

Questions & Answers Neighborhood Grant

Questions and answers regarding United Way of Central Maryland's FY2021-22 Family Stability Program Grant are listed below in three sections.

- **Part A: Neighborhood Grant Programmatic Questions posed at United Way of Central Maryland's Grant Information Session on November 10, 2020.**
- **Part B: Request for Proposal Questions posed at United Way of Central Maryland's Grant Information Session on November 10, 2020.**
- **Part C: Questions submitted via e-mail to grantquestions@uwcm.org – through Tuesday, November 10, 2020 @ 5:00 p.m.**

PART A: Questions Related to the Neighborhood Grant Program Overview

1. Can this grant be used for a community garden and or a community radio station?

Yes. Again, please ensure that your project aligns with the goals and selection criteria of: neighborhood centered, resident-driven, inspires community connection and will have a positive impact in your community.

2. Will you fund projects that are already utilizing some of these same metrics, or already conducting some of this work?

Yes. This does not have to be brand new work. It is important to know that the reviewers will not fund operating expenses or funding to continue doing work that does not align with project goals. Within this, if the work is something you are already doing, describe how you will build on that and sustain it and engage residents in a deeper level.

3. Do we need site control for the projects? If we want to clean up a vacant lot do we need permission from the absent owner?

Please ensure that you have the proper authority (permission, permits, etc.) to conduct your project if you are utilizing public or private property. If you do not have these permissions at the time of your proposal submission, you should include plans to secure them in your project plan/timeline.

4. Can your project span the 3 areas? Or should we focus on 1 impact area?

Yes. However, we ask that you please identify one primary area. You are welcome to span 2 or 3 areas, and your application can explain how you will address 1, 2 or 3 areas.

5. Can you talk about the \$500,000 budget requirement for this grant? Will you be looking at COVID impacted budgets or pre-COVID budgets?

Eligible organizations should have current annual operating budgets under \$500,000. If your operating budget has been impacted by COVID, as it has impacted many, that would be acceptable to reflect in your total, current annual operating budget.

6. Can this grant be used to support families in need?

No. This grant is not meant to be used directly as a main purpose to provide financial assistance to families or individuals with COVID (or other) related costs. Please direct folks in need to 2-1-1 United Way Maryland Helpline (dial 211). However, stipends or salaries are allowable in the budget for these projects. If individuals or families are conducting work on a project and need compensation, that is allowed.

7. Can a project address COVID-19 barriers? What if the project submitted was to do a resource-access support day for those suffering from COVID-19?

Again, the lens with which the reviewers will be reading applications will be the selection criteria (See question #1). We expect to see outcomes beyond just addressing emergency needs.

COVID has impacted neighborhoods in many different ways. Sometimes it can be hard to tease-out the needs that you are seeing. This grant is for projects that bring people together and meet the selection criteria. If you can find ways of addressing COVID while also accomplishing these goals than that is acceptable.

Applications that we see for utility, rent and direct food assistance will most likely not address our selection criteria without layering on other project aspects.

8. Could the grant focus on health care needs of the community?

Please see Question #1.

9. Can the grant funding be used for salaries or stipends?

Yes. These line items are included in the budget.

10. Is the budget cap absolute, or is there some flexibility?

Absolute. United Way had to draw the line somewhere, and we landed on \$500,000 maximum total annual operating budget in the current fiscal year for eligible organizations. The highest grant award will be \$10,000.00. The grant range is \$2,500 – \$10,000.

11. Can the grant funding be used to assist with transportation the groups of children (public transportation/uber etc.)?

It can be, as transportation is needed as part of the plan to conduct a neighborhood-centered, resident driven project that inspires community connection and will have a positive impact in your community. Again, please see question #1.

12. What are the reporting requirements after receiving the grant?

There is a one-time final grant report that will not be complex. We will ask for some data in terms of the numbers served and if you met your project objectives outlined in your application. We will also ask you to submit an account of expenses. The goal is to learn how successful your project was, and to receive feedback about this grant opportunity.

13. Who is able to apply for this grant?

Please see page 3 of the Neighborhood Grant RFP. We are targeting this grant opportunity towards smaller non-profits with connections to local community.

14. If we have partners, do you require letters of support from our partners?

No, we are not requiring letters of support. We will not be reviewing any additional information supplied, as it is not a requested part of the application. Please describe relationships with partners within the application questions!

15. If there is any missing information or errors on three application will there be an opportunity to add to the application? If so, will we be contacted by email? or phone?

We do not expect to be asking follow-up questions at this time. We will not have enough time to give equal opportunity for every applicant to address questions after the deadline closes and before decisions are made. Please ensure that you are monitoring the e-mail you submitted as your contact information for announcements regarding your grant application during this process.

16. Can we apply on behalf of single families in need?

See question #7 and eligibility criteria on page 4 of the RFP. Applications on behalf of individuals or families are part of the ineligible categories.

17. How do you want applicants to calculate salary? Is it the hours estimated to be spent on the project multiplied by the rate?

We do not have a specific way of asking organizations to calculate salary costs. We are asking you to account for the work and time committed for those individuals working on the project, and tell us the appropriate cost in your budget.

