Awardees, both partners, must attend a mandatory Community Engagement workshop in August 2027*.
- Awardees are required to attend a 30-minute finance and administration webinar
- Awardees are required to engage in 4 hours of coaching sessions over the course of their award

All awardees are required to submit a mid-project progress report and a final progress report.

- Additional reports detailing progress to-date and all submitted publications and grant applications (pending or funded) may be required.

*this date may be be subject to change, depending on schedules

POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS (CONT.)

- All awardees **are required to participate in CCTSI evaluation activities** related to the pilot grant program.
- All awardees will identify, and budget for, an opportunity for the partnership to disseminate project outcomes back to the community and prepare a short presentation at a PACT Meeting. Awardees also are strongly encouraged to accept invitations to networking events designed to disseminate project outcomes.
- Research dissemination in scholarly peer-reviewed journals, meeting settings, and back to the community

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Alignment with federal funding priorities at the time of application and award
  - Strong scientific premise
  - Solution-oriented approach
  - Terminology is aligned
- If you are an CU AMC employee -- check CU Anschutz Campus guidance and rubric

If you are unsure whether your topic falls within the scope of this RFA or would like advice regarding best practices and application pre-review processes, please contact Kaylee Gordon for consultation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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