

2027-2028 COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANTS



Guidelines & Frequently Asked Questions

Questions? Contact Julia.Helton@uwwf.org

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ABOUT UWWF AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

United Way of West Florida is a local 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive. Driven by our motto, "United is the Way," we live out our mission to unite our community and leverage resources to improve lives by building partnerships, valuing every individual, and leading meaningful change.

UWWF's Community Investment Grants support local nonprofit programs that create measurable impacts for ALICE ([Asset, Limited, Income, Constrained, Employed](#). [More information pg. 8](#)) individuals and families across Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

This competitive process is designed to:

- **Give Locally, Stay Locally:** Combine undesignated community-raised dollars into a central fund, ensuring these resources stay entirely within Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.
- **Uphold High Standards:** Award investments following nonprofit best practices to build partnerships and engage people to serve others.
- **Drive Targeted Innovation:** Partner with funded agencies that act as innovators to drive change and measurably improve critical community needs.

Four Pillars of Impact

Applicants must submit one application for a program that aligns with a specific UWWF Impact Area:

- **Healthy Community:** Improving the health and well-being of all.
- **Youth Opportunity:** Helping young people realize their full potential.
- **Financial Security:** Building financial stability and strength.
- **Community Resilience:** Addressing urgent needs today and advancing a better tomorrow.

UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS CYCLES

1. **Grants are shifting from a one-year to a two-year grant cycle.**
2. **Grants will focus on Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) households.**
3. **UWWF will be limiting the number of funded programs to 15.**

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

Nonprofits interested in applying for a UWWF Community Investment Grant must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be incorporated and registered as a nonprofit in the state of Florida and certified as a tax-exempt charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Have an independent Board of Directors that meets regularly.
- Maintain current bylaws that guide the organization's operations.
- Have been operational for at least 12 months and can provide the most recent complete year of financial documentation.
- File the current IRS Form 990 (not a 990N e-Postcard) or provide documentation explaining why a filing exemption applies.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Nonprofits interested in applying for a UWWF Community Investment Grant must meet the following eligibility requirements in their program:

- Must align with at least one of UWWF's four impact areas
- Must serve Escambia and/or Santa Rosa County residents
- Must have a strong focus on the ALICE population in addition to serving households below the federal poverty level
- Must report on the following information:
 - Income
 - Age
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Locations served
 - Etc.

Not sure if you qualify? Review the eligibility criteria above, and attend a training session. For more information, visit uwwf.org/community-investment-grants or email Julia.Helton@uwwf.org with any questions.

STEPS TO APPLY FOR A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT

1. ATTEND A VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON MANDATORY GRANT TRAINING SESSION.

- Trainings are to provide an overview of the grant process and a chance to ask UWWF staff questions.

2. ENSURE YOUR NONPROFIT HAS AN ACTIVE E-CIMPACT ACCOUNT WITH CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION.

- Setting up an account: Agencies will be required to provide a summary, mission, and primary points of contact.
- Existing account: Ensure your agency account is up to date with contact profiles.
- All grant communication and updates are through the system. Please ensure everyone in your organization who needs to receive updates and information on the grant is listed.

3. SUBMIT A LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) ON E-CIMPACT.

- The LOI will also require agencies to upload financial documentation, outline agency processes, and outline requests for funding for their program.
- This will be reviewed by the UWWF Finance Committee, made up of UWWF Board members, to ensure proper financial processes and the sustainability of the organization.

4. IF SELECTED TO ADVANCE, COMPLETE THE FULL GRANT APPLICATION ON E-CIMPACT.

- Agencies are required to provide detailed descriptions of their programs, complete a budget of the program, explain how UWWF funds will be spent, and more.

5. PRESENT TO THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PANEL ASSIGNED TO REVIEW THEIR APPLICATION.

- Trained volunteers will review grant applications and attend presentation days based on their panel assignments.
- The presentation is where your agency expands on the program, introduces staff and board members involved in the program and agency, and answers questions volunteers may have.