18. Does "administration" include a fiscal sponsor fee?

You can put the fiscal sponsor fee in the "miscellaneous" category. The administration budget line-item includes other over-head costs your organization would incur due to operating the project.

19. What are examples of "administration" costs?

Administrative costs are those costs incurred by your organization that are not directly related to program implementation. They include things such as salaries for staff not directly involved in program implementation, rent and utilities, office supplies and information technology dedicated to the organization's overall infrastructure (as opposed to that which is used specifically for a program).

20. If awarded funding, would the entire amount of that funding need to be spent by the project deadline? If the entire amount is not spent by that time, would the organization be responsible for returning those funds to United Way?

Yes.

21. Can you use money to build a community web-site for self help of the community members?

Yes. Please see question #1.

22. Can you recommend supplemental funders that are members of the United Way that offer sustainable funding?

United Way is not prepared to recommend other specific funders at this time. We will explore the possibility of providing this kind of support in the future.

23. Our agency is assisting our community with their two public gardens with lighting and fencing. Will that be acceptable since in two different areas in the community?

Yes. How you define your community is up to you.

24. Can we apply for separate grants for each location under separate agencies?

The spirit of this grant is to support neighborhood organizations conducting neighborhood work. You can only apply once per agency to receive funding for one project.

25. Will this grant be offered every year or 2x/year since the duration of projects is 5 months?

We plan on continuing this opportunity into the future and incorporating feedback from the community. As of right now this grant will be offered 1x a year, but this could change as we synthesize feedback from our first year of Neighborhood Grants.

26. Can the grant provide chrome books or tablets so people can log on to virtual meetings in COVID?

Technology and purchases that sustain your project are allowable. However, they need to be integral to your project and how it meets the selection criteria, as stated in Question #1.

There are a lot of folks that need technology due to COVID. Please make a case that the technology you are requesting is really wrapped into the goals of your project. Applications purely for technology purposes that are not also conducting projects will not receive strong scores.

27. Can the grant provide chrome books or tablets so people can log on to virtual meetings in COVID?

Please see question #26.

28. My work assists former foster youth who really don't have a community. Most are experiencing homelessness, could I still be considered?

The focus of this grant opportunity is on supporting neighborhood-centered organizations to improve their local communities. For the sake of this application, we are defining neighborhood as a

geographical area where people live. To be successful, all grant applications must identify a specific neighborhood/community that they will serve and address the four primary grant selection criteria outlined at the bottom of page 5 of the *Neighborhood Grant RFP*.

We encourage all organizations to look for United Way's Changemaker Challenge grant opportunity that will be released this spring.

29. I run a nonprofit 501(c)(3) that helps people with Parkinson's Disease (PD) fight back against their symptoms through focused exercise classes. We take anyone with PD, and classes are free so anyone in the Community with PD can participate. COVID has caused us to cancel all of our fundraisers. Is this something that would be considered?

Please see question #1.

30. Clearly these are one-time grants. Is there any expectation that there may be follow-up grants to continue the work we start?

These are 1 time grants for a 5-month grant period. We don't have specific plans to expand on the work started by these grants but it is something we are thinking about for the future.

PART B: Questions Related to the Neighborhood Grant RFP

31. will you post this recording on your website just in case we want to review portions of it before we submit our proposal?

Yes! You can find this recording on the United Way's non-profit funding page ([LINK](#)), as well as a copy of the Presentation and the Q&A Document.

32. Would newly established 501(c)(3)'s be eligible to apply? If so, what financial documentation would be considered acceptable?

Please see page 2 of the RFP. We expect financial documentation to be submitted at the time of the application, or it will not be considered complete.

33. Does the video have to be a YouTube link or can it be a file?

It has to be a YouTube link due to the file size limit of 10 m/b on CommunityForce. Be sure to mark the video as "unlisted". You can toggle your privacy settings in order to keep the general public from viewing your video.

34. If awarded funding, would the entire amount of that funding need to be spent by the project deadline? If the entire amount is not spent by that time, would the organization be responsible for returning those funds to United Way?

Yes.

35. Can an organization awaiting the IRS determination letter apply for this funding?

No. We ask that you be a fully incorporated, tax-exempt non-profit at the time of application submission.

36. Does an organization have to be a 501c3. Many grassroots. resident lead organizations are not.

At this time, we are asking that organizations be able to demonstrate tax-exempt status at the time of application. We understand that many small, grass roots organizations do not have this qualification yet, and are thinking about how to address this in the future.

37. Can we also apply for your other grant opportunities at the United Way during the same time period?

Yes! Current United Way grantees are eligible, as well.

38. Can a 501C6 organization apply?

Yes. As per page 3 of the RFP, the United Way will accept many different types of tax-exempt statuses, of which 501(c)(6) groups are included.

39. What is a financial statement could it be the organization budget for the year?

A financial statement is an external statement created by an independent accountant who looks through your organizations records/finances. This differs from an internal financial statement, which is created by someone within the organization, and which will not be accepted for this grant.

40. If our fiscal sponsor has a budget over \$500,000 we CAN, or CANNOT apply?

Fiscal agents/sponsors can be of any size and are not required to be under the \$500,000 threshold. The only documents we are requiring from a fiscal agent/sponsor are their: Tax-exempt letter, Financial Document and Good Standing certificate with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (see question #.).

The organization conducting the project should be under the \$500,000 threshold and should submit and answer all application questions except for the three documents the fiscal agent/sponsor must submit.

41. What if the Organization is not connected to a church but is faith based?

Faith-based organizations that meet requirements are eligible, and we understand how huge of an impact faith-based organizations can have in their communities. However, funds cannot be requested for faith-based activities, as stated on Page 3 of the RFP.

42. And the Financial Statement from the fiscal sponsor needs to be about the fiscal sponsor? Or our sponsored org?

If an organization is using a fiscal sponsor, then the required Financial Statement needs to come from the **Fiscal Sponsor**. The specific document required (as outlined on page 2) is based on the revenues of the **Fiscal Sponsor**.

The documents full list of documents required from the fiscal agent are outlined in question #40.

43. Our nonprofit organization files the N Postcard. Our budget is less than \$3,000 a year. How can we provide financial information which we can afford to provide?

The N Postcard does not meet the Financial Document submission requirement for this grant application. We appreciate the challenges that smaller organization face in meeting financial documentation requirements. Under our new guidelines, based on your organization's revenues of \$300,000 of charitable contributions or less, you would need to provide a Financial Compilation, which is far less detailed and expensive than a Financial Audit or Financial Review. We know, however that this may still be a barrier to some organizations and will continue to seek alternative solutions moving forward.

44. Do you have to have your financials audited or looked over by an outsider? Is there another way to get around this? Maybe a report that matches a bank statement?

Please see question #39. Unfortunately, there is no alternative to submitting this financial statement, unless you decide to work with a Fiscal Agent.

45. what is the deadline for application?

November 24, 2020 at 5:00 pm. The CommunityForce Portal will automatically close at that time. I will be available for technical support up until the deadline.

46. Where can we access the presentation after today?

See question #31.

47. Can the financial audit be added to the expenses?

No. We need the financial statement at the time of the application. Unfortunately, project costs cannot cover expenses incurred before the start-time of the grant period. We will consider this more as we move forward as it might impact small organizations.

48. If you are using a fiscal agent, do you or the fiscal agent submit the audit?

Please see question #40 and #42.

49. If we pay a bookkeeper to prepare our financial statements, is that considered an independent compilation?

Question answered on November 17th. No. An independent compilation has a report. There are three types of attestation – Audit, Review and Compilation. A bookkeeper can compile the financial statements, but the bookkeeper cannot attest to the accuracy. Therefore, you need a third-party to write the report that is attached to the financials.

50. The majority of our funding (99%) is from grants that we have received. Our only other money taken in is from membership. So our only budget is from each specific grant that we receive. Is there someone that I can speak with to get clarification on the compilation requirement.

Regardless of the source(s) of revenues for your organization, you are still required to submit an independently reviewed Financial Audit, Financial Review or Financial Compilation document outlined

on page 3 of the RFP. A compilation is a standard accounting practice which an accountant or accounting firm can assist you with.

51. Can an organization outside of Central Maryland apply? For example, a non-profit in Prince George's County expanding their services to one of the 6 areas in Central Maryland?

These grants are meant for organizations conducting local work in central Maryland neighborhood. Please make a strong case that you are embedded in the community that you are supporting. If you are on the cusp of a jurisdiction line, than this would seem more doable. We are not looking for folks starting new work in new communities.

52. Will you also post these responses in writing on your website in addition to your verbal responses here today to these questions here in the chat?

Yes. See question #31.

53. If you give stipends is any type of documentation required to be reported to the IRS?

Question answered on November 17th. We report to the IRS payments that exceed \$600 annually. Their classification should be reviewed with their tax accountant or advisor.

54. If you are using a contractor for your project would that go under salary on contract cost?

If you are paying someone to do work who is not on your organization's payroll, it is typically considered a contract cost.

PART C: Questions asked via E-mail

55. When providing a Financial Statement (acceptable for organizations with gross income from charitable contributions of \$749,999 or less) do you require a GAAR Review with or without footnotes or an OCBOA Review cash or tax basis?

Question answered on November 17th. We need audited financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for entities generating \$750K in revenue.

56. This year our budget is lower due to the pandemic and falls below your \$500,000 max. For the last three years our budget has been more than \$500,000. Would we still qualify to apply for this grant? And even if we do qualify to apply, are we the type of non-profit you are looking to support given our previous budgets?

Please see question #5.

57. It has just come to my attention that no one in the association has a copy of our IRS letter (we incorporated in 1949). I'm going to request an affirmation letter from the IRS, but, I highly doubt we'll have that by the grant deadline! Do I still qualify for this grant?

We will allow you to provide a screenshot of your organization's name from the IRS's tax-exempt search web-page (<https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/>) only if you cannot access your IRS Determination letter before the deadline. Please ensure that the date and time stamp is located on the screenshot.