



United Way
of Greater Cincinnati

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Application Process

When does the application open?

The online application will be available Monday, October 18, 2021.

How do we apply?

United Way uses a grant application system called e-CImpact. Visit www.uwgc.org/funding and scroll down to "Apply Now". You'll be directed to the online application system to begin your registration and application. A full set of instructions on the online system can be found [here](#) along with a [short video tutorial](#). Technical assistance can be accessed by emailing impact@uwgc.org.

When is the application due?

The online application must be submitted by **11:59 PM EST on December 1, 2021**. *Please note that staff support will only be available up to 5:00PM EST that day.

When will I know if we are going to be funded?

In January 2022, we will announce the defined systems change opportunities and invite selected partners to complete a full request for proposal application. While this is not a guarantee of funding, invitations to complete the application will indicate a strong likelihood of receiving funding within the funding ranges provided in the invitation. At that time, applicants that are not invited to move forward will also be notified. Final decisions will be announced in March 2022.

How many applications can we submit? Can we apply in partnership with another organization? (This also answers: Can organizations partner and submit one letter of interest? Can apply as both part of a coalition and an individual application?)

We generally expect organizations to only submit one application. Organizations may partner and together submit one application so long as all the eligible requirements are met. There is no specific preference for applications to come in with defined partnerships.

In some cases, an organization may submit one application and be part of a collaboration/partnership or coalition application. Our general guidance is that multiple applications may be appropriate if the coalition/partnership/collaborative provides services that are distinctive or uniquely different from any one of the member organizations. To receive more specific guidance, we recommend you email impact@uwgc.org to schedule a short conversation with a staff member.

If a partnership is being formed, should each organization apply separately with an ask that reflects their component of the work?

Generally, we would recommend that new partnerships apply separately and highlight their partnership throughout the application, particularly in the systems change opportunity section.

Will United Way be suggesting potential partnerships? Are partnerships/collaborations recommended?

During the application process, United Way will not be suggesting potential partnerships. Upon deciding the system change opportunities and inviting select partners to complete the full application, United Way will share our perspective on partners that align to each of the specific systems change opportunities and there will be more opportunities to build informal and formal partnerships throughout the two year funding cycle.

How long is the grant cycle?

Funding through the Call for Systems Change Partners is for a **two-year** commitment spanning from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2024.

What impact areas are you investing in?

The primary focus of this funding is to invest in a diverse portfolio of organizations that will leverage their programs/service to accelerate systemic change opportunities that promote family economic well-being (formerly communicated as poverty reduction or financial stability). We continue to focus on four primary impact areas that support economic well-being:

- Basic needs
- Financial stability
- Quality education
- Quality mental and physical health

More details on the measurement framework and key strategy areas that fall within these impact areas can be found in United Way's Measurement Framework. It's available in the online reporting system's (e-CImpact) resource center.

Are there minimums or maximums?

United Way expects that most annual grants will range from \$25,000 to \$750,000.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

Organizations must meet the following criteria to be eligible for funding through this process:

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or other tax-exempt community-based group, entity or collaboration/ coalition that operate like a nonprofit organization.
- Currently operate programs or services that serve a majority of people living within United Way of Greater Cincinnati's footprint including:
 - **Hamilton, Clermont, Brown** counties in Ohio
 - **Dearborn and Ohio** counties in Indiana
 - **Boone, Campbell, Kenton, Grant** counties in Kentucky
- Demonstrate an ability to make tangible contributions to systems change and is interested in contributing to systems change through collaboration.

Does the 501(c)(3) need to be located within the counties listed?

Organizations outside of United Way's footprint may apply if most people served live within the counties listed above. For national organizations that may have a local office or focus in this region, it is sufficient that the local office serves a majority of people in United Way's footprint.

What are the other tax-exempt groups that can apply?

Here are just some examples: Faith-based tax-exempt organizations, community coalitions (consisting of nonprofit or grassroots groups), and business associations providing services that fall under 501(c)6 tax exemption. It is important that all applicants also meet the other eligibility requirements. If you have a specific concern about meeting this eligibility, please reach out to impact@uwgc.org to have a conversation before applying.

Can for-profits apply?

Currently, for-profit organizations and individuals are not eligible. If you believe that your application should be accepted, please contact impact@unitedway.org to discuss before submitting an application.

Can a nonprofit subsidiary that operates within/under a larger nonprofit submit a separate application if it shares the same tax ID as the larger organization?

Yes, a nonprofit subsidiary providing distinctive services from the parent organization may submit a separate application.

Are you eligible to apply if you currently receive funding from United Way?

Yes, we encourage all our current partners to apply for this opportunity. For organizations currently funded as agency partners, future funding will be contingent on the results of this process.

Organizational Profile Questions

To answer the service capacity question, over what period should I use to calculate an average number of individuals served?

You can decide whether to use an average of families served over multiple years or use the number of individuals served in a specific 12-month period (such as the last calendar year or, if on a different schedule, your most recent fiscal year). Because of the impacts of COVID-19 on service delivery and data collection, we did not want to limit organizations by asking for people served during a specific timeframe. Please use your judgement to provide an answer that is reflective of your current service capacity to serve families/ individuals over a 12-month period.

How should the information on Major Funding Sources be provided? Is there any additional guidance you can provide?

While we titled with question “major funding sources” you can generalize your answer to provide a high-level overview of key revenue and funding sources. General categories such as “individual donors” or “service fees” are acceptable. If you have single sources of revenue/ funding that represent a significant portion of overall resources for the organization, we’d prefer a specific name for the funding or revenue source.

