



United Way of
Waco-McLennan County
Local Giving. Local Impact.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Eligibility Questions:

Eligibility Basics:

1. What is eligible to be funded?

Programs of 501©3 nonprofit organizations (with the exception of Universities, Colleges, and their Foundations, and ISDs and their Foundations) that align with United Way goal areas and strategies within the [Impact Framework](#) priority areas (Children, Families, Communities), as well as meet the basic grant eligibility requirements are considered eligible. Eligible programs will be sent an invitation to submit a full grant application, but are not guaranteed funding at that stage. Volunteer-led Community Investment Councils will review full applications and make recommendations to the UW Board for funding.

Please also review the 2025-27 Grant Eligibility Criteria available on our website for more details.

2. What is not eligible for funding?

Non-501©3 organizations, Universities, Colleges and their Foundations, ISDs and ISD Foundations, Capital Campaigns, Debt Service, Endowments, Fundraising Events, vehicle purchases, significant building renovations and large capital expenses (maximum of 10% of grant award, up to \$7,500 per organization allowed) are not eligible for United Way funding. Nonprofit programming outside of the United Way Impact Framework is also not eligible for funding.

Please also review the 2025-27 Grant Eligibility Criteria available on our website for more details.

3. Must my organization have an Executive Director to be eligible for funding?

Per the Board requirements for eligibility, an organization must have a formal structure and formalized Board member responsibilities, which include annual review of the Executive Director (ED) or CEO. This individual need not necessarily bear the title of "Executive Director" or "CEO," nor must it be a paid position, but a

separation of duties between the organization’s leader and Board is implicit in the structure to allow for this accountability.

4. How will I know if my program may be eligible for funding?

Organizations can review the [Impact Framework](#) for program alignment and then complete an online “Eligibility Checklist” to go through the Eligibility process. United Way Designated Agencies automatically meet the basic organizational eligibility criteria but must submit an Intent to Apply form for the specific program for which they are seeking funding. United Way staff will review your Eligibility Checklist/Intent to Apply submission and will reach out to you directly with a notification of eligibility. Please visit the United Way website to review the Eligibility Criteria and Grant Eligibility Information Session webinar recording and PowerPoint slides for more information on eligibility requirements.

5. Are organizations expected to meet all of the items in the Eligibility Checklist?

Organizations and their programs must meet the requirements of all questions on the Checklist, and submit all basic eligibility documents for eligibility as these are the Basic Eligibility/minimum requirements for any potentially-funded program.

For any special circumstances your organization wishes to have considered, please use the comment boxes available throughout the eligibility checklist.

6. How will programs be notified of Eligibility results?

Notifications of Eligibility results, including invitations to submit a full grant application if deemed eligible, will be sent by email by mid-December 2024.

7. If my program was eligible last year, will we need to go through the Eligibility process this year?

Yes, returning programs will be required to submit the Intent to Apply Form this cycle, even if the program passed eligibility last grant cycle. Program eligibility will be reviewed each grant cycle, however, the process will be abbreviated for returning applicants/United Way Designated Agencies who already meet the basic organizational eligibility criteria.

8. How do I know if my program is a Safety Net program or falls under other programming areas in the Impact Framework?

Please see below for a basic side-by-side to help you evaluate where your program best fits:

Safety Net programming	Other programming
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate, one-time, and/or temporary – assistance • Helping people access essential services to stabilize or recover from a crisis or emergency situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer-term client-program interaction aligning with health, education, child well-being, financial stability or other related strategies &/or wrap-around services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically limited depth or duration of interaction; less ability to track improvements over time • Focusing on removal of practical barriers to access essential services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping people “reach their full potential” (UW Vision) via change in knowledge, skills, or behavior • Ability to track measurable improvements in clients’ lives over time
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9. Why is the funding available for programs under the Safety Net goal area less than the other pillars?

In 2018, United Way’s Strategic Planning process led to a shift in our funding model via a new outcome-based grant-making model to measure impact. Because Safety Net services are typically focused on addressing immediate needs or stabilizing after a crisis or emergency, the ability to track measurable, client-level change over time is more limited. The Board therefore decided to allow a higher cap on the other longer-term programming areas in the Impact Framework.

However, organizations that provide Safety Net programming, and also provide wrap-around or other services in another Goal area, may be eligible to submit a second program in another pillar/goal area, allowing access to the higher overall cap of \$150K maximum per organization.