27-28 GRANT PROCESS TIMELINE FOR APPLICANTS	
LETTER OF INTENT AND GRANT TRAININGS	July 7 (virtual) July 9 (in-person) July 13 (virtual)
LETTER OF INTENT WINDOW	Opens - July 13 at 9am Closes - August 3 at 5pm
FINANCE COMMITTEE REVIEWS LETTER OF INTENT SUBMISSIONS	August 4 - August 18
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT APPLICATION WINDOW	Opens - August 21 Closes - September 21
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT VOLUNTEER EVALUATOR VIRTUAL INFO SESSION	September 1 September 3
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT VOLUNTEER TRAININGS	September 18 (virtual) September 21 (in-person) September 24 (virtual)
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT PRESENTATIONS	October 19-October 28 (Impact areas will be assigned specific days)
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT EVALUATIONS DUE	November 3
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT PANEL DELIBERATIONS	November 5-November 6
FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS PRESENTED TO UWWF BOARD OF DIRECTORS	Early December
APPLICANTS NOTIFIED OF FUNDING	Early to mid December

FUNDING POPULATION FOCUS

All UWWF funding must support programming in Escambia and/or Santa Rosa counties.

- Agencies will be asked to identify specific zip codes they are serving within the two counties.

Escambia County	Santa Rosa County
Downtown Pensacola – 32501, 32502, 32503	Gulf Breeze (Midway, Tiger Point) – 32561, 32563
Greater Pensacola – 32504, 32505, 32506, 32514, 32526, 32534, 32559, 32591	Milton – 32570, 32583
Warrington/Perdido – 32507	Pace – 32571
NAS Pensacola – 32508	Navarre – 32566
Pensacola Beach - 32561	Jay - 32565
Cantonment/Century – 32533, 32535	
Molino – 32577	
McDavid - 32568	

FUNDING REQUEST AMOUNTS, BUDGETS, AND ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Agencies can request between **\$30,000 and \$100,000** for their 2027-2029 Community Investment Grant. Funded programs will receive between \$15,000-\$50,000 annually for two years. For each program awarded funding, we plan to fund 100% of the requested amount. This is part of the reason for the shift to funding up to 15 programs. To be eligible for funding, agencies must submit financial documents for the most recently available fiscal year.

Annual Budget	Financial Documents Required
Over \$750,000	Audit
\$500,000 - \$749,999	Audit or Financial Review
Below \$500,000	Board Approved Financial Statements

Agencies are also required to provide an organizational budget and most recently filed IRS Form 990. 990 Postcards are not accepted for the Community Investment Grant.

ALICE POPULATION

UWWF works to serve households of families and individuals known as ALICE. ALICE is an acronym for “Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed”. These are households that work yet still struggle to afford the basic cost of living. This is a way for us to understand our community members and their needs better.

Applicants are encouraged to take time to understand ALICE and determine if their program aligns with the ALICE population and the purpose of the UWWF grant. Resources include a deeper dive into demographics, the labor force, and household makeups in the state and counties. Below are resources for your review:

- [United for ALICE](#)
- [Florida ALICE](#)
- [Escambia County ALICE](#)
- [Santa Rosa County ALICE](#)
- [ALICE Income Status Tool](#) - compares ALICE Household Survival Budget costs to income, tailored by location and household composition, to determine if a household is Poverty-Level, ALICE, or Above the ALICE Threshold.

Applicants will be required to provide how ALICE households are or will be served through their programming. ALICE households are broken down by income thresholds.

A table defining top and bottom income thresholds of ALICE households. Just example!

	Family of 4 (Aproximatley)		Single Adult		Single Senior	
	Bottom	Top	Bottom	Top	Bottom	Top
Escambia	\$33,000	\$52,188	\$15,960	\$33,948	\$15,960	\$38,424
Santa Rosa	\$33,000	\$55,080	\$15,960	\$34,752	\$15,960	\$38,976

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

If a program receive funding, the agency must complete quarterly reports covering the following periods:

Quarter 1 - January to March

Quarter 2 - April to June

Quarter 3 - July to September

Quarter 4 - October to December

The following information must be collected and reported on in e-Cimpact:

- Target population demographics (it is acceptable for some responses to include 'Unknown'):
 - Ethnicity/Cultural Origin
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Geographic area
 - Counties served
 - Zip codes served
 - Veteran status
 - Disability status
- Household types based on income
 - ALICE Households
 - Number of adults
 - Number of children
 - Number of seniors
 - Poverty Households
 - Number of individuals in the household
- Outputs - number of individuals tracked
- Outcome - number of individuals who achieved outcome

INVESTMENT IN UWWF'S IMPACT AREAS

Outcome measurements:

If your agency **cannot** provide this information and data, your agency is ineligible for a Community Investment grant.