Generally, we are giving you the discretion to share information on your funding/revenue sources to help us:

- better understand the diversity of your organization’s funding/ revenue sources and
- understand your funding request of United Way in comparison to other major funding sources of the organization.

Priority Area Questions and Uploads

The system only allows one upload per priority area, can I add more than one document?

While you are limited to one upload per priority area, you can include multiple documents in that upload as long as the document does not exceed the maximum file size (individual file size of 32 MB and maximum combined file size of 64 for all the uploads).

If you do not have a program that allows you to merge files, you may want to explore online PDF file merger products, many of which are free.

Economic Well-Being Template

My organization serves people across a broader area than United Way's footprint, on the economic well-being required template should I only include people served within United Way's footprint?

Generally, no. Because this funding will provide unrestricted organizational-level grants, we would like you to use data that represents all those served by your organization. National organizations with a specific office or branch located in our region are an exception to this rule. For organizations with a large footprint this likely means that the top zip codes you provide may not represent most people you serve. If you feel that it is helpful to provide additional zip code data, you may use the comment box in the template to share more data or provide additional context.

Are we able to enter data for a single program?

We are asking that organizations include data reflecting the entirety of their programs and services. We are looking for a broader overview of the whole population served by the organization.

We only collected data on whether families were above or below 200% FPL. How do we enter the information on the template?

The application provides additional income categories in the case that organization can disaggregate participant income data by these categories. (For currently funded agency partners, these are similar categories optional family income-level demographic fields included in the 2019 year end reports.)

If you are unable to provide data in this format but do track if the participant is above or below 200% FPL, we could recommend you fill out this section of the template in one of two ways:

- Enter the data together in the 100-200% FPL field and provide comments to indicate how you collect the information.
- Provide estimates for Below 100% FPL and 100-200% FLP based on your understanding of participants served. Provide comments indicating that they are estimates and share details on how the data is currently collected.

Funding Amounts

Will the amounts awarded be lower than the last grant cycle?

While we have not determined the final funding pool available for investment in this process, we are working to diversify funding opportunities provided through United Way on an annual basis. As a result, the specific pool of funds available for investment through this process will be less than in previous years although United Way's total investment in community solutions, through grants to community organizations, will remain largely the same.

Is the funding range referencing the total grants over two years?

No, the likely funding range provided is for an annual grant amount. While this funding process is for a two-year funding commitment and we make all efforts to maintain equal annual funding throughout the grant period, second year grant amounts will be contingent on United Way's fundraising results.

Will funding amounts still include contributions already allocated to agencies by donors (often referred to as "designated donations")?

For those familiar with United Way's policy of "first dollar in", that policy will be ended in 2022. Funded partners through this process will be listed on United Way's pledge card but will receive designated donations separate from the grant commitment. Currently funded partners that may have been designated by donors during the Fall 2021 campaign will also receive those payments through a separate process. Designations will begin to be released twice a year once the donation is collected. More details will be provided in early 2022.

Selection Process & Systems Change Opportunities

How will United Way prioritize applications?

United Way will use the eligibility requirements and priority areas in the Letter of Opportunity to prioritize funding. Additionally, selection of partners will be made through the lens of the systems change opportunities.

How will United Way conduct the review process?

Letters of Opportunity will primarily be reviewed by UWGC staff. Volunteers will be engaged during parts of the decision process. The final selection of partners and funding decisions will be approved by the United Way of Greater Cincinnati Board of Directors.

We work with a very specific population or issue area, what if our community isn't represented in the community insights?

We recognize that the community insights project will only serve as a representative sample of our community and will not be inclusive of all specific communities or residents. As we look to define the systems change opportunity, we'll be combining the community insights data with community partner perspective (shared through the Letter of Opportunity). Additionally, United Way will bring our perspective, knowledge, and community data to the table about community challenges, strengths and community partners to inform decisions.

How can we spread the word about the survey to people with serve?

Anyone can sign up to take the community insights survey. If you would like to share the survey with people you work with or support, you may send a simple survey link for people to sign up. Email impact@uwgc.org to receive the link.

Is the narrative about how we might contribute to the systems change opportunity really meant to be a proposed solution to achieve the change?

No, we do not anticipate that many organizations will be able to, through their contributions alone, solve or achieve systemic change against the opportunity highlighted in the application. While this may be the case in some situations, we do not anticipate to see this in most applications. Instead, we are interested to understand how your organization, operating in your current capacity, could be part of a meaningful solution. At this point in the application process, you do not need to present a full solution but rather should work to demonstrate how you might be able to leverage your current services and programs (using the categories provided) to support change.

We don't do advocacy and don't know how to address the systems change opportunity section. Can you provide us with more guidance?

We have had helpful feedback that the two original examples of systems change opportunities in the webinar both appeared to be policy related. Systems change efforts can come in many forms and can address different parts of the system. We think it's most helpful to first consider the key challenges or root issues that are holding families back from economic well-being. From there, consider the conditions of systems change icon (the upside-down triangle graphic from FSG's article: The Waters of Systems Change). Think about opportunities to address that root issue that might shift, alter or transform: the flow of resources, practices, policies, relationships & connections, power dynamics, or mental models.

Call for Systems Change Partners 2022-2024
Frequently Asked Questions

To help you consider how to best reflect the systems change opportunity in your application, we've created a new supplementary resource with expanded systems change opportunity examples. It's available in the Resource Center within the online system (e-CImpact).