

United Way of Central Maryland 2023 Neighborhood Grant Questions and Answers

This document includes answers to frequently asked questions as well as questions asked during the Neighborhood Grant Information Session held on November 2, 2022 and those submitted to United Way via email.

GENERAL

When and where can I find the slide show presentation and recordings for the Neighborhood Grant Information Session and the Grant Writing Workshop?

These presentations and recordings as well as all other Neighborhood Grant materials can be found on our funding opportunities webpage: <https://www.uwcm.org/funding-opportunities-for-organizations>

What is the website where I can find the RFP?

Same as above: <https://www.uwcm.org/funding-opportunities-for-organizations>

The application is not showing up in the application portal.

It is live. Go to <https://www.uwcm.org/funding-opportunities-for-organizations>. There you will find a link to access the online application through our CommunityForce portal.

If more than one person is working on the same application, do they use the same password to login?

Yes, but you have the ability to invite others in your organization to collaborate on the application with you. Instructions for that can be found in your dashboard.

Will the grant cycle be the same next year?

The grant cycle for this Neighborhood Grant opportunity is February 1 through October 21, 2023. United Way has not established grant cycle dates beyond this current application.

For the video submission, are you able to upload a video from a cellular phone? The last grant it stated that it needed to be on YouTube.

Videos filmed using a cell phone are perfectly acceptable. However, your video must be submitted in the form of a YouTube video by creating the video in YouTube and cutting and pasting the video link into the application. Unfortunately, this is the only way CommunityForce can accept your video.

You have a slide that showed how you can check off multiple jurisdictions, yet you are asking us to identify one jurisdiction for our application. Please clarify.

Within the *General Information* section, we are asking you to identify all of the jurisdictions that your organization serves. Within the *Project Description and Narrative* section, you must identify the one jurisdiction you are proposing to serve with this Neighborhood Grant.

What if your organization has a collaborative shared leadership structure (no CEO, no exec director)?

Within the *General Information* section, *Executive Director/CEO* please provide the name(s) of one or more members of your shared leadership team. Include their Title(s) as you best see fit (e.g., Leadership Team Member).

Please clarify – is the Neighborhood Grant funded by public funding or private funding?

United Way of Central Maryland will utilize private funding sources for the 2023 Neighborhood Grant.

We are a neighborhood group that does not have a nonprofit designation; however, we partner with an organization which does, and which is our fiscal agent. Does the term organization apply to our fiscal sponsor, or to our neighborhood group?

For the sake of this RFP, the term Organization refers to the group that will be implementing the proposed project, in this case your neighborhood group. All information provided within the *Organizational Information* section application should be for your neighborhood group, with the following exceptions:

- Indicate “Yes” that you will be using a Fiscal Agent/Sponsor for this application.
- Provide the requested information about your Fiscal Agent/Sponsor.
- Under *Required Organizational Documents*, provide the three required documents for your Fiscal Agent/Sponsor.

What is the role of a fiscal agent for this grant?

In addition to providing the required documentation with the application, if a grant is awarded, the fiscal agent will have a role in ensuring good stewardship and fiscal accountability for the grant funds. In the case the applicant does not have nonprofit status, the grant agreement will be between United Way and the identified fiscal agent.

ELIGIBILITY

Must a nonprofit be registered in Maryland? Or can an organization apply if it’s incorporated in DC but serving Maryland?

Nonprofits registered outside of the state of Maryland are eligible to apply. Please remember that all applicants must demonstrate that they have a strong connection to the community/neighborhood they are proposing to serve, and as with all applicants, they would need to make the case that their proposed project aligns with the **four main project criteria**:

- Is community-focused
- Is resident-driven
- Creates connections among residents
- Shows promise of community impact

Our service area includes Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Howard Counties.

Can a fiscal sponsor support more than one applicant?

Yes, a fiscal agent can support more than one applicant.

Can an organization submit an application for a project, and also serve as a fiscal agent for another applicant?

Organizations may submit a maximum of one application. Multiple applications submitted by an agency will not be reviewed. However, you may serve as a fiscal agent for an entirely different organization and project.

How do you define “neighborhood?”

Many neighborhoods or communities are defined by themselves. There is not a strict definition for the purpose of this grant. You may define it as you like. You may identify a neighborhood/community that is defined by geographic boundaries. We will also consider applicants that define a community of people they propose to serve - based on common interests, characteristics, and/or experiences. Either way, it is important that the applicant effectively describes how the people they will serve make up a neighborhood and/or community.

What is the total operating budget amount for an applying organization?

To be eligible, applicants must have a total annual operating budget of **\$500,000 or less** in their current fiscal year.

If the organization’s budget is over \$500,000 but the work in the specific neighborhood or jurisdiction is under \$500,000, can the organization apply?

No. The established \$500,000 maximum budget eligibility criteria is applied to the applicant organization’s total annual operating budget.

Do you need to submit all three fiscal documents if you’re under \$300,000?

If you are a smaller organization, you can submit an organizational budget, profit/loss statement or Form990. Just one - not all three.

How old can the certificate of good standing be?

It must be within your current fiscal year. If you have a current certificate, you may upload it. Additionally, you may submit a screenshot showing that your organization is currently in good standing. Go to the Maryland Department Assessments & Taxation website - <https://dat.maryland.gov/businesses/Pages/Internet-Certificate-of-Status.aspx> under Businesses, select Business Entity Search, search for your organization, confirm you are in good standing, take a screen shot with a date time stamp and upload it to your application.

My organization is new as of 2021, and they have their 501c3 and MD certifications. However, they have not yet filed taxes, so they do not have a 990 or other audited financials. Are they still eligible to apply for this grant opportunity? And if so, is there other documentation that you would like to see?

Yes, if your organization had annual gross income from charitable organizations of \$300,000 or less last year, we would also accept a copy of your current annual organizational budget.

Do applicants need a building or infrastructure to be eligible for a Neighborhood Grant?

We do not have parameters regarding the use of a building/physical space.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES / USE OF FUNDS

Can inside capital improvements for a community resource organization such as an arts organization in a neighborhood apply?

Applicants may use grant funds for capital expenses. As with all applicants, they would need to make the case that their proposed project aligns with the **four main project criteria**:

- Is community-focused
- Is resident-driven

- Creates connections among residents
- Shows promise of community impact

Would an existing farmers market operation that's forming a 501c3 be funded?

Applicants need to have current nonprofit status to be eligible to apply or they can apply in partnership with a fiscal agent that has nonprofit status.

Do general operating funds for a community center qualify?

We are not looking for general operating grant proposals. We are looking for grant applications that meet the main selection criteria outlined in the RFP, and that address at least **one of three project categories:**

- Build Vibrant Neighborhood,
- Inspire Community Connections; and/or
- Empower Local Leaders.

Can the application be the expansion of a current successful project that may focus on a different part of the neighborhood?

Yes, you can have an asset-based approach. You can build upon successful things by deepening what you are doing, expanding to engage and/or serve more people, or working with different populations or location. If you have demonstrated impact to build on, that would strengthen your application.

Please provide a more in-depth explanation of ineligible religious activities:

Religious organizations with nonprofit status are eligible to apply to conduct non-sectarian activities that support a community/neighborhood and its members/residents.

What if the project serves and impacts more than one jurisdiction?

You must select one jurisdiction that you are proposing to serve with your Neighborhood Grant.

Can an organization submit one application that technically serves two programs?

Yes, as long as the application focuses service on supporting one community/neighborhood and is aligned with the four main criteria established for the Neighborhood Grant.

Can a portion of the funds be used to hire neighborhood residents to maintain a green space (e.g., mowing grass)?

Yes

Can funding support staff salaries/costs be included in the budget for this grant?

Yes, not for general operating expenses, but to support staff time on the Neighborhood Grant project.