



United Way of 1000 Lakes

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Application Guidelines

Community Investment Fund

Multiyear Grants

Funding Cycle: July 2017-June 2019

Deadline: February 15, 2017

Executive Summary

About United Way of 1000 Lakes

Since 1963, the United Way of 1000 Lakes has partnered with local nonprofits to identify critical issues, create partnerships, and raise funds to help people in the Itasca area. Mobilizing the caring power of the communities it serves, the organization's mission, drives work to create a happier, healthier community. They accomplish this by inspiring collaboration, fundraising, and volunteerism.

United Way of 1000 Lakes taps into the regions strengths – our people, our pride, our diversity and our generosity – to remove the barriers people face to achieving their potential. Part of helping people live their best possible lives is providing the building blocks to a good quality of life – **Education, Income and Basic Needs and Health.**

United Way supports hundreds of causes to help the community as a whole. One way they accomplish this is by investing in local organizations to make the biggest possible impact – independently, and in partnership with each other. This allows donors to make an impact on those around them through one single contribution. A volunteer governing board and investment panel make the important allocation decisions that impact all of us and help make the region a better place to live and work. Investments are tracked and evaluated to ensure results are being achieved, positive social change is happening and progress is being made.

Community Investment Fund

The Community Investment Fund is made possible by the financial contributions of hundreds of community investors through United Way's annual campaign. These dollars help nonprofit organizations address the needs of those living in or at-risk of poverty.

United Way's Designation Policy, updated in 2012, and was developed to encourage growth in United Way's mission while still respecting the donor's choice. Any designations to United Way's Funded Partners are treated as first-in dollars. Total donor designations that exceed the allocated amount to a Funded Partner will be given in addition to that Funded Partner's allocation, and will be paid to them as such designations are received by United Way.

Organizations not receiving grant awards will receive the pledged amount of designated gifts. Designations only will be assessed a processing fee of 11 percent. Fee is based on actual historical fundraising costs in accordance with United Way Worldwide Membership Standards.

Purpose of Request for Proposals

The Community Investment Grant Process is a strategy targeted approach to guide United Way of 1000 Lakes to make meaningful and measurable improvements in the lives of people in our community.

To improve the lives in our community, United Way of 1000 Lakes invests contributors' gifts in exceptional programs that make measurable progress toward the Community Investment Goals in the areas of **Education, Income and Basic Needs, and Health.**

United Way has an open, competitive grant funding process that identifies which organization will have the greatest impact in helping us achieve them. United Way is able to fund exceptional programs through the implementation of the Community Investment Grants process, a competitive transparent funding process that is open to all nonprofit organizations that meet eligibility criteria.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to clearly communicate each aspect of the Community Investment Grant process and, ultimately, to encourage organizations doing outstanding work in the areas of Education, Income and Basic Needs and Health to apply for funding.

All requests are reviewed competitively and without consideration to prior or current funding.

Multi-year Funding

United Way of 1000 Lakes understands that the achievement of Community Investment Goals will require substantial, longer-term investments in high performing programs in the areas of Education, Income and Basic Needs and Health. Therefore, all grants awarded through the Community Investment Grant process will be two-year grants (July 2017 through July 2019).

Multi-year funding represents the best use of community resources. Organizations will be able to focus on program implementation rather than annual proposal development. Successful programs will be able to articulate clear multi-year funding plans and show a commitment to long-term outcomes and positive results.

Membership Eligibility

In order to be included for nonprofit membership with United Way of 1000 Lakes for the 2017-2019 Grant Cycle, an organization must meet all eligibility requirements, as described below.