In the Letter of Intent, agencies are required to select the impact area the program aligns best with. This includes selecting the output that best relates to the outcome of the impact area. Only one output is selected per program.

This section:

- Demonstrates how investments are contributing to change in communities.
- Shares key data points to show meaningful progress on shared impact goals.
- Provides accountability to donors, stakeholders, and the communities served.
- Establishes a consistent framework for comparing results across funded programs.

Outputs vs. Outcomes:

Outputs are the direct, measurable activities your program produces – such as the number of individuals served, meals provided, or classes held. Outcomes are the changes or benefits that result from those activities – such as improved food security, increased employment, or enhanced quality of life.

Both are required to demonstrate program effectiveness.

Agencies should have a documented data collection process in place prior to submitting a full application. Inability to collect, track, or report the required data at any point during the grant period may result in disqualification from current or future funding cycles.

INVESTMENTS IN UWWF'S IMPACT AREAS CONTINUED

Youth Opportunity	
Outcome	Develop foundations for youth success
Outputs	Number of children (K-3) reading at or above grade level
	Number of children (0-5) who meet age-appropriate developmental milestones through early childhood programs
	Number of youth who demonstrate improved academic engagement through school- or community-based programs and/or individualized supports
	Number of middle and high school youth who demonstrate improved social and soft skills
	Number of youth served that graduate high school on time

Healthy Community	
Outcome	Improve community health and wellbeing
Outputs	Number of individuals who demonstrate increased ability to manage their own health needs
	Number of children and adults who adopt healthier behaviors (e.g., improved nutrition, increased physical activity, and progress toward a healthy weight)
	Number of individuals who improve or maintain their emotional, mental, and/or social health
	Number of individuals with increased access to healthcare services and supports

INVESTMENTS IN UWWF'S IMPACT AREAS CONTINUED

Financial Security	
Outcome	Build household financial stability and independence
Outputs	Number of individuals who increase disposable income by accessing benefits and/or reducing costs
	Number of individuals who secure affordable housing and/or access appropriate financial products or services
	Number of individuals who complete job skills training and secure employment
	Number of individuals who demonstrate improved financial behaviors (e.g., budgeting, saving, and credit management)

Community Resilience	
Outcome	Improve disaster preparedness and resource awareness
Outputs	Number of individuals who receive short-term relief services
	Number of individuals who increase their knowledge of disaster preparedness and/or environmental sustainability practices
	Number of individuals who are better prepared for disasters and/or have improved access to recovery resources
	Number of individuals who are trained to implement, or benefit from, environmental sustainability practices

GRANT EVALUATION PROCESS

Community Investment Grants are reviewed by trained community volunteers serving Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

Evaluators use a rubric to score applications. The rubric is divided into different sections:

- Program Description
- Target Population
- Program Capacity and Long-Term Viability
- Outcome Measures
- Collaboration
- Program Budget

The rubric will be provided to applicants when the grant application opens.

1. Community Investment Panel volunteers review applications and attend presentations
 - a. Four panels assigned applications within focus areas - Healthy Community, Youth Opportunity, Financial Security, and Community Resilience
2. Volunteers evaluate applications using the rubric
3. Panels deliberate to make funding recommendations
4. Recommendations are presented to UWWF's Board of Directors for approval

FUNDED AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

If an agency's program receives funding, the following is required:

- Sign and submit a Memorandum of Agreements.
 - CEO and Board Chair signature required.
- Agencies must complete quarterly reports on the funded program.
- Updated information in the 211 Northwest Florida database (if in the system).
- Updated staff information in e-Cimpact.
- Host a Time to Shine visit coordinated with UWWF staff, board and volunteers.
- UWWF must hold a presentation to agency staff to share resources and services.
- UWWF asks that agencies make a good faith effort to offer agency employees and/or volunteers the opportunity to support UWWF.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE NEW 2-YEAR CYCLE

Q: WHY IS UWWF MOVING TO A 2-YEAR CYCLE?

A: The transition to a two-year cycle allows UWWF and our partner agencies to take a broader, more strategic view of community impact. By evaluating programs over a longer period, UWWF can better measure true outcomes rather than short-term outputs.

Q: IF WE RECEIVE A 2-YEAR GRANT, DO WE HAVE TO REAPPLY AFTER YEAR 1?

