

Coffee Hour Questions and Answers:

General Questions

- Can you use a fiduciary to apply?
 - a. Yes. Organizations may apply via a fiduciary, if applicable. All applicant organizations must be 501c3s in good standing with the State of Michigan and the Internal Revenue Service and will be required to upload a copy of their IRS designation letter, 990 form, W-9, financial statements, and Michigan Solicitation License.

If your organization is utilizing a fiduciary to receive funds, the fiduciary must be the organization that creates the organizational account within [SurveyMonkey Apply](#). They also must complete the Organization and Financial Information profile. If the fiduciary organization is unsure if their organization has a SurveyMonkey account, please have them contact the United Way team at sma@unitedwaysem.org.

United Way suggests having the fiduciary invite a representative of the sponsored/implementing organization to be a member of the account so that the sponsored/implementing organization can complete the application and subsequent reporting requirements.

- Can both the fiduciary and sponsored organization apply for a grant?
 - a. Yes. Both a fiduciary and the sponsored organization may submit individual applications for this grant. However, the programming and services that each is applying for should be different and specific to their organization. Organizations who are acting as a fiduciary AND applying on their own should first contact the United Way team before they begin the application process by emailing sma@unitedwaysem.org.
- Is there an award ceiling (max) or floor (min) for each fund?
 - a. Yes. Funding ranges will be provided for each competitive opportunity in February when the grant details, applications and rubrics are released.
- You've talked about the Spring 2025 funding round. Will there be a Summer, Fall or Winter funding round?
 - a. No. Currently we do not anticipate releasing other opportunities through these Funds in 2025. We continue to work diligently every day to bring in more resources to support the important work our partners are doing and encourage organizations [to check our website regularly for other funding opportunities](#).
- Will applications be in Survey Monkey?

- a. Yes. All applications must be submitted through our grant management portal, SurveyMonkey Apply (SMA). To access United Way’s SMA platform please visit: <https://apply.unitedwaysem.org/>.
- If we have a grant that is closing with United Way, will we still be eligible?
 - a. Yes. This is an open call for applications from both potential and current funded partners who meet the eligibility criteria and funding priorities laid out in the applications.
- How much funding will be distributed? Is there a dollar amount that will be invested in Washtenaw County through these grants?
 - a. Our annual campaigns are still underway, and we are working to determine the total amount available for investment. Of the total that will be available, a minimum of \$1M will be invested to support efforts in Washtenaw County as a commitment of the merger between United Way of Washtenaw County and United Way for Southeastern Michigan.
- Can organizations apply for general operating or a specific project?
 - a. We are committed to providing organizations with flexible, operational funding to amplify impact. We are asking for organizations to fill out a budget and are leaving the use of funds description up to each organization. We ask that organizations stay within a 15% allowance for overhead/indirect expenditures in alignment with the [current Federal de minimis rate](#), and approximately a 30% benefit rate. Aside from these stipulations, budgets can be very flexible to meet the organization’s needs.
- Will the grants allow for indirect costs?
 - a. Yes. We ask that organizations stay within a 15% allowance for overhead/indirect expenditures in alignment with the [current Federal de minimis rate](#).
- When are the 2025 application due dates for the first two funds?
 - a. Applications for the Community Access and Response Fund and the Wraparound Services and Stability Fund will open on March 3, 2025, and are due by 5pm on March 28, 2025.
- Are households living at 30% of the area's median income and requiring deeply affordable housing included within your target group? ALICE often refers to low to moderate households.
 - a. Yes. We want to understand how effective we are at reaching those below the ALICE Survival Budget Threshold, including those below the federal poverty level and those who do not have incomes high enough to cover their basic needs. Within the application you will be asked to identify if you are serving target groups that disproportionately fall below the ALICE threshold and to what extent services are offered in the identified municipalities that have large concentrations of ALICE.

- Can you apply for different funds if you are applying once as a standalone organization and once as part of a collaborative?
 - a. Yes. This is permissible as long as you are not the lead applicant for the collaborative entity.

Determining Which Fund to Apply For

- If our organization has a funding request that is urgent AND that addresses household wellbeing, would we apply for the Community Access & Response Fund or the Wraparound Services & Stability Fund?
 - a. Organizations will have the ability to choose where they best align and can most effectively engage around our shared priorities. We strongly encourage organizations to carefully review the grant resources, including application and rubric ahead of deciding which fund best aligns with their service delivery model and the kinds of support they want to use United Way funding for.
- If our organization offers services/programming that seem to fit into two categories, can we apply for two different grants to support two different initiatives?
 - a. No. Each organization must select the fund where it believes it will have the most competitive application aligned to grant intent, resources available, and expectations for funding.
- Could organizations set up a one-on-one session with United Way to talk about our programs and see where we would best fit?
 - b. Yes. The first step is to email us at partnernetworks@unitedwaysem.org
- Can we apply for both Community Access & Response and Wraparound Services & Stability Funds if they are for different programs within our organization?
 - a. No. We are only accepting one application per organization between these two opportunities.