10. Can United Way grants be used for seed funding?

No, grant awards may not be used as seed funding for organizational start-ups. Preferred criteria for funding is that an organization has been in operation for 12+ months.

However, funding consideration may be given to new initiatives or programs at established organizations.

11. Do you fund collaborative programs between multiple organizations?

While United Way deeply encourages and values collaboration, currently, program grants are designed to be awarded to individual programs under the umbrella of a single organization. As such they are not meant to fund large collective-impact initiatives and collaborations that fiscally- involve multiple partners. However, it may be possible that a larger organization serves as the “fiscal agent” for a combined program implemented jointly with another nonprofit, or that one nonprofit provides contracted services within the scope of another nonprofit’s programming and program budget.

12. Do you fund staff training or organizational capacity-building needs with Program grants?

A Program application may request funding for training or capacity-building needs (such as staff-use equipment, tools, etc.) as a line-item/portion of grant, but not the entirety of the grant. Program grants are intended to impact client-level outcomes, so any training or capacity-building items included in grant budgets, such as tools,

equipment, etc. must make a compelling case for the expected direct link to program effectiveness and improved client outcomes.

In addition, please note that 25% of grant awards may be applied toward general operating expenses.

13. Do you fund equipment or technology for clients to use in our program?

A Program application may request funding for client-use equipment or technology as a line-item/portion of grant, but not the entirety of the grant. Program grants are intended to impact client-level outcomes, so any items included in grant budgets, such client-use equipment or technology, etc. must make a compelling case for the expected direct link to show program effectiveness and improved client outcomes.

Please note the cap on large capital expenses of 10% of a program's grant award, up to \$7,500 overall cap per organization.

14. Do you fund Environment, Arts & Culture, and Animal-related programs?

In a general sense, United Way does not fund environmental, arts & culture and animal related programs and organizations. However, there may be cases where a unique program coming from a 501(c)3 eligible organization outside of the traditional health and human services context can make a compelling case for their program's goal(s) and objective(s) alignment to the United Way Impact Framework.

15. Do you fund short-term projects or short-term initiatives?

Generally speaking, United Way program funding is invested in consistent programming that tracks impact and ties to measureable client outcomes and impact over a sustained period of time.

16. Who reviews the Eligibility Checklist/Intent to Apply Form?

United Way staff and Impact and Engagement Committee will review the Eligibility Checklist/Intent to Apply Form and make decisions on invitations to submit a full grant application.

17. Will I be able to view the full grant application during the eligibility checklist process?

No, the full application questions will be made available after the Eligibility Checklist process. Programs meeting all eligibility requirements will gain access to the full application questions at that second stage in the process.

Eligibility Checklist – Technical Assistance:

18. Will I be able to save my checklist and return to finish it at a later stage?

Yes, please click "save" on all sections of the Checklist where you have entered information.

19. Can I print a copy of my completed checklist or download a PDF version?

Yes, after you have completed your checklist, you will receive a confirmation email that your submission was received and will be able to view your submission and download or print it at that stage.

20. I am a returning organization (I submitted a full grant application last year) but I can't remember my Grant Portal login or the person whose name it was under is no longer employed at my organization, what do I do?

Email grants@unitedwaywaco.org to obtain a new login for the grant portal.

21. One of the required documents for submission of the Eligibility Checklist is my organization's most recent IRS 990, however, we are a newer organization and it is our first year filing an IRS 990. What should we do in this instance?

In this instance, explain your situation in the explanation box provided on the Eligibility Checklist when asked about documentation that your organization has. Later on, if you become a grant-funded partner, you will be asked to submit your most recent IRS 990 when it becomes available to you during the grant year.

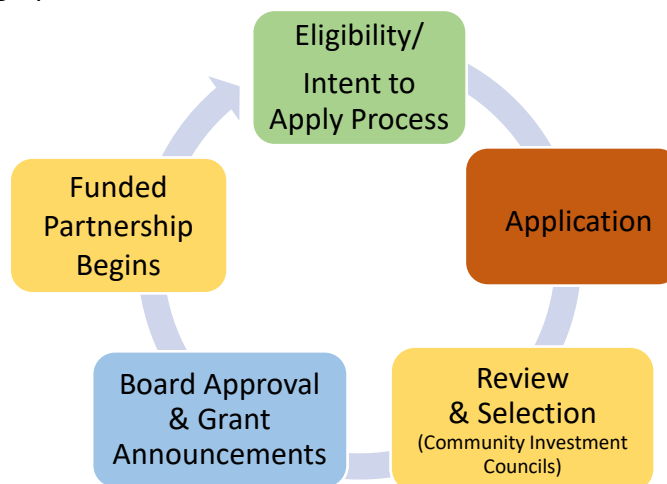
General Questions/Grant Parameters:

1. Can you help me determine where my program fits in the Impact Framework?

As there may be unique nuances to your programming goals and objectives, we ask that programs carefully review the Impact Framework themselves to see how they may align. For questions on terminology, or other eligibility requirements, please visit the Glossary and Eligibility FAQs.

