United Way of South Mississippi

Request for Proposals

2023-2025



United Way of South Mississippi is pleased to announce January 13, 2023, as the opening of the application process for the 2023-2025 Community Impact Grant Cycle. This packet provides information needed to apply for United Way Community Impact Grants *that support programs that help achieve specific community objectives in the areas of Education, Health and Financial Stability.*

***United Way of South Mississippi’s staff and Board of Directors are committed to working closely with a broad range of partners to achieve lasting change and to find and implement solutions that will positively impact lives today and for the next several generations. Our goal is to give children and families the tools and support they need to thrive in our community.***

We thank you for your interest in working with United Way of South Mississippi. As you consider the development of a proposal in response to the RFP, please do not hesitate to contact Julie Schmidt with any questions you may have.

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**Overview**

United Way of South Mississippi’s mission is to rally resources, collaboratives and

leadership to improve the quality of life in South Mississippi.

The Community Impact Grants program is designed to invest in priority projects that further the UWSM mission and strategic community goals. Programs providing services may apply for funding based on real need, quality management practices, collaborative efforts, and evidence of measurable results.

Applicant agencies are required to provide measurable outcomes that result in changes in participant knowledge, attitude, behavior, skills, values, condition or status. Funded programs must also have effective tools and methods in place, addressing both the quantity and quality of services provided that enable program evaluation.

Expectations of all agencies, programs and collaboratives seeking funding:

Proposals will be accepted from organizations with the capacity, competence and experience to accomplish project goals and objectives.

**The UWSM** **Investment Planning Process includes:**

* Identifying those populations and communities that are most at risk of poor educational, income and health outcomes;
* Recognition that UWSM must focus its resources for impact;
* Solicitation of community, agency and donor input; and
* Development of a measurement framework that will deliver positive and measurable community change.

**For its 2023-2025 investments, United Way of South MS seeks to**:

* Partner with organizations with strong leadership, staff, evaluation and financial capacity;
* Focus and leverage resources;
* Invest in evidence-based or evidence-informed best practices;
* Reward cooperation/collaboration;
* Measure results more frequently;
* Participate in UWSM’S annual campaign

**FUNDING AVAILABLE**

UWSM’s ability to invest in community programs is contingent upon the financial success of the annual campaign as well as our continued focus on quality agency performance.The actual amount of funding available will not be determined until the close of campaign on March 30, 2023. A suggested range for grants is $15,000-$40,000 per year of grant cycle.

**Organization Eligibility and Documentation Requirements**

Applicants for UWSM Community Impact Funds are required to meet basic principles and practices of nonprofit management. These criteria must be met before any application will be considered. These standards include:

1. The applicant must meet the IRS standards for nonprofit status 501(c), faith-based organization or governmental entity (Requires copy of IRS 501(c) determination letter, letter of government or faith-based institution).
2. The program must serve residents of Hancock, Harrison, Pearl River or Stone Counties
3. The organization must have held 501c status for 3 years in the UWSM service area.
4. Financial documentation requirements vary based on the organization’s budget:
   1. Any agency that must have an audit completed will provide UWSM with a copy.
      1. **Agency Annual Revenue less than $250,000:**

* If agency is a 501 (c) - a copy of its Certificate of Charities Registration issued by the MS Secretary of State.
* Copy of the most recent financial statement submitted to the agency’s Board of Directors.
* Prior year unaudited financial statement signed by the Board President, Executive Director, and Chief Financial Officer or board meeting minutes approving financial statement.
  + 1. **Annual Revenue greater than $250,000 but less than $499,999:**
* If agency is a 501(c) - a copy of the agency’s Certificate of Charities Registration issued by the MS Secretary of State.
* Copy of the most recent financial statement submitted to the agency’s Board of Directors.
* Prior year financial statement reviewed by a CPA & signed by the Board President, Executive Director, and Chief Financial Officer or board meeting minutes approving financial statement.
  + 1. **Agency Annual Revenue greater than $500,000:**
       - If agency is 501(c) – a copy of the agency’s Certificate of Charities Registration issued by the MS Secretary of State
       - Copy of the most recent financial statement submitted to the agency’s Board of Directors
       - CPA prepared independent audit
  1. UWSM reserves the right to request an audit, financial statement or any other additional financial documentation deemed necessary of any applicant agency or local program regardless of agency revenue and expenses.

5. Provide a copy of your agency’s current operating budget.

6. List of Board of Directors with contact information and terms of service.

7. Applicants must be able to send and receive email. UWSM makes its investment payments through EFT and will request appropriate banking information from agencies receiving funds.

8. The organization must be committed and able to make measurable improvements for clients in one of the strategies for which United Way of South Mississippi will invest funds. Measurable improvements must align with published outcomes and indicators.

9. The agency must be willing and able to enter into a provider “Memorandum of Understanding” with United Way of South Mississippi regarding participation in the United Way of South Mississippi’s campaign and the provision of services in compliance with United Way requirements including submission of beneficiary reports of client demographics, program reports detailing outcomes achieved, and financial reports showing support, revenue and expenses by funded program.

10. Agencies must utilize an accounting software capable of providing a detailed accounting of specific expenditures as part of the quarterly reporting process.

**Community Impact Grant Program Timeline**

**Friday, January 13th** **Request for Proposal (RFP) will be posted on the UWSM website** [www.unitedwaysm.org](http://www.unitedwaysm.org)

**Friday, February 10th** **Letter of Intent, Legal and Financial documents/ Eligibility materials to be submitted online via application located on UWSM website no later than 12 noon**

**Friday, March 3rd Notice of eligibility determination is sent**

**Invitations to apply sent**

**Thursday, March 30th**  **Community Impact Grant applications due no later than 12 Noon**

**Friday, June 23re Notice of UWSM approved investments for 2023-2025**

**STEP ONE: DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

The first step in the application process is to submit documentation of the agency’s eligibility for a UWSM Community Impact grant. The organization’s legal and financial documents should be submitted electronically via the below link **by 12 Noon on February 10th, 2023.**

[**https://epledge.unitedwaysm.org/Volunteer/AgencyRegistration.jsp**](https://epledge.unitedwaysm.org/Volunteer/AgencyRegistration.jsp)

The link may also be found at [www.unitedwaysm.org](http://www.unitedwaysm.org)

**STEP TWO: REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION**

The financial documents will be reviewed by a committee of financial staff and volunteers. Applicants will be notified of their eligibility by March 3, 2023. Those who are eligible will be invited to submit a full application.

**Please note that an invitation to submit a proposal does not guarantee funding or full funding of the amount applied for.**

**STEP THREE: GRANT APPLICATION**

Those organizations selected to submit a full proposal will be sent the application instructions and application. **Proposals are due by noon, March 30, 2023. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.** Community Impact Teams will evaluate the grant application, visit the applicant program site and interview staff prior to making investment recommendations to the UWSM Board of Directors who will make the final funding decision in June, 2023.

**UWSM Investment Goals, Strategies and Measures**

UWSM’s goals, strategies and minimum required measures are listed below. **Only proposals that align with at least one of the UWSM Goals and Strategies will be considered for funding**.

**Goal 1 - Education:** Children 0-5 to meet appropriate developmental milestones prior to entering kindergarten and/or children K- 6th to achieve and maintain grade level reading.

Strategy

1. Support evidence-based early care and learning programs that measure and enhance developmental and academic success.
2. Support quality school based and after school tutoring for at-risk children, measuring the children’s progress toward grade level reading.
3. Establish summer/intercession learning programs that last a minimum of three weeks to prepare children to enter kindergarten and/or prevent summer learning loss in reading skills.

Indicator measures, include but not limited to:

* # & % of children whose developmental levels are assessed within 1 month of entering the program.
* # & % of children that meet all age-appropriate developmental milestones at the end of the academic year.
* # & % of children who progress in their readiness for kindergarten or the next level of pre-k education as measured by an identified assessment tool.
* # & % of children participating in the program that read on grade level by the end of the school year and are promoted to the next grade (By grade – 1st graders, 2nd grades, 3rd graders).
* # & % of children in summer/intercession learning programs who do not lose ground in their reading level.

**Goal 2 - Health:** Educate community members on the importance of good health and raise awareness of basic health and human services.

Strategy

1. Support established programs that increase access to healthcare and healthy living initiatives. Including affordable prescription medication.
2. Support programs that raise awareness regarding health topics such as prevention, management and treatment of health conditions.
3. Decrease the number of individuals and families living with food insecurity.

Indicator measures include but not limited to:

* # & % of program participants receiving healthcare services at the beginning of the program.
* # & % of program participants receiving healthcare services at the end of the program.
* # & % of children whose BMI, grades and attendance are assessed within 1 month of entering the program.
* # & % of children whose BMI decreased, and grades and attendance increased at the end of the program.
* # & % of individuals and families receiving access to food and healthy living resources at the beginning and end of academic year.

**Goal 3 - Financial Stability:** To empower community members to gain stable financial ground by providing them with the necessary tools and resources towards a path of financial empowerment and freedom.

Strategy

1. Support programs that provide access to career pathways through job training and employment readiness services.
2. Support programs hosting financial literacy opportunities and teaching self sufficiency through positive money management and credit counseling.
3. Decrease the number of families living in homelessness by supporting agencies that provide affordable housing options.

Indicator measures include but not limited to:

* # & % of individuals seeking employment at beginning of program.
* # & % of individuals successfully employed at the end of the program.
* # & % of individuals served through financial literacy programs.
* # & % of individuals seeking permanent housing at beginning of program.
* # & % of participants residing in permanent/semi-permanent housing at the end of program.

**Goal 4- Family Services and Support Goal:** Using two generation collaboration, families will be move toward stability and have the support needed to improve learning success for their school aged children.

Strategy

1. The developmental and academic progress of the families’ children is measured and, through consultation among collaborative partners, impact on both generations served is tracked.

Indicator measures include but not limited to:

* # & % children whose developmental or academic levels are assessed within 1 month of entering the program.
* # & % of children that meet all age appropriate developmental or academic milestones on entering the program.
* #/% of children referred for additional developmental screening or tutoring
* # & % of children that meet all age appropriate developmental or academic milestones at the end of the academic year.
* # & % children who progress in their readiness for kindergarten or the next level of pre-k or elementary education as measured by an identified assessment tool.

Strategy

1. Parents are engaged to assess family needs and develops goals/plans to meet them, including parenting education

Indicator measures include but not limited to:

* # & % of parents meeting the program criteria (including CPS removing children from the home) who agree to participate in a structured program to increase family stability.
* # & % of parents that demonstrate at least 33% progress toward their service plan goals within nine months of enrollment.
* # & % of parents who are reunified with their children and family stability is measurably increased.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION CRITERIA

Programs will be evaluated using criteria outlined below. Volunteers will use these investment criteria to evaluate all proposals. The Investment Criteria listed below are grouped into four key categories:

### Linkage to the Community Impact Agenda and United Way’s Priority Focus Areas and Strategies for Funding

* + Program aligns with one or more of the Community Impact Agenda goals and strategies and United Way funding priorities.
  + Organization and program can demonstrate the ability and experience to directly benefit the local community by serving the identified community needs.
  + Community conditions are clearly stated and well documented.
  + Program summary describes goals and key components of the program.
  + Program is mission-driven and based on best practices of the industry that achieve results and meet the needs of the community.

### Program Finances

* + **Fiscally Sound and Responsible**: Demonstrates a history of being a fiscally sound organization, maximizing available resources; has a clear and understandable accounting system that meets current accounting industry standards.

### Accountable, Effective and Efficient:

1.) Demonstrates stable and effective management (effective system oversight and governance).

2.) Has accounting procedures, budgets and financial audits that meet acceptable criteria.

* + **Supported by the Community**: Has a history of community, volunteer, and client support demonstrated by program revenue and volunteer involvement.

### Collaboration, Innovation, and Best Practices

* + Minimum: Program integrates its goals and services with community organizations and groups to address critical community needs.
  + Best practice: Program engages in collaborative activities in which multiple organizations or groups identify a common mission and work to achieve that mission through shared resources and shared accountability.

### Commitment to Measuring Outcomes and Providing Results

* + Program aligns with UWSM outcomes that represent positive change for program participants.
  + Appropriate evaluation/data collection plans and procedures are in place.
  + Program achieves demonstrable results that link to one or more specific impact strategies for action as prioritized by UWSM.

These guidelines will be used in the form of a scorecard to assist volunteers in their evaluation of funding requests and in the funding decision-making process.

**Community Impact Volunteers**

The Community Impact Grant Process is reviewed and assessed by local volunteers who are trained by United Way staff and ultimately provide funding recommendations to the UWSM Board. Each community impact team will use the Program Investment Criteria as its guide for the evaluation process.

There are three kinds of volunteer teams: the Community Impact Council who will act as a liaison between the volunteers and the Board of Directors, the Finance team who determines the eligibility of each applicant organization, and the Community Investment Team who evaluates the grant applications, conducts site visits and makes funding recommendations to the UWSM’s Board of Directors.

**Responsibilities of UWSM Agency Partners**

Achieving shared goals for Grantee's clients, the community, and UWSM's service area requires that UWSM and Grantee work together toward achieving these goals. The Grant Agreement will spell out specific requirements for each organization to include:

* Timely and accurate quarterly reporting of program performance;
* Present to UWSM Board of Director’s meeting as requested;
* Annually submit new audits, 990s and a recent unaudited financial statement;
* Actively promote United Way of South Mississippi through marketing and communications efforts. UWSM encourages Grantee's acknowledgement of UWSM support;
* Consistently recognize UWSM as a funding partner of this program on your organization’s media announcements and program collateral materials;
* Be available for public speaking engagements during the Annual Campaign, addressing the critical issues that your agency addresses, but not necessarily promoting your agency;
* List your organization on the South Mississippi Volunteer HUB web page provide details, logo, and pictures of program activities. <https://gulfcoasthub.galaxydigital.com/>
* Encourage volunteer participation in UWSM sponsored events.

***United Way of South Mississippi continues to serve Hancock, Harrison, Stone and Pearl River Counties in addition to encouraging partnerships and collaborations with our neighboring United Ways. The work of thousands of volunteers and the generosity of the contributors to our annual campaigns demonstrate our mission to “rally resources, collaboratives, and leadership to improve the quality of life in South Mississippi.” Our vision is clear: we are improving outcomes in education, income, and health for everyone in South Mississippi by giving children and families the tools and support they need to thrive in our community.” By partnering with donors, employers, nonprofits, faith-based groups and government agencies, United Way brings a coordinated approach to solving community problems.***