

United Way of Oxford-Lafayette County



United Way of
Oxford-Lafayette County

Call for Proposals & Community Investment Policies & Procedures Manual

Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Grant Cycle

Submission Due Dates:

Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application: March 3, 2025

Program & Community Coalition Grant Applications:
April 1, 2025

Section 1. Community Investment Process

A. Overarching Community Investment Principles

The United Way of Oxford-Lafayette County (UWOLC) is committed to investing its resources in ways that create a lasting community impact by preventing problems before they occur, prioritizing long-term solutions over quick fixes, and promoting community-wide approaches that serve all who live in the Lafayette-Oxford-University (LOU) community.

At the same time, the UWOLC recognizes there are many people living in our community who are at times unable to meet their families' basic food, shelter, and medical needs. The UWOLC believes no one should be without a safety net. As a result, the UWOLC balances its commitment to lasting change with a focus on ensuring our community's basic needs are met. Over time, we hope more and more families achieve financial stability and self-sufficiency, ultimately reducing the demand for such services.

To maximize its community impact, the UWOLC maintains high standards for its own investment process as well as the programs and coalitions that receive UWOLC funding. First and foremost, the UWOLC identifies high-priority community issues through periodic community needs assessments, with input and feedback provided by LOU's diverse communities. The UWOLC also ensures that available funds are awarded through a careful, fair, and thorough evaluation process that responds to those high-priority issues. Finally, the UWOLC holds funded organizations fiscally responsible and requires their programs to be well-managed and engaged in outcome measurement as well as continuous program improvement.

B. Areas of Focus and Funding Preferences

In 2008, United Way Worldwide announced the following goals for the United States:

- Improve **education** and cut the number of high school dropouts – 1.2 million students every year - in half.
- Help people achieve **financial stability** and get 1.9 million working families - half the number of lower-income families who are financially unstable - on the road to economic independence.
- Promote **healthy** lives and increase by one-third the number of youth and adults who are healthy and avoid risky behaviors.

In 2018, United Way Worldwide initiated a program designed to achieve the following goals over a ten-year period:

- **Education:** 95% of students will graduate high school ready for college and career
- **Income:** Five million people will get better jobs
- **Health:** 90% of people will be healthier
- **Community Cohesion:** Engage ten million people to build inclusive and stronger communities

In keeping with these broad national goals (but based on local community input), the UWOLC has identified the following areas of focus and funding preferences:

Health

Focus: To improve people's health, with a focus on programs that help the community and its members:

- Achieve and maintain healthy lifestyles for adults and children
- Support older adults and adults diagnosed with mental illness

Education

Focus: To help children and youth achieve their potential, with a focus on programs that help the community and its members:

- Enter kindergarten ready to learn
- Read at grade level by the fourth grade
- Earn a high school (or equivalent) degree

Income/Financial Stability

Focus: To promote financial stability and independence, with a focus on programs that help the community and its members:

- Attain family-sustaining employment
- Create affordable housing opportunities
- Manage expenses and build savings

Basic Needs

Focus: To meet the community's basic needs, with a focus on programs that ensure that community members have:

- Sufficient food
- Adequate shelter
- Disaster/emergency relief services.

C. Program & Community Coalition Funding

The UWOLC solicits applications from as well as funds specific programs and community coalitions that can demonstrate alignment with the focus areas and funding preferences above. The UWOLC does not fund an organization's overall operations.

Awarded funds must be used exclusively to support the proposed program in Lafayette County. Eligible uses of funds include but are not limited to staff salaries, staff and volunteer professional development, equipment and material purchases, travel expenditures, and program-specific overhead costs. Other program-specific expenses may also be eligible for UWOLC funding. UWOLC does not fund bricks and mortar expenditures.

D. UWOLC Outcome Measurement Requirements

The UWOLC is committed to funding programs and community coalitions with clearly defined outcomes and a plan for measuring as well as responding to results. All awardees are required to measure and report on the outcomes of their funded program(s); see Program Grant Application, Community Coalition Grant Application, and Reporting Requirements for details. The UWOLC will provide guidance regarding outcome measurement through an Application Workshop and other ongoing opportunities.

Section 2. Eligibility

A. Agencies/Programs Eligible for UWOLC Funding

The UWOLC funds programs that improve health, advance education, promote financial stability, and meet basic needs for Lafayette County residents. Specifically, the UWOLC funds programs that are aligned with the focus areas and funding preferences above.

The UWOLC funds programs run by 501(c)(3) organizations. Exceptions to this requirement may be made for other nonprofit or public entities (e.g., libraries, schools, and universities) in the event a non-501(c)(3) runs a program that aligns with a UWOLC focus area or funding preference. For-profit businesses are ineligible even if they run programs aligned with UWOLC focus areas or funding preferences.