2. What are the steps in the overall Application Process?

See the below graphic.



3. Is there a minimum and maximum dollar request amount per program or per organization?

There is no grant request/award maximum per program, however, the maximum grant request/award per organization is \$150,000 (combined total).

For organizations submitting one or more programs under the Safety Net pillar only (1 or 2 programs), the maximum grant request/award per organization is \$100,000.

The minimum funding request/award per organization is \$25,000 (in all Pillars).

4. If we ask for a certain amount of funding, might we be offered a lesser amount of funding?

Grant applications will be reviewed in light of the strength of the application, number and strength of other applications received, and total funds available for grant-making. Community Investment Councils may recommend funding at a lesser amount than requested given these factors; consider the scalability of your program when submitting your application.

5. What is the maximum number of programs that may be submitted per organization?

You can submit up to 2 programs per organization in 2 pillars (in the same pillar or in two separate pillars).

6. If 2 programs are submitted under one Eligibility Checklist, are both programs collectively accepted/rejected, or is each program considered individually?

Checklists will be reviewed and considered on the basis of 1) meeting organization-level eligibility requirements and 2) meeting program-level eligibility requirements, including alignment with UW areas of focus. Each program is therefore screened individually for eligibility, provided that all organization-level eligibility requirements are met. It would be possible then, for some programs of an organization to be invited to submit full grant application(s), and not others.

7. What is the maximum number of United Way pillar areas (Children, Families, and Communities) that may be addressed (represented?) per organization?

An organization may address a maximum of 2 United Way pillar areas. Each program submitted may only address one pillar.

8. How much total grant funding does United Way have available for grant-making in the 2025-2027 grant cycle?

The amount available to be granted in the 2025-27 grant cycle is contingent upon the results of the Fall 2024 United Way Campaign.

9. What is the length of the grant?

Grant awards are for a period of 2 years (24 months).

10. Can a portion of the awarded grant funding be used for General Operating?

Yes, 25% of grant funds may be budgeted for and used for General Operating.

11. What is included under “General Operating” expenses?

General Operating expenses are any non-program expense related to administering the day-to-day activities of the nonprofit. It is also routinely referred to as “Management and General” expense in nonprofit accounting. It may include rent, equipment, administrative supplies and staff, liability insurance, etc. Applicants may exercise discretion in what to allocate to general operating support in United Way grant applications, with a few exceptions/exclusions (such as debt service, capital campaigns, fundraising events, and endowments).

12. Will I have to reapply to receive funding for the same program next year?

Yes. Programs may reapply in subsequent years for the same program, however there is not an automatic renewal process. Programs must re-enter the competitive grant process and may or may not be funded in subsequent years.

13. How will the grant award be disbursed? In one lump sum or installments?

Grant awards will be disbursed monthly as funded partners remain in good standing and meet all agreements and terms of funding.

14. How often are reports required?

Reports must be submitted semi-annually, at 6-month intervals, for a total of 4 reports over the course of the 2 year/24-month grant cycle.

15. Who reviews the full grant applications?

A Community Investment Council (CIC) will review applications and make funding recommendations to the Board. CICs are made up of community members representative of the Waco & McLennan County area and communities served by United Way of Waco-McLennan County, with facilitating support from United Way staff members and the Impact & Engagement Committee Chair. To ensure a robust and inclusive grant application review process, members have been selected based on the skill, experience and perspective they bring in a particular pillar (issue) area.

The CICs are supported by a Financial Review Council, which reviews the financial documents and sections of applications, and is facilitated by United Way staff.

16. Will organizations give presentations or meet with the Community Investment Councils during the application review process?

There is not a formal presentation step in the application review process. However, there may be Council follow-up questions after initial review of your application; staff will provide those to you in writing and request your answers to provide back

to the Council. In special cases, a Council may request an in-person meeting with an applying program.

17. Will funded organizations be obliged to conduct a United Way campaign during their funding period?

No, but they are certainly welcomed to!