



## 2026-2028 Community Impact Investment Process Grant Guidelines

This document provides prospective nonprofit applicants with information to determine if they qualify and may wish to apply for United Way of Dubuque Area Tri-States (UWDATS) funding as part of the 2026-2028 Community Impact Investment Process. The document includes:

- **Brief Overviews of:**
  - UW Funding Program Criteria, Evaluation Process, & Funded Partner Requirements
- **Key Dates**
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

UWDATS is not able to fund all worthwhile grant applications. Each year, the UWDATS Board of Directors determines the amount of grant money available, based on financial conditions and annual fundraising campaign results. Any specific amount of funding for the second year of this renewal extension cycle is also contingent upon the agency/program demonstrating progress relative to targeted program outcomes.

### United Way Funding Program Criteria

It is the goal of UWDATS to fund the strongest proposals based on established evaluation criteria with heavy emphasis on documented program performance. All grant applications are scored based on the following:

- Fit with the United Way focus area of preventing and/or reducing poverty in the areas of healthy communities, youth opportunities, and financial security;
- Strong connection between community need for the program, client population, and non-duplication of services with existing programs\*;
- Community collaboration;
- Measurable outputs & outcomes; and
- Program budget that is reasonable and appropriate for the activities required to achieve proposed outcomes;
- Emphasis on the organization's commitment to Dignity, Fairness, and Belonging.

\*While UWDATS strives to not fund duplicate programs, it may fund similar programs if the level of community need warrants it.

UWDATS recognizes the importance of collecting data to help in storytelling efforts and in articulating how the work being done translates into a valuable return on investment and impacting poverty in our communities. The UWDATS's 2026-2028 Community Investment Plan that contains a list of community priorities, outputs, and outcomes can be found on the UWDATS website under About Us/Community Impact Grant.

This funding is focused on supporting programs that address targeted community-wide issues related to those experiencing poverty or who are at risk of poverty, with research-based strategies to make significant and sustainable progress and are operating within the 10-county UWDATS service area. See UWDATS website under About Us/Community Impact Grant for detailed service area information. Collaboration and

partnerships among community organizations are encouraged. If the proposed program is jointly sponsored by multiple organizations, one 501(c)3 must serve as the primary designee or anchor organization in order to serve as the contact to United Way and funding administrator for the grant award.

**UWDATS does not fund** capital campaigns, building renovations, direct payments to individuals such as scholarships, political causes, or programs that include inherently religious activities such as worship, prayer, proselytizing, or instruction.

## Evaluation Process

The UWDATS evaluation process is led by staff and the Community Impact Committee Chair who is a member of the UWDATS Board of Directors. The grant applications are evaluated by a volunteer Investment Review Panel who represent a wide range of local academics, professionals proficient in health and human services, community leaders and local investors. As UWDATS is a community-based fundraising organization, local investors also have a role in evaluating grant applications. All individuals receive training on community needs and the process of reviewing grant applications. The panel's recommendations are submