

MIAMI-DADE ECONOMIC ADVOCACY TRUST 2026 PITCH COMPETITION



Pitch Timeline

August 3 rd	Application Open		Application available Small Business and Economic Development
August 5 th	Pitch Info Session	12:30pm	https://miamidade.zoom.us/j/86462726997?pwd=KaPbRKHmd5aFQxbgMJgFy2c1Z4zhc8.1 Meeting ID: 864 6272 6997 Passcode: 745415
August 6 th	Pitch Info Session	12:30pm	https://miamidade.zoom.us/j/86462726997?pwd=KaPbRKHmd5aFQxbgMJgFy2c1Z4zhc8.1 Meeting ID: 864 6272 6997 Passcode: 745415
August 28 th	Application Deadline	5:00 PM	All submissions emailed to: EconomicDevelopment@MiamiDade.gov
September 2 nd	Semi Finalist Announced	5:00 PM	https://www.instagram.com/mdeatinfo/ https://www.facebook.com/MDEATInfo/
September 9 th	Final Pith Competition	5:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Sandrell Rivers Theater 6103 NW 7 th Ave Miami, FL 33127

Section 1: Objective

The MDEAT Pitch Competition is designed to support the growth, sustainability, and innovation of established small businesses that have demonstrated a commitment to serving the Miami-Dade County community. The competition seeks to invest in businesses with a proven operating history that contribute to economic development through job creation, business expansion, neighborhood revitalization, and community impact.

The program provides funding opportunities to eligible micro and small businesses that have been operating in Miami-Dade County for a minimum of three (3) years and are prepared to present a compelling business growth strategy before a panel of judges.

Section 2: Eligibility and Program Requirements

Eligibility

To be eligible for the MDEAT Pitch Competition, applicants must meet all the following requirements:

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Own a for-profit business that has been continuously operating for a minimum of three (3) years, as verified through Sunbiz.org.
- Maintain a physical business location within Miami-Dade County and have a valid Local Business Tax Receipt.
- Submit only one application per business ownership and/or management group. Businesses with common ownership or shared management are limited to one application for consideration in the Pitch Competition. If selected, only one award may be granted to the ownership or management group, regardless of the number of affiliated businesses.
- Neither the applicant business nor any owner with common ownership may have been selected as a winner of the 2025 MDEAT Pitch Competition.
- Neither the applicant business nor any owner with common ownership may have received funding through any 2025 or 2026 MDEAT Grant

Business Requirements

- Submit IRS Business Tax Return and Transcripts for the three tax years (2022, 2023, and 2024).
- Demonstrate an average annual gross revenue between \$24,000 and \$750,000 over the three-year period
- Current and active Miami-Dade County Local Business Tax Receipt (LBTR)
- IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN) Confirmation Letter
- Valid government-issued identification

Business Operations

- Employ fewer than twenty-five (25) full-time and/or part-time employees.
- Be in good standing and not in default or non-compliance with any Miami-Dade County loan, grant, or financial assistance program.
- Operate as an independent business. Franchises and businesses affiliated with national or international chains are not eligible.
- Demonstrate how the business contributes to the economic vitality of Miami-Dade County through initiatives such as:
 - Job creation and workforce development
 - Business growth and expansion
 - Community revitalization
 - Innovation
 - Sustainability and long-term economic impact
- Operate in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and not engage in any illegal activities.

A. Submission Guidelines

To participate in the Pitch Competition, please submit the following to EconomicDevelopment@MiamiDade.Gov by the deadline **8/28/2026** close of business 5:00 pm.

1. Completed Application found on our website: <https://miamidade.gov/mdeat>
2. Executive Summary: Submit a one-page summary detailing the business concept, market need, target audience, and impact.
3. Pitch Deck: Prepare a slide deck (5-10 slides) covering the problem, solution, market size, business model, competitive advantage, team, and financial projections.
4. Video Submission: Introduce yourself and your business idea in a compelling 2-3 minute video. Highlight the following: 1. Introduction 2. The Problem or Need 3. The Solution/Value Proposition 4. Target Market 5. Impact 6. Business Model and Revenue Plan 7. Funding Need and Use of Funds 8. Call to Action/Closing. **It is recommended that videos be submitted via YouTube Link.**