A: No. Approved grantees receive funding for both years as part of a single award. Year 2 funding is contingent on satisfactory submission of the quarterly reports and continued compliance with the grant agreement. Before releasing a second year of funding, UWWF wants to confirm the agency spent the first year's funds appropriately and as budgeted. In addition to verifying appropriate use of grant funds, this report gives the grantor insight into the agency's broader financial stability and capacity to sustain program delivery into the second year.

Q: CAN THE AWARD AMOUNT CHANGE BETWEEN YEAR 1 AND YEAR 2?

A: In most cases the award remains the same. However, UWWF reserves the right to adjust Year 2 funding based on the Year 1 report, significant organizational changes, or budget considerations. We will communicate any adjustments.

Q: WHAT IF OUR PROGRAM CHANGES SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THE 2-YEAR PERIOD?

A: Contact UWWF staff immediately. We understand that programs evolve. Minor adjustments can often be accommodated through a program modification request. Significant changes will require a formal amendment to the grant agreement.

ELIGIBILITY & FIT

Q: CAN FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS APPLY?

A: Yes, faith-based organizations are eligible to apply, provided the program for which funding is requested serves all community members regardless of religious affiliation, and no grant funds are used for religious activities or instruction. Organizations must also have been an operational 501(c)(3) for at least 12 months.

Q: WE ARE A NEW ORGANIZATION. ARE WE ELIGIBLE?

A: Organizations must have been in operation for at least 12 months and have at least one completed fiscal year of audited (or reviewed) financials. If you do not yet meet these requirements, we encourage you to connect with our team to discuss capacity-building resources.

Q: CAN WE APPLY FOR MORE THAN ONE PRIORITY AREA?

A: No, agencies can only submit one application.

APPLICATION & PROCESS

Q: WHERE DO WE SUBMIT OUR APPLICATION?

A: All applications are submitted through our online grants portal, e-Cimpact. Paper or email submissions will not be accepted.

Q: IS A LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) REQUIRED?

A. Yes, a LOI is required to be considered for funding.

Q: WHAT ATTACHMENTS ARE REQUIRED?

A: Required attachments include: Current Florida Charitable Solicitation Registration 56904, Current IRS Form 990 or 990-EZ (postcards are not accepted), Financials, Articles of Incorporation, Agency Bylaws, Non-Discrimination Policy, and Board of Directors.

Optional documentation includes: IRS Form 990 or 990-EZ extension, Management Letter (from CPA to your organization) if one was prepared, and Family Board Member Relationship Clarification

Q: CAN WE SUBMIT THE SAME APPLICATION WE SUBMITTED LAST YEAR?

A: Your application must reflect the current 2-year cycle, including a 2-year budget narrative and updated outcomes framework. We recommend treating this as a new application rather than updating a prior submission.

REPORTING & COMPLIANCE

Q: WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE QUARTERLY REPORTS?

A: Agencies must collect and report on the following information and data: ethnicity/cultural origin, age, gender, geographic area (Counties served and Zip codes served), veteran status, disability status, ALICE households, households living in poverty, and outputs and outcomes.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS IF WE CANNOT MEET OUR YEAR 1 OUTCOMES?

A: We recognize that community work is complex. If you are falling short of targets, please reach out to your grants manager before the report deadline. We value transparency and will work with you to understand the context and determine appropriate next steps.

ALICE

Q: WHAT IS ALICE?

A: A metric that represents the number of households in a specific geographic area that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level but less than the basic cost of living for the county.

Q: WHY IS THE GRANT FOCUSING ON ALICE HOUSEHOLDS?

A: ALICE households throughout Escambia and Santa Rosa counties are struggling financially and often do not have access to additional government and public services and benefits. There is a clear mismatch between wages and cost of living.

ALICE CONTINUED

Q: WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ON ALICE?

A: Agencies can visit UnitedforALICE.org for more information and tools on ALICE.

Q: HOW DO I KNOW IF A HOUSEHOLD IS WITHIN THE ALICE THRESHOLD?

A: Agencies can use two tools to see if a household is within the ALICE threshold. The first is the ALICE Survival Budget which reflects the minimum cost to live and work in the current economy and includes housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, technology, and taxes. It does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college or retirement. The ALICE Income Status Tool can also be used. The ALICE Income Status Tool calculates these expenses: housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and technology, plus taxes, and a contingency fund (miscellaneous) equal to 10% of the budget.