Evaluation and Scoring

- Are grants being evaluated by United Way staff or community committees?
 - a. United Way remains thoughtful about how we invest and distribute resources into the community for shared impact. Applications will be scored using a rubric (provided in the application materials) and consider annual budget size, current financial position as well as compliance with state and federal regulations. Decisions will be made based on the strength of the application, proposed services, geographic spread, service population, and other considerations to ensure that the portfolio of funded partners is reflective of and is responsive to the diverse needs of our community.

Additionally, our review process will include feedback from community representatives including governance committees, the local human services sector,

businesses, higher education, subject matter experts, community groups and people with lived experience.

- Are collaborative applications for the Wraparound Services Fund scored higher (extra points) because they are collaborative as opposed to an agency applying independently?
 - a. No.
- Will scoring rubrics be shared with applicants?
 - a. Yes. The scoring rubrics along with other grant resources will be available on our [website](#) before the grant opportunities open on March 3, 2025.
- Is past performance a funding award consideration?
 - a. United Way is excited to work with values-aligned community partners in our region. As we look to the future, we take a variety of factors into consideration, including past performance, communication, and timeliness of report submissions.

Community Access and Response Fund

- We've received a Basic Needs grant. Will the Community Access and Respond Fund priorities be similar?
 - a. While our new investment strategy moves away from multiple program-specific funds to a set of three grant opportunities intended to complement each other, we will continue to invest in a variety of programs/services across education, basic needs, advocacy, and racial equity with the understanding that each of these areas is critical to our mission and community vision.

Current Basic Needs grantees will see similarity between some aspects of their current funded work and the priorities of the Community Access and Response Fund and the coordinated care approach of the Wraparound Services and Stability Fund. We hope that many of our current partners can see where their services align with the new framework and that prospective organizations see the framework as an opportunity to explore how they might engage with United Way in new ways.

Wraparound and Stability Fund

- Do you foresee opportunities for grantees to collaborate and learn from each other on best practices?
 - a. Yes, as part of the United Way for Southeastern Michigan Partner Network, organizations will have access to a plethora of resources. These resources include partner network meetings uplifting community resources, volunteer engagement support services, toolkits and support guides on storytelling, advocacy, nonprofit best practices, and more.
- Is there a maximum or minimum number of organizations that can be part of a collaborative application?

- a. No. Collaboratives will submit a single application that includes the lead organization and a list of each additional partner. Under this model, partners will have the discretion and flexibility to choose how they distribute funding among each other to maximize the impact of their work together.
- How will organizations document the work of the collaborative?
 - a. We are providing collaborative applicants with the opportunity to upload supporting documents (i.e. MOUs, contracts, etc.) that illustrate how your group operates and works together.
- Is it more critical to work comprehensively with a smaller number of families, or to scale to much larger numbers with a few chosen assistance supports?
 - a. In general, we value quality over quantity and want to understand the scope and scale of services relative to the grant intent, type of service(s), and requested budget. We recognize that organizations delivering more intensive programming and/or a variety of services and supports to more holistically address the needs of individuals and families may require more staff capacity and a longer service engagement, so fewer individuals may be supported. We anticipate this could be relevant for organizations submitting applications under the Wraparound Services and Stability Fund.
- If we want to expand those pre-existing collaboratives, how will that be considered?
 - a. Collaboratives that can demonstrate they have been working together in some formal capacity for at least one year are eligible to apply as a collaborative entity under the Wraparound Services and Stability Fund. Collaborative applicants will have the opportunity to share the nature of their relationship and proposed future work together in response to the applicant questions. We are not weighing collaboratives who intend to expand more heavily than those who propose to continue their partnerships as they are today.

Connect4Care and Systems Change Fund

- How will invitations to the Connect4Care and Systems Change Fund be determined? When will invitations be extended to organizations for this Fund?
 - We are carefully considering the composition of organizations for this Fund, taking into account partner's capacity, the extent to which they are working at scale to address entrenched community conditions, alignment to United Way's advocacy efforts and strategy, and readiness to engage collaboratively through our Community Information Exchange. Invitations will be extended on or before 1/30/25.
- If selected for the closed-invitation category, can we also submit for one or both other funding streams?
 - a. Organizations supported through the Connect4Care & Systems Change Fund are also eligible to apply for funding in the Community Access & Response Fund OR the

Wraparound Services & Stability Fund only if they are applying to support different programs and costs from the activities funded through the Connect4Care & Systems Change grant. We will consider the merits of these applications against the full spectrum of competitive applications.

Points of Contact for Further Questions

- For more information on these grant opportunities, please visit our grants partner hub website at: UnitedWaySEM.org/Grants.
- For questions or support related to the investment strategy and funding cycle, please contact the Agency Relations team at: PartnerNetworks@UnitedWaySEM.org
- For questions or support related to accessing our grant management platform, SurveyMonkey Apply (SMA), please contact the Community Investments team at: SMA@UnitedWaySEM.org