

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Economic Mobility Framework and Basic Needs/Financial Well-Being RFPs

Updated: June 13, 2022

### Why has United Way of Northeast Florida adopted this new Economic Mobility Framework?

- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, one in three local households (including half of all children) lived in poverty or from paycheck-to-paycheck. The situation was even worse for our Black residents, who experienced financial hardship nearly twice as often as their white neighbors.
- We still don't know the full scale of this health and economic crisis, but we do know the challenges it exposed are only getting worse, particularly with the rising costs of housing, gas and other living expenses.
- To change this narrative, we need to address the root causes of poverty and break down the barriers limiting economic mobility for individuals and families in Northeast Florida.
- With our new framework, we're intentionally focusing our resources and investments on a limited number of priorities to get better, faster results and be more accountable to our donors and the community.

### How were the three impact areas selected?

- Over the past two years, we've engaged hundreds of business, government and nonprofit partners through surveys, focus groups, planning workshops and listening sessions.
- We gained additional insights from national research and local data, as well as our own experience from nearly 100 years of working within the community.
- Using this collective input, we worked with our Community Impact Council to identify three key drivers of economic mobility: Basic Needs, Financial Well-Being and Racial Equity. These impact areas ensure we meet the immediate needs of our residents, while also tackling long-term challenges and systemic inequities.
- Food access, housing, education and workforce are the priority strategies funded by the current RFPs.

### Will United Way continue to provide funding for community partners?

- United Way uses many methods to achieve our goals, from leadership and advocacy to the programs and initiatives we directly administer within the community.
- We will also strategically invest in organizations working locally to advance our shared goal of improving economic mobility for all residents of Northeast Florida.
- Moving forward, our investments will be more focused and proactive in supporting the economic mobility framework.

### What funding opportunities are currently available?

- We are currently seeking applications from nonprofit organizations to receive funding for programs supporting priority strategies in Basic Needs and Financial Well-Being.
- In Basic Needs, funding will be available to support programs that increase access to nutritious food and stable housing.

- In Financial Well-Being, funding will be available to support programs that address barriers to academic success and provide job/skills training and job-seeking support.

### **How will you measure your success?**

- We worked with subject matter experts to develop a set of priority strategies and targeted indicators for each impact area, identifying the strongest opportunities to move the needle on our community challenges in a meaningful way.
- All of our activities will support these strategies and we'll use the indicators to monitor and measure our progress by 2025.
- A system of accountability will be implemented for all funded programs. Every program will be responsible for submitting output and outcome descriptions, targets and background notes before the start of the funding year.
- As the year progresses, agencies will provide a mid-year and end of year report. We will evaluate agency results against baseline numbers for the targeted indicators and provide feedback accordingly to ensure compliance with our strategic plan and its focus areas.

### **What if my program doesn't serve the specific population or geography outlined in the targeted indicators?**

- If your program supports the priority strategy (i.e., access to food, job-seeking support, etc.), we encourage you to apply for funding.
- Because the targeted indicators address a subset of the population or geography with the highest risk/greatest need, bonus points will be given to programs that specifically align with these indicators.
- No points will be deducted for programs that serve a broader population or geography.

### **Can my agency apply for multiple funding opportunities?**

- Agencies may submit applications for funding opportunities in both Basic Needs and Financial Well-Being, but may only submit one application per impact area.
- If an agency applies for funding opportunities in both impact areas, it could be awarded none, one or both. Each application will be evaluated separately.

### **How should my agency decide which funding opportunity to pursue?**

- Agencies should seek funding for the programs in which they believe they can drive the greatest results.

### **How much funding will be available through the community investment process?**

- A total of \$4.5 million will be available during this funding cycle.
- Applicants must request a minimum of \$25,000.
- There is no cap on the maximum request amount, as long as it doesn't exceed 50% of the program's operating budget.

### **Will United Way use any of the \$20 million it received from the MacKenzie Scott Foundation to support these funding opportunities?**

- The MacKenzie Scott grant will not be used to directly support these funding opportunities, but it has played a major role in our ability to provide community investments.
- Receiving the \$20 million grant in December 2020 provided us with financial security and stability at a time in which many organizations were facing tremendous uncertainty.

