



Human Services Fund

FY2026

Request for Proposal (RFP)

FAQ

SERVICE CATEGORIES:

Comprehensive Workforce Development

Youth Gun Violence Prevention and Reduction

Supporting, Securing, and Stabilizing Housing for High-Risk Populations



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General Information

What is the Human Services Fund (HSF)?

The HSF is a City of Cincinnati funding initiative designed to support nonprofit organizations providing essential human services. The fund prioritizes:

- **Comprehensive Workforce Development**
- **Youth Gun Violence Prevention and Reduction**
- **Supporting, Securing, and Stabilizing Housing for High-Risk Populations**

Who administers the fund?

The **United Way of Greater Cincinnati (UWGC)** administers the fund in partnership with the **City of Cincinnati**. Funding recommendations are made by the **Human Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)** and final funding decisions rest with the **Cincinnati City Council**.

How much funding is available?

Total funding across the three service categories is estimated at **\$8 million to \$8.5 million**, subject to City Council approval.

What is the grant period?

September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026 (Year 1)

September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027 (Year 2)

Eligibility and Application Process

Who is eligible to apply?

Organizations must:

- **Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.**
 - Fiscal sponsorships may be eligible to apply if the fiscal sponsor assumes full financial and legal responsibility of the funds/project, signing subcontract and receiving and distributing funds to the project team. Fiscal sponsorships are also required to submit with their application:

1. A signed fiscal sponsorship agreement.
 2. A copy of your fiscal sponsor's letter of exemption from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) or exemption from taxation under another section of the Internal Revenue Code.
 3. A copy of your fiscal sponsor's most recently filed IRS form 990.
- Provide services to **City of Cincinnati residents** (physical location within the city is not required).
 - **Will programs be required to provide proof of residency within city limits for program participants?**
 - No, proof of residency is not required, however organizations will be required to report the number of residents served as well as demographics, including numbers served by zip code in their reporting.
 - Submit proposals for up to **three (3) programs**.
 - Ensure **City funding does not exceed 60%** of the program's total revenue.

Can organizations apply for multiple programs?

Yes. Organizations may apply for up to **three** (different) programs across the services categories. Organizations may apply for any combination of categories they wish. However, programs are considered and awarded funds on an individual basis. Please select the Service Category the program is most suitable for. The same program cannot be submitted across multiple categories.

Can you clarify how collaborative multi-partner or multi-program applications work?

A multi-partner or program application should demonstrate a cohesive program model that shows how each individual program service helps contribute to the desired or targeted outcomes. Proposals will still need to select one priority area – it is not possible for a program proposal to be assessed across multiple priority areas. Additionally, it would be clear that the outcomes achieved are greater or different from programmatic outcomes that can be achieved by any one program operating separately. **Programs should only be combined into a single proposal if they operate as a fully integrated initiative.**

Can you provide an example of a multi-program (one agency) application?

- Example 1 –Demonstrates Collaboration

Agency A has created wraparound supports for their clients with partnership from Agency B & C:

- Agency A operates a family focused supportive housing program; and
- Agency B runs a job training program for unemployed adults; and
- Agency C provides mental health counseling services

This collaboration provides wraparound services for clients participating in the supportive housing program.

Can you provide examples of potential (multi-partner) collaborations?

Here are a few examples.

- Example 1 – Demonstrates Collaboration

A collaborative program aims to provide comprehensive outcomes to single parents living in a specific neighborhood. To deliver against the targeted outcomes and priorities identified by the city, the collaborative includes:

- Agency A that provides the housing supports for the population to remove barriers to obtaining and retaining employment;
- Agency B plans to provide targeted workforce and work supports services, aligned to high demand fields, to the same targeted population; and
- Agency C will support the individuals in navigating additional public benefits – such as childcare benefits.

This collaboration helps ensure that the proposal is competitive under the criteria of the Workforce Development by demonstrating their programs address direct employment services and provide wraparound support.

- Example 2 – Demonstrates Collaboration

4 organizations have created a collaborative agreement and created a program for a neighborhood-based violence prevention initiative combining:

- Agency A: Provides street outreach and crisis intervention services in high-risk areas; and
- Agency B: Delivers trauma-informed mental health services and family counseling; and
- Agency C: Operates a youth center providing after-school programming and mentorship; and
- Agency E: Specializes in working with local schools to address chronic absenteeism

This collaboration creates a multi-faceted approach addressing immediate safety, trauma healing, youth engagement, and educational success.

- Example 3 – Does Not Demonstrate Collaboration

Agency A operates an after-school program that provides youth with a stable environment for study as well as additional assistance with communication, accountability, and personal growth for youth participants.

Why this fails to demonstrate collaboration:

The agency is running their existing standalone program, with no integration or referral of services with another organization. While this program would be eligible for HSF funding, this program would not demonstrate collaboration.

I'm interested in exploring a collaborative solution, but I don't know who to work with. Can suggestions be provided?

There are several ways to identify potential collaboration partners. Start by mapping organizations that currently refer clients to your program or receive your referrals, as these existing relationships often indicate natural partnership opportunities. Consider what additional services your clients need that you don't provide and look for organizations that excel in those areas. The key is finding partners whose services complement rather than compete with yours, and who share your commitment to serving the target population effectively.

Do we need to provide documentation of collaborations (MOUs or letters of support)?

No, but including **MOUs or letters of intent** is **strongly encouraged**, particularly for projects involving multiple partners or service providers.

Funding and Budget

What is the minimum and maximum grant amount?

- **Minimum grant:** \$25,000
- **No maximum grant amount**, but historically, the average award is **\$78,228**, with a median of **\$76,204**.

Does the grant amount requested cover one or two years of the grant?

The amount requested should be for one year of the grant. The budget submitted should be for one year only – fiscal year 2026. Typically, Council approves the first-year awards for a second-year contract as long as outcomes have been met, and the funding has been appropriately spent. Council only approves budgets on a yearly basis, so funding is only one year at a time.

Can ineligible expenses be shown in the budget, even though funds cannot be used for them?

Yes, ineligible expenses **can be included in the budget** if they are relevant to the full program cost. However, the budget must clearly indicate that **HSF funds will not be used** for ineligible expenses.

Is there a grant match requirement?

Not specifically, no. However, the amount awarded to your program for an HSF grant cannot exceed 60% of the program budget. The remaining 40% will need to come from other funding sources or in-kind support (see below).

Can in-kind support be used to make up the 40% of the budget that is not funded by HSF?

Yes. **In-kind contributions** (such as donated goods, volunteer services, or space) **can count** toward the 40% non-HSF funding requirement. However, organizations must **document and justify** in-kind support in their budget.

Are there limitations on direct costs or indirect cost rates in this application?

There is **no specific cap** on direct costs. However, all costs must be **reasonable, necessary, and clearly documented** in the proposal.

Is there a cap on indirect cost rates for grantees?

The RFP does not specify a cap on indirect cost rates. However, **proposed indirect costs should align with industry standards** and reflect **reasonable, justified** expenses. It's important to note that indirect costs billed to the city resources will still need to be itemized and documented; there is no ability to claim a flat indirect costs rate.

Program-Specific Clarifications

Can you give some examples of programs that would be funded under the Housing category?

Examples include:

- **Eviction prevention programs** offering mediation or emergency financial assistance.
- **Housing navigation services** assisting individuals in finding and securing stable housing.
- **Permanent supportive housing programs** for high-risk populations, such as individuals with disabilities, former justice-involved individuals, or youth aging out of foster care.
- **Street outreach and homeless response teams** providing case management and resources.

In the Workforce Development category, must proposals provide all three components: employment services, wraparound support, and education assistance?

Yes, **proposals must include all three elements:**

1. **Direct employment services** (job placement, employer connections).
2. **Wraparound support** (housing stability, mental health support, transportation).
3. **Education/training opportunities** (GED, credentials, industry-specific training).

Proposals that **do not** incorporate all three elements will **not be competitive**.

Can you clarify if organizations need to meet all criteria under the first priority or at least one?

Organizations **do not** need to meet **all criteria** under the first priority, but proposals should address **at least one key priority area** while demonstrating **alignment with the broader funding goals**. Strong proposals **clearly articulate how their program addresses specific priorities**.

Application Requirements and Submittal

Are the Program Measures included in the RFP required?

A minimum of 3 program measures are required to be submitted (maximum of 8). You are welcome to use the suggested measures provided in the RFP or use your own.

How do I apply?

Applications must be submitted via **e-CImpact**, United Way's grant management system.

- **Online application opens:** February 14, 2025
- **Deadline:** March 24, 2025, at 4:30 PM

To access e-CImpact:

1. Visit [United Way's website](#)
2. Click on the **e-CImpact** portal.
3. Log in or create a new account.
4. Complete the required fields and upload necessary attachments.

Who do I contact if I have trouble accessing e-CImpact or need assistance?

Contact us at: humanservicesfund@uwgc.org

Does the application have to be completed in one sitting?

No! Our online application system e-CImpact provides the ability to save and return to your application at any time prior to the due date.

Attachments

Program Model

- Should be no more than 2 pages
- May use any of the three templates provided (logic model, program design, theory of change), or your own model as long as it contains the resources, key activities and service components and the desired program outputs and outcomes.

Board and Staff Demographics

- Complete the excel spreadsheet with the name, role, and demographics for each board member. Then complete the second tab with the aggregate overview of race/ ethnicity of agency staff.

Proposal Review and Selection

How are proposals evaluated?

Proposals are reviewed based on:

1. **Alignment with service category priorities**
2. **Clear program design and implementation plan**
3. **Measurable outcomes and data-driven approaches**
4. **Cultural competency and equity considerations**
5. **Collaboration and sustainability strategies**

Who reviews the proposals?

- **UWGC screens for eligibility** (April).
- **HSAC reviews and scores proposals** (April – May).
- **City Council approves final funding** (June – July).
- **Grant period begins** (September 1, 2025).

Reporting and Compliance

What are the reporting requirements?

Grantees must submit **progress reports at 6-month and 12-month intervals**, covering:

- Client demographics and service numbers.
- Narrative updates on program progress.
- Documentation of grant-funded expenses.

Are there required grantee meetings?

Yes, **grantee convenings** occur **2-3 times per year** for capacity-building and reporting discussions. Participation is **strongly encouraged**.

Additional Questions

Can you reference the City's newly adopted focus on "Achieving Change Together"?

The City's [Achieving Change Together \(ACT\) for Cincinnati](#) framework is a **strategic initiative** focused on reducing violence, improving economic mobility, and addressing systemic barriers through **collaborative, data-driven efforts**. Proposals for **Youth Gun Violence Prevention and Reduction** must align with **ACT principles** and leverage **community-based solutions**.

Specific documents were referenced in the webinar slide deck. Where can I find the originals?

The primary documents referenced include:

- [City of Cincinnati HSF Services Category RFP \(FY26-FY27\)](#)
- [FY26 HSF RFP Overview Webinar Slides](#)
- [ACT for Cincy Framework](#)

Will the PowerPoint be made available after the webinar?

Yes. The PowerPoint presentation is available on the [HSF RFP webpage](#) and emailed to registered attendees.

Where can I ask more questions?

Office Hours (on Microsoft Teams):

Open Office hours will be held on Teams at the following times, please click the link to join the Teams meeting:

- [Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM](#)
- [Thursday, March 13, 2025, 12:00 – 1:00 PM](#)
- [Wednesday, March 19, 2025, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM](#)
- **1:1 Consultation Appointments:** Available via **United Way staff booking link:**
[Book time with Laura Plaisted: Human Services Fund RFP 1:1 Discussion](#)
- **Email Inquiries:** humanservicesfund@uwgc.org

For updates, visit the [HSF RFP webpage](#).