BLACK EMPOWERMENT WORKS
Grants for Community Transformation.

OUR PATH FORWARD

MARCH 30, 2020
As we discussed how we move forward considering the massive impact of COVID-19, we knew we couldn't make the best decision in isolation. We reached out to our community – our prospective grantees, reviewers, and mentors – to get their perspective.
WE HAVE MADE THE DECISION TO EXTEND THE GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE TO MAY 1, 11:59PM.
FOR REVIEWERS, THIS MEANS...

- You will receive notice regarding selection by April 1.
- Reviewer training will be done virtually, and the date of that training will be pushed back.
- The reviewer window changes from April 6-May 13 to April 20-June 1.
- Interviews with grantees will happen virtually, unless stay-at-home restrictions are lifted by the time of interviews.
FOR GRANTEES, THIS MEANS...

- You will have until May 1 to complete your application.
- You can continue to access application support through extended open office hours (link on the site, uwgc.org/Black-led).
- You will receive a check-in call from United Way between now and May 1.
- If you have already submitted an application, we would be willing to re-open the application for further revisions.
FOR MENTORS, THIS MEANS...

Mentorship responsibilities would not begin until June 1 at the earliest. We will continue to refine the mentorship experience.
HOW DID WE MAKE THIS DECISION?

We took all the feedback we received from potential grantees, reviewers, and mentors (plus input from a few United Way staff members) and made the best decision based on what we heard, and what we know. We tried to balance the need for more time, with the immediate need for resources.

The following pages lay out the feedback we received.
People provided feedback

- 62% Potential Grantees
- 37% Potential Reviewers
- 16% Potential Mentors

*Note: People were able to choose more than one option*
PERSPECTIVES WERE MIXED

How should we move forward considering the realities of COVID-19?

- 38% Keep current timeline
- 40% Delay timeline
- 22% I’m not sure
THE MOST COMMON REASONS TO KEEP THE TIMELINE

1. Because organizations need funding now more than ever.
2. To be prepared to get to work once restrictions are lifted.
3. Funding would support work that directly addresses challenges created by COVID-19.
4. To promote a sense of normalcy, positivity and productivity amidst so much uncertainty.
THE MOST COMMON REASONS TO **DELAY THE TIMELINE**

1. To provide more time to prepare a quality application.
2. To allow time and space for people to adapt to our changing, challenging environment.
3. To ensure everyone has access to resources to complete an application.
4. Because there is so much uncertainty.
WE RECEIVED A LOT OF DIFFERENT OPTIONS FOR DELAYED TIMELINES...

- “End of April”
- “Early May”
- “Mid-May”
- “End of May”
- “June/End of June”
- “July”
- “Until after stay-at-home order is lifted”
- “Q3/Q4 (July-December)”
THE MAJORITY OF FOLKS WOULD STILL BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE WITH A DELAYED TIMELINE...
THOUGH THE IMPACTS OF A DELAYED TIMELINE VARIED.

FROM POSITIVE...
- "It would give us more time to reset and complete the grant effectively."
- "It would positively impact my decision to participate... my capacity to do extra things is limited right now."

TO NEGATIVE.
- "Our project is time-sensitive..."
- "[We] might have to change or seek alternative partners."
- "Delaying the grant significantly increases the likelihood that we starve before we succeed."
If we changed to a virtual, computer-based format, would this present challenges for you?

AND OVERALL, SWITCHING TO A VIRTUAL FORMAT WOULD PRESENT LIMITED CHALLENGE.
UNITED WAY STAFF MEMBERS LEANED MORE TOWARDS DELAYING.

In your opinion, how should we move forward considering the realities of COVID-19?

- Keep timeline: 59%
- Delay timeline: 33%
- Unsure: 8%

"I see advantages to keeping the current timeline, having projects ready to take off on the other side of this crisis. I also see the advantage of waiting... This situation may stir up new ideas..."
For virtual meetings, lean toward video chats. Possibly use formats that might already have access to (i.e. Google Hangouts, FaceTime).

Check in will all applicants by phone – ask about technology, any support they need. Provide technology if you can.

Give grace to those with incomplete applications. Provide support to complete them.

Provide an office space that can be reserved for applicants if they need access to internet.

Record all meetings so that people with children can watch while kids are asleep.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT.

We look forward to communicating even more about how we can run a great grant program given our current environment.
HAVE QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!

Black-led@UWGC.org

513-762-7157

Visit UWGC.ORG/Black-led and schedule time during our open office hours.