The UWOLC Board of Directors has adopted a Diversity and Inclusion Statement of Principle and an Anti-Racism/Ethnic Discrimination Statement. The UWOLC accepts applications from and funds programs for which eligibility is determined in ways that reflect the referenced statements.

All organizations that receive UWOLC funding—whether community funds or designated funds—are required according to United Way Worldwide guidelines to complete an Anti-Terrorism Certification. The UWOLC will also run all organizations that receive UWOLC funding against the Anti-Terrorism Watch List (formally known as the Specially Designated Nationals List, available [here](#)).

B. Agencies Not Eligible for UWOLC Funding

Even if they have 501(c)(3) status, the following types of organizations are ineligible for UWOLC funding:

- Highly controversial organizations
- Organizations primarily political in nature
- Organizations that benefit animals

Any organization that does not complete an Anti-Terrorism Certification or that appears on the Anti-Terrorism Watch List (Specially Designated Nationals List) is ineligible to receive UWOLC funding.

Any organization that is determined to have mismanaged funds through any relevant channel, including but not limited to the UWOLC's application and reporting processes, is ineligible to receive UWOLC funding.

C. Community Coalitions Eligible for UWOLC Funding

Community coalitions in which the UWOLC serves in a leadership capacity as the lead support partner and/or fiscal agent (e.g., LOU Reads Coalition) must submit a Community Coalition Grant Application. The UWOLC funds community coalitions that promote quality education, good health, and financial stability for Lafayette County residents as well as coalitions that align with the organization's focus areas and funding preferences. If the UWOLC serves as the primary fiscal agent for a community coalition, a Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application is not required. Please note members of the UWOLC Board of Directors and UWOLC staff are not allowed to prepare a Community Coalition Grant Application.

Section 3. Two-Stage Proposal Process

Submissions must be received via email at kurt@unitedwayoxfordms.org by 5:00 p.m. on the designated due dates.

A. Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application

All agencies seeking to receive UWOLC funding must submit financial and organizational documentation, which will be reviewed by the UWOLC's finance committee. The Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application may be submitted at any time between the announcement of the Call for Proposals and March 3, 2025. All required documents must be received by the deadline on March 3, 2025.

If the UWOLC serves as the primary fiscal agent for a community coalition seeking grant funds, a Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application is not required.

Please note applicants planning to submit more than one Program Grant Application should only submit one Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application. The UWOLC's finance committee will provide feedback to the community impact committee (CIC) based on the submitted documentation.

In the Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application, the applicant will provide basic information about the agency, assure compliance with UWOLC fiscal policies, and submit required financial and related materials in PDF form (see the Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application for a detailed list of the materials that are required to be submitted).

B. Program Grant Application

Only agencies that have submitted the required Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application by the deadline may submit Program Grant Applications to the UWOLC. Completed Program Grant Applications must be received by April 1, 2025.

A separate Program Grant Application must be submitted for every program for which UWOLC funding is sought. The Program Grant Application includes detailed instructions on the information required.

As previously mentioned, the UWOLC is committed to measuring the impact of the funds invested in a program. For each program seeking grant funds, the applicant must complete an Outcome Measurement Plan targeted on at least two indicators. The Program Grant Application includes detailed instructions on outcome measurement and the Application Workshop described below will include guidance for applicants on this section.

C. Community Coalition Grant Application

Community coalitions must submit the Community Coalition Grant Application to the UWOLC by April 1, 2025. The Community Coalition Grant Application should be submitted to request grant funds for operating expenses and/or to maintain certification. A Program Grant Application should be submitted by a coalition if the requested grant funds will be used for ongoing programs and one-time projects. Like other applicants, a separate Program Grant Application must be submitted for every program for which UWOLC funding is sought. The Community Coalition Grant Application includes detailed instructions on the information required.

As previously mentioned, the UWOLC is committed to measuring the impact of the funds invested in a community coalition. For each community coalition seeking funding, the applicant must complete an Outcome Measurement Plan targeted on at least two indicators. The Community Coalition Grant Application includes detailed instructions on outcome measurement and the Application Workshop described below will include guidance for applicants on this section.

D. Application Workshop

Prospective applicants are encouraged to attend the FY 2025-2026 Application Workshop, which will provide guidance on how to develop a strong application and insight regarding the application review process. The workshop will be held via Zoom at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. Any applicants interested in participating should email UWOLC Executive Director Kurt Brummett at kurt@unitedwayoxfordms.org to request the Zoom meeting information.