Find a brief description of each topic below to assist in preparing your required initial submission package:

1. Executive Summary (One-page max) - *Please provide a brief overview of your business idea, the problem it addresses, and your proposed solution.*
2. Describe Your Target Audience - *Who are your primary customers, and why do they need your product/service?*
3. Market Potential - *Provide a brief description of your market size and potential growth.*
4. Business Model - *How do you plan to generate revenue (e.g., product sales, subscription model)?*
5. Competitive Advantage - *What makes your business unique compared to competitors?*

6. Current Progress and Milestones - *List any achievements, such as completed prototypes, sales, partnerships, or funding secured.*
7. Funding Need and Use of Funds - *How would you use the grant funding if awarded?*

B. Application Submittal Rubric

CRITERIA & DESCRIPTION	POINTS
1. Completed Application Completeness, Accuracy, and Compliance. Application is fully completed, and all required documents are included. Applications missing any of the following will be deemed ineligible: Three (3) years of IRS Tax Return Transcripts, Local Business Tax Receipt (BTR), IRS EIN Documentation, and Valid Government-Issued Identification.	10
2. Executive Summary Business Concept, Problem, Solution, and Impact. Clearly explains the business concept, identifies the market problem or need, presents the proposed solution, and communicates the anticipated business or community impact.	15
3. Target Audience Customer Identification and Market Fit. Clearly identifies the primary customer(s), demonstrates an understanding of customer needs, and explains why the product or service is a strong fit for the target market.	5
4. Market Potential Market Opportunity and Growth. Demonstrates a clear understanding of the target market, market size, industry trends, customer demand, and potential for growth.	5
5. Business Model Revenue Strategy and Sustainability. Clearly explains how the business generates revenue and demonstrates the viability and sustainability of the business model.	10
6. Competitive Advantage Differentiation and Value Proposition. Demonstrates what makes the business unique, identifies key competitors, and clearly explains the company's competitive advantage and value proposition.	5

7. Current Progress and Milestones Business Readiness and Traction. Demonstrates evidence of progress through milestones such as business launch, customer acquisition, revenue generation, prototypes, partnerships, certifications, funding secured, or other measurable accomplishments.	5
8. Funding Need and Use of Funds Strategic Investment Plan. Clearly explains the amount of funding requested, how grant funds will be used, and how the investment will contribute to business growth, expansion, or increased capacity.	5
9. Pitch Deck Organization, Content, and Visual Effectiveness. Pitch deck effectively communicates the business through the following components: Problem Statement, Solution, Market Opportunity, Target Audience, Business Model, Competitive Advantage, Team, Financial Projections, Funding Request, and Overall Presentation Quality.	20
10. Video Submission Communication, Persuasiveness, and Presentation. Presenter clearly and confidently communicates the business idea within the 2–3 minute time limit. Video effectively addresses: Introduction, Problem/Need, Solution/Value Proposition, Target Market, Business Impact, Business Model and Revenue Strategy, Funding Need and Use of Funds, and Call to Action. Evaluation includes clarity, engagement, professionalism, presentation skills, and overall effectiveness.	20
Total Points	100

C. Judging Criteria

1. Innovation and Creativity: Is the idea unique or a creative solution to an existing problem?
2. Economic Impact: Will the business create jobs, address economic needs, or benefit the community?
3. Scalability and Sustainability: Is the idea scalable, and can it be sustained long-term?
4. Team and Execution Plan: Does the applicant/team have the skills and plan to execute the idea?
5. Presentation Quality: Was the pitch well-prepared, clear, and engaging?

D. Competition Structure

- Initial Screening: Applications reviewed based on eligibility and business potential; top 7-10 applicants move to the semi-final round.

- Final Pitch Event: Finalists present live in front of judges and an audience. Each finalist gets 5-7 minutes for the pitch followed by a Q&A.

E. Prizes and Support

Monetary Awards: Substantial grants or seed funding for the top three winners, with prizes of **\$15,000 for first place, \$10,000 for second place, and \$5,000** for third place, empowering them to scale their businesses.

Access to Resources and Networking Opportunities: Complimentary access to a wide range of local business resources, generously provided by our strategic partners, designed to support business growth and innovation.

Exclusive Marketing and Event Space: First-place winners receive premier marketing support and access to event spaces, courtesy of our esteemed community partners, to elevate their brand visibility and community engagement.

F. Terms and Conditions

Finalists will be required to agree to specific terms, as a recipient of Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust grant funds.

Grant funds must be used for the business as outlined below:

- Inventory/Supplies/ (No Food Items)
- Business Equipment
- Marketing/Advertising
- Business Expansion
- Technology (e.g., computer, software, copier, etc.)

Section 4: Initial Submission Attachments

To participate in the Pitch Competition, please submit the following to **EconomicDevelopment@MiamiDade.Gov** by the deadline **8/28/2026** close of business:

1. **Completed Application:** download on our website: <https://miamidade.gov/mdeat>
2. **Executive Summary:** Submit a one-page summary detailing the business concept, market need, target audience, and impact.
3. **Pitch Deck** (PDF, 5-10 slides): Please attach a pitch deck with slides on your problem, solution, market, business model, team, financial projections, etc.
4. **Video Pitch** (2-3 minutes): Introduce yourself and your business with a clear focus on the problem you're solving and the value your solution offers. Highlight your target market, the impact of your business, and how your model generates revenue. Share your funding needs and how the investment will drive growth. Conclude with a strong call to action that inspires support for your vision. Ensure the video is engaging and accessible via an online link.

Pitch Competition Application

Section I: Business Details – please provide all business information as it appears on www.sunbiz.org. It is preferred to provide typed answers for accuracy and legibility.

- A. Legal Name of Business: _____
- a. Owner Name(s): _____
- b. Business Phone: _____
- c. Personal Contact: _____
- d. Business Email: _____
- e. What is the date filed on Sunbiz.org for this business? _____
- B. Is this business a DBA? Y/N _____
- If yes, list the DBA owner: _____
- C. Business Address: _____
- D. County Commissioner & District #: _____
(<https://www.miamidade.gov/global/government/commission/home.page>)
- E. Type of Business: _____
- a. Brief Description: _____
- b. Is this a for profit business or a non-for-profit? _____
- c. List your 6-digit NAICS Business Code: _____
(<https://www.naics.com/search/>)
- F. Do you have employees on payroll? Y/N _____
- a. If yes, how many: _____
- G. List and attach any business designations: _____

Section II: Business Structure Information – Please provide all business information as it appears on www.sunbiz.org. It is preferred to provide typed answers for accuracy and legibility.

- A. EIN #: _____
- B. Which corporate structure describes your business:
- a. Corporation __ b. Partnership __ c. Sole Proprietorship __ d. LLC __ e. Not-For-Profit __
- f. Other: _____
- C. Is the business authorized to issue shares? Y/N _____
- a. If yes, how many shares: _____
- b. If yes, have any shares been issued? Y/N _____

c. If yes, number of preferred: ____ and number of common: ____

D. Identify all owners of the firm and their ownership percentage.

Name/Title	Ethnicity	% Ownership

E. Is the owner, or any shareholders or partners of the business employed by Miami-Dade County? Y/N

a. If yes, provide name, position, and department: _____

b. If yes, please contact the Miami-Dade Ethic Commission for a legal opinion and submit the opinion along with this application.

F. List professional licenses held for legal and ethical business operations and the name of the license holder:

a. _____

b. Do you have an active Miami-Dade County Local Business Tax Receipt? Y/N

G. Identify and fully explain any changes within the past 15 months affecting the ownership, control, or responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the company (attach additional sheet if necessary): _____

Section III: Financial Information – Please provide all business information as it appears on www.sunbiz.org. It is preferred to provide typed answers for accuracy and legibility.

A. Number of authorized signatures on company's checking account: ____

Please give the name and title of individual(s) authorized to sign checks:

Name	Title

B. Has the applicant firm or any firm affiliation with the applicant firm's owner, officer, directors, or senior management been suspended or debarred from contracting with any government entity? Y/N

If yes,
explain: _____

Section IV: Acknowledgements

1. Consent and Agreement

- ☐ I agree with the terms and conditions of the competition:
- ☐ I confirm that all the information provided is accurate and my own original work.

Print Name

Sign Name

Date