

Request for Ideas

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the difference between a Request for Qualifications/Proposals (RFQ/P) that United Way of Greater Cleveland has used in the past and the new Request for Ideas (RFI) process?

The RFP and the RFQ are similar in that they both allow programs to seek funding from United Way of Greater Cleveland. Under the RFP process agencies were essentially “pitching” programs that fit into United Way’s investment areas at the time. Under the RFI model, United Way is asking agencies to align the work of various programs under common goals in hopes of funding many programs in the same direction to impact poverty.

What are Investment Strategies?

United Way has identified three Investment Strategies in which it will focus its funding. These are Thriving Families, Housing Stability, and Healthy Communities. Thriving Families seeks to ensure that children are prepared for kindergarten and that youth and adults are connected to jobs with career pathways. Housing Stability wants to ensure Greater Clevelanders have – or are on a pathway to – safe, stable, and healthy housing and are able to access resources to meet their basic needs. And Healthy Communities seeks to ensure that people, especially seniors, are nourished with food and social contact in ways that help them maintain their independence.

Is there a restriction on the number of applications an agency can submit?

An organization may only submit a total of one application. Organizations can apply once in one Investment Area. It is recommended to apply within the area where the organization believes it has the strongest idea.

Can an agency apply in multiple Investment Strategies?

No, ideas should address one Investment Strategy. It is recommended to apply within the area where the organization believes it has the strongest idea. There will only be one (1) award per organization. Please call your Director to discuss if your organization has additional questions.

When will we be notified about funding? What is the process preceding notification?

Once agencies submit their Idea, United Way will begin the review process and select Ideas to move forward and complete a full, detailed application. Agencies will be notified in May 2021 regarding whether they will be invited to submit a full application and subsequently a virtual site visit. In addition, virtual site visits will be shared broadly for public feedback and input. Final award notifications and funding will begin January 2022.

Are you funding programs or organizations?

United Way has not specified that its funding in this cycle will be for programs or organizations. Funding is for strategies that will help the community achieve the recommended Investment Goals. Therefore, the use of funds should be identified, along with the rationale, within the budget narrative portion of the submission.

Can you provide an example of a budget for the RFI?

EXAMPLE (adjust according to your own budget)

Line Item	United Way Request	Other Funding	Description
Salary & Wages	\$100,000	\$50,000	2.5 FTE Case Managers
Consultants	\$15,000	\$10,000	IT
Travel	\$5,000	\$5,000	Summit
Equipment	\$2,500	\$4,000	Laptops & Phones
Supplies & Materials	\$1,000	\$0	Postage & Printing
Indirect	\$7,500	\$35,500	Occupancy
Other	\$10,000	\$10,000	Staff Training
TOTAL	\$141,000	\$114,500	

How long will the programs be funding? Must we reapply each year?

United Way funding is, and always has been, year-to-year funding based on trends in the Annual Campaign. Funding levels may vary based on the availability of funds, program performance, and compliance with the Terms of Grant Agreement. However, United Way will not issue another RFI or application process for two (2) years. Organizations will *not* be required to re-apply on an annual basis. Programs will still be expected to submit updated documentation on a yearly basis, such as an updated 990, and to comply with data reporting requirements. Programs not in compliance with the terms of the award could see their award reduced or eliminated.

Will new programs be considered for funding?

Yes, new programs will be considered for funding. The timeline for launch of a new program, if not already in operation, should be clearly outlined within the submission. This is not a planning grant. Program must be in operation within six (6) months of the start of the grant period.

I do not see any outcome indicators identified in the RFI, what will we be asked to collect?

In this application cycle, United Way engaging in a practice called Emergent Evaluation. Organizations, ideas, and/or programs that receive United Way investment will have tailored outcome indicators created during the funding review process. This avoids the use of outcome indicators that do not actually match with the strategies selected for funding.

Our “program,” as our agency defines it, is large and encompasses several different best practices. However, our proposed RFI application for funding would only focus on one segment of this program. Should we submit the budget for the entire agency-defined program, or only the budget for the segment of the program that would be directly affected by UWGC dollars?

We recommend that dollars applied for should be directly applicable to the work you are doing in the strategy you apply in. If the dollars will affect one area of your agency-defined program directly but will have a ripple effect on other areas of the agency-defined program through a continuum of care that you can demonstrate in your application, then you may choose to submit the entire agency-defined program’s budget. If your agency-defined program covers multiple different strategies, then please divide the budget up to show the costs of delivering services in each strategy. **This is a complicated question in many cases. If you have any questions about this issue, please reach out to the Director over the strategy you’re applying in and have a discussion.**

Do we have to specify an “indirect” rate, and/or “overhead costs”?

No. Funding provided is flexible to meet the necessary conditions to operate and grow the program applied for. These needs should be outlined in the budget narrative.

Should the ideas be more programmatic and engagement-focused or result in built or physical outcomes?

United Way does not provide capital support. Ideas, while they may have a built or physical component, should focus on programming and engagement.

Is there an expectation that organizations will have to make a financial commitment in the implementation stage?

No but UWGC investment may not cover all program expenses. You must continue to seek diversified funding.

Do we have to have an equity-focused idea?

Yes, this is our first investment principle and is non-negotiable.