- This allowed us to extend our 2018 grant cycle (which was scheduled to end in 2020) for two additional years, ensuring our partners could continue providing critical services during a time of great community need.
- The grant also encouraged us to think differently about our work and consider how to deploy those dollars within our community in a bold, transformative way.

### **When will the new funding cycle begin?**

- Current funding opportunities opened to all eligible human service agencies on June 1, 2022, and close June 22, 2022.
- Contracts for programs funded through this process will begin on October 1, 2022 for a two-year funding term.

### **If my program is currently funded by United Way, will any supplemental funding be provided between June and October?**

- Our previous funding cycle (which began in 2018) ends on June 30, 2022.
- Any partners funded during the previous cycle are encouraged to apply for the new funding opportunities (provided their programs are aligned with the economic mobility framework), but there is no guarantee that funding will again be awarded.
- As such, no additional funding will be provided between the close of the previous grant cycle and the start of the new one.

### **How will funding decisions be made?**

- All eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by a team of community experts and select United Way staff.
- Specific funding criteria can be found within the individual Basic Needs and Financial Well-Being RFPs.
- For the best results, we encourage applicants to clearly demonstrate the connection of their proposed programs to our priority strategies and targeted indicators within the economic mobility framework.

### **What if my program is no longer eligible for funding?**

- We recognize that this may be a difficult process for previously funded organizations whose work is no longer aligned with our strategic framework.
- While we greatly value the contributions of past and present partners, a more intentional investment strategy is required to achieve the change our community needs.

### **Will additional funding opportunities be available?**

- In an effort to be more responsive and agile in addressing emerging community needs, funding will not be limited to this opportunity alone.
- Rather than limiting funding opportunities to once every two or more years, we will release them as needs and opportunities arise.
- Later this year, we anticipate announcing funding opportunities associated with the Racial Equity impact area, and additional funding announcements are expected to follow.

### **Where do you list the primary contact for the application?**

- On the Agency Profile page.

**Can an agency have multiple individuals that can access the same agency profile?**

- Yes, multiple staff members may have access to the Agency Profile; however, all staff members must use the same login information to ensure they are working on the same application.

**If our program provides services in Duval County, however, the clients served are also from three other service area counties, how is this indicated on the application?**

- We want to know where your clients live, as a percentage by county. If you have clients living in other counties, you can note that in the “Percent of Counties Served” section.

**Can you provide additional detail regarding what are considered indirect costs for this grant that cannot exceed 10%?**

- The indirect costs limit is set at 10% of total program costs and covers “back office” items, including human resources, office supplies, rent, etc.

**What are the reporting dates for program outcomes?**

- United Way will provide bi-annual reporting documents. The first reporting period is from October 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023. Reports are typically due within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. The End of Year report will cover services provided between April 1, 2023 and September 31, 2023.

**What will agencies be required to report on?**

- Reporting requirements for each funding area are outlined within each RFP. These reporting requirements will be discussed in detail during a series of funding meetings in October 2022. The outcomes listed in the RFP are examples of the data we are seeking from our funded partners.

**Many food-insecure families are struggling financially. If we are completing the funding application for the priority strategy of food access, are we allowed to include client emergency financial assistance in the budget, making it more of a wraparound model of services?**

- It is expected that agencies will budget for all items that fit their intervention strategy to ensure that their clients are successful in achieving the program’s goals.

**Could you please clarify "Management Letter?"**

- Management letters usually identify where internal financial controls need to be improved, and the auditor feels the need to address this with the Board of the agency.

**Is there an alternative to the audits or are the audited financials mandatory?**

- The RFP outlines the necessary financial documents needed based on the agency’s annual revenue.
- Not all agencies are required to conduct audits and the RFP outlines what can be submitted in place of the audit.

**We are coming to the end of our fiscal year. Our next year's budget will not be finalized until after the submission date. Is the 2021-22 agency budget acceptable to use?**

- United Way recognizes that agencies are on a variety of fiscal year cycles, so please use the last approved budget available.

**Are you requesting one-year budgets or budgets for the full grant period?**

- The Agency budget and the Program budget are both one-year budgets.

**If we are requesting the grant to pay for existing staff, will we need to break down each salary for the current staff?**

- In the program budget narrative, you can group salaries by function.

**Will the Application Workshop recording be available after this meeting?**

- Yes, the recording has been posted to United Way's website.