Although the workshop will not give applicants specific language for use in individual Program Grant Applications, it will be designed to assist in creating viable proposals.

Section 4. Two-Stage Review Process

A. Evaluation of Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Applications

The finance committee of the UWOLC Board of Directors will review all Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Applications. The finance committee will evaluate the submitted documentation and provide feedback to the community impact committee (CIC) to consider in making its award recommendations to the UWOLC Board of Directors. Incomplete applications may not be considered and could negatively impact award recommendations as well as grant awards.

As previously noted, if the UWOLC serves as the primary fiscal agent for a community coalition, a Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Application is not required.

B. Evaluation of Program Grant & Community Coalition Grant Applications

In determining grant awards, the UWOLC's Board of Directors will be advised by four advisory committees that match the organization's four focus areas of education, health, financial stability, and basic needs. The advisory committees will consist of UWOLC board members as well as other community volunteers who are knowledgeable about community needs, effective programming within a particular focus area, and outcome measurement.

Each advisory committee will evaluate the Program Grant Applications and Community Coalition Grant Applications submitted within its particular focus area. The committees will consider the severity of the community need being addressed as well as its alignment with the UWOLC's focus areas and funding preferences, the anticipated strength of the program/coalition in addressing the identified need, and the anticipated strength of the program/coalition in improving community conditions so as to reduce the need in the future. The clarity and completeness of Program Grant Applications and Community Coalition Grant Applications, including the outcome measurement plan, will affect the advisory committees' evaluations.

Taking into account the advisory committees' evaluations and feedback from the finance committee, the community impact committee (CIC) of the UWOLC Board of Directors will make funding recommendations to the full board for its review and approval. Agencies will be notified of FY 2025-2026 grant awards by June 16, 2025. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 grant cycle will run from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

Section 5. Post-Award Considerations

A. Agreement of Responsibilities

By June 30, 2025, each partner agency and community coalition receiving a grant award under the FY 2025-2026 funding cycle will be required to submit a signed Agreement of Responsibilities to the UWOLC via email at kurt@unitedwayoxfordms.org. Each grant recipient will receive a copy of the Agreement of Responsibilities when the UWOLC sends out its award notifications.

B. Period of Performance and Funding

Funded programs will be conducted between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026.

C. Quarterly Payments

The UWOLC will issue quarterly payments to its program partner awardees in July 2025, October 2025, January 2026, and April 2026, pending receipt of required reports based upon local data. Any designations received by the UWOLC on behalf of the agency will be the first dollars awarded in the allocation process.

D. Mid-Year and Year-End Reports

Awardees must report at mid-year (by January 31, 2026) and year-end (by July 31, 2026) on beneficiaries, expenditures, and outcomes using local data. Failure to submit the required reports may result in grant funds being withheld until a report using local data is provided or the award being terminated. Awardees should notify the UWOLC of any significant change in the program or agency as soon as it occurs and no later than the next report.

Previous awardees applying for FY 2025-2026 funding will also be required to report on their FY 2024-2025 beneficiaries, expenditures, and outcomes as part of the Program Grant Application and Community Coalition Grant Application submission processes.

E. Fundraising Restrictions

As outlined in detail in the Agreement of Responsibilities (see above), awardees are not allowed to solicit local employee groups at any time. Awardees are also not allowed to conduct campaigns that encourage designated contributions to the UWOLC, regardless of whether the campaigns are focused on encouraging designations to their specific organizations or in general.

Section 6. UWOLC FY 2025-2026 Grant Cycle Timeline

February 1, 2025: Call for Proposals is distributed and announced

February 12, 2025: Application Workshop (Zoom, 10:00 a.m.)

March 3, 2025: Primary Fiscal Agent Pre-Applications are due by 5:00 p.m.

April 1, 2025: Program Grant and Community Coalition Grant Applications are due by 5:00 p.m.

June 16, 2025: Applicants are notified of award decisions on or before this date

June 30, 2025: Signed Agreement of Responsibilities is due from each awarded partner agency

July 1, 2025: UWOLC FY 2025-2026 funding period begins

July 15, 2025: First quarterly checks are scheduled to be mailed

October 15, 2025: Second quarterly checks are scheduled to be mailed

January 15, 2026: Third quarterly checks are scheduled to be mailed

January 31, 2026: Mid-Year Reports are due

April 15, 2026: Fourth quarterly checks are scheduled to be mailed

June 30, 2026: UWOLC FY 2025-2026 funding period ends

July 31, 2026: Year-End Reports are due

Section 7. UWOLC Contact Information

Please email any questions regarding the call for proposals to UWOLC Executive Director Kurt Brummett at kurt@unitedwayoxfordms.org.