- + The proposed program must align with one of the focus areas and investment goals.
- + Have substantial local presence and programming in the geographic area covered by the United Way of 1000 Lakes, which includes Itasca County and surrounding communities.
- + Be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as tax-exempt under 501(c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

- + Have an active and responsible governing Board of three (3) or more, whose members have no material conflict of interest and a majority of whom serve without compensation, which directs the organization.
- + Must pass United Way’s Stewardship (Financial) Review process

Overview of Process

The process begins with the Stewardship or Financial Review to determine whether or not an organization is eligible to receive funding. Once eligibility is determined, proposals are reviewed and evaluated, first by staff and then by volunteer Community Investment Panels.

All programs are evaluated using standardized tools that measure the relative strength of the proposal. Successful programs will demonstrate, through written proposals and site visits, a connection between program goals and Community Investment Goals (Appendix A), effective programming and evaluation efforts, and access to the resources necessary to achieve impact. Outlined in Figure 1.

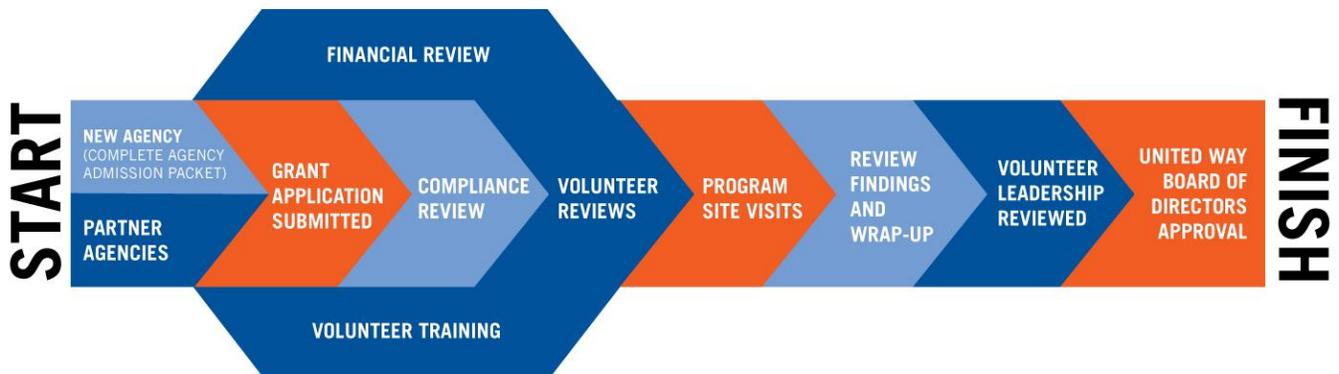


Figure 1

Stewardship Review Process

Organizations must submit a Stewardship Packet for review to determine eligibility for funding.

NOTE: New organizations seeking funding should schedule a pre-application session with United Way staff and send a letter of intent to United Way, indicating which focus area they are addressing, outlining the community program or service they hope to provide, and the funding amount they intend to apply for. United Way staff and board review requests and make a decision on whether to allow program to advance forward.

Stewardship Packet Checklist

A complete Stewardship Packet will contain the following elements:

Financial Review Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Audit: If the nonprofit's annual revenue is \$100,000 or greater, provide audited financial statements for most recently completed fiscal year (depending upon your fiscal year end). Please share unaudited financials if audited statements are not yet available.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Roster: Most current roster of the Board of Directors indicating those who are officers, members of the Executive Committee and all standing committees. Please acknowledge that at least three of the members have no material conflict of interest and a majority of whom serve without compensation, which directs the organization.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget: Most current Board approved budget with comparison to previous year and current year to date actual revenue and expenditures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	IRS Determination Letter: Most recent 501(c)(3) designation letter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form 990 or 990EZ for the most recently completed (depending upon your fiscal year end).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Management Letter: If the most recent audit had a management letter (also known as internal control deficiency letter) with it, please submit a copy of the management letter and your service provider's formal response.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unaudited Financial Statement: Most recent financial statements, should include Statement of Financial position (Balance Sheet) and Statement of Activities (Income Statement).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Patriot Act Compliance: In compliance with the USA PATRIOT ACT and other counter-terrorism laws, United Way requires that each agency certify United Way funds and donations will be used in compliance with all applicable anti-terrorist financing and asset control laws, statues and executive orders.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disclosures: Please list any major changes and/or circumstances, fraud, litigation, investigation or other related occurrences sine the most recent audit that would affect the financial health of your organization. If there are not any disclosures, please indicate such when completing application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Required Licenses and Accreditations: If applicable, provide type, licensing body and renewal date.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional, State or National Affiliations: If applicable, provide membership documentation.

Proposal Compliance Review

The questions below will be assessed by United Way staff in order to ensure proposal compliance. If proposal is incomplete, it may be removed from the process and the applying organization will be notified.

Compliance Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Was the organization's grant application submitted on time?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Was the proposal complete (including all required sections and attachments)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Did the organization pass the Stewardship Review?

Panel Review and Evaluation

Proposals that meet compliance criteria will be reviewed and scored by Community Investment Panels. Each panel consist of approximately 6-8 panel volunteers (including Board Chairs) and United Way staff. Volunteers review proposals, conduct site visits, and score each program proposal. Throughout the review process, volunteers are trained to use the Best Investment criteria to make the decisions.

When comparing programs in a particular impact area, Best Investment refers to the program that most clearly demonstrates:

- + **ALIGNMENT:** Connection between program goals, United Way Community Investment Goals, and targeting issues in each focus area.
- + **IMPACT:** Effectiveness of programming as reflected by evaluation efforts and outcomes (Logic Model)
- + **RESOURCES:** Access to the resources (staff, experience, financial, etc.) to successfully implement the program

Community Investment Panels convene to discuss program scores and Best Investment criteria. During the convening United Way staff will capture key questions from the panel. Such key questions will be communicated to the appropriate contact person. This will allow program staff the ability to directly respond to key questions.

Funding Recommendations

Each Community Investment Panel (Education, Income and Basic Needs, and Health) convene for a final deliberation meeting in order to develop funding recommendations for each program under consideration. United Way staff will present an initial set of funding recommendations based on the application scores. Council volunteers will discuss the overall application scores and Best Investment criteria, adjust funding levels where necessary, and approve final funding recommendations.

Funding Approval

The final funding recommendations of each Community Investment Panel (Education, Income and Basic Needs, and Health) will be reviewed, possibly modified, and then ratified by the United Way of 1000 Lakes Board of Directors.

The Board will approve final funding amounts in May 2017. Funding decisions, detailed feedback and detailed feedback explaining the funding decision will be promptly communicated to each organization.

Monitoring

All programs that are awarded funding will be required to track and report outcomes results to United Way annually. United Way staff, board and volunteers will utilize the information in the reports to determine whether or not each program is exceeding, meeting or falling below expectations outlined in the original grant proposal. Site visits may be scheduled to learn more about the programs successes, challenges, and reported outcomes.

Community Investment Goals – Appendix A

EDUCATION	INCOME	HEALTH
<p>Helping increase children’s readiness to achieve in school, improving academic achievement, and promoting positive youth development through high-quality out-of-school time opportunities.</p>	<p>Helping individuals and families increase income, build savings and grow assets so they have reduced debt and are working toward a goal that might be stable housing, business, retirement or postsecondary education.</p>	<p>Helping individuals and families increase physical, mental and social well-being, promoting resident and community engagement, improving supports for seniors and people with disabilities.</p>
<p>Readiness to achieve in school Intended result: School readiness means children enter school developmentally on track in the areas of literacy and social and emotional development; approaches to learning; language and literacy development; creativity and the arts; cognition and general knowledge; physical well-being and motor development.</p> <p>Improve academic achievement: Academic achievement means students are prepared to succeed in later grades and graduate from high school. Children who are able to read at grade level have the essential tools needed to excel in grade school which sets the stage for success in middle and high school. High school graduation is fundamental for advancement to higher education and employability.</p> <p>Promote positive youth development: Youth have access to participate in structured activities that build on assets and bolster their ability to make positive choices. Youth who regularly participate in high-quality out-of-school time programs have proven long-term outcomes for success including high educational aspirations, better school attendance, increased achievement and avoidance of risky behaviors.</p> <p>Foster Parent and Family Engagement: Increase opportunities for parent and family engagement in their child’s learning and development through programs that improve parenting knowledge and skills, support academic achievement, promotes healthy lifestyle choices, and fosters relationships with schools and community.</p>	<p>Increase self-sufficiency: Financial stability can be achieved through a continuum of services that work to increase income and reduce debt beginning with access to education to increase both soft and hard employment skills; affordable housing, transportation and childcare; improve money management skills; increase credit ratings and tax preparation assistance. Better access to education and workforce opportunities and allows people enhance job skills, increase income and move toward independence and self-sufficiency.</p> <p>Gain and Sustain assets: Ensure that working families have access to opportunities, programs, tools, products and counseling that promote financial literacy and asset-building to help hard-working families build skills to ensure sustainable change. It also allows a family to set goals for building savings and assets for higher education, business start-up, retirement, life insurance, reliable transportation or a home. Research conducted over the past decade demonstrates that assets increase household stability, decrease economic strain, and decrease the likelihood of poverty transmittal from one generation to the next.</p> <p>Foster an integrated set of community-wide services to meet people’s basic needs in the areas of: Food & Shelter; Safety; Transportation; and Crisis Services: Support crisis and intervention services, providing for: basic needs; personal safety for those who face threats to their immediate well-being including: domestic violence, child abuse and sexual assault; and promotes a coordinated system of information and referral services.</p>	<p>Increase access to physical, mental and health care: Increasing access to health care services and benefits means that people who are not getting care or treatment for health problems get connected to health coverage and care providers. Limited access to healthcare services and benefits compromises health status leading to increased school and work absence; and it can result in medical debt which drives many people into financial crisis. Good health allows children a better chance to stay on track in school and better equips adults to maintain and increase income through productive work.</p> <p>Promote healthy a lifestyle: Increase the number of youth and adults who make healthy choices in the areas of nutrition and fitness; and avoid risk behaviors like teen pregnancy, substance abuse and smoking.</p> <p>Promoting independence: Provide a full continuum of support services for older adults and people with disabilities with independent living in the areas of transportation or home programs; resident and community engagement; nutritious meals and health education. Providing support so people can remain independent in their homes has cost advantages and benefits.</p>

Request for Proposals

United Way request for 2017-2019 Community Investment Grants for Education, Income and Basic Needs, and Health is currently open. Deadline to apply is February 15, 2017.

2017-2019 Application for Funding Timeline

January 3	Application for Funding available
February 15	Application for Funding due (deadline 4 p.m.)
February	Compliance Review
March	Application Evaluation & Program Site Visits (see guidelines)
April-May	Allocation recommendations presented to United Way Board of Directors
May	United Way Board of Directors Approval
June 1	Allocation Award letter and Affiliation Agreement sent to agencies
July 15	2017-2018 Funding Year begins (1 st Quarter Agency Payments)
January 15 th , 2018	Funding Interim Reports due
March 2018	Compliance Review; United Way Board of Directors Approval
June 2018	Allocation Notification Sent
July 2016	2018-2019 Funding Year begins (1 st Quarter Agency Payments)

To Apply

Ensure your organization meets the above eligibility criteria, complete the application for funding, and attach the required documents as outlined. Deadline to apply is February 15, 2017.

New programs seeking funding should schedule an informal pre-application session and send a letter of intent to United Way, indicating which focus area they are addressing, outlining the community program or service they hope to provide, and the funding amount they intend to apply for.

For information about the United Way's grant process or to schedule a session, contact Kimberly Brink Smith at (218) 999-7570 or email kimberly@unitedwayof1000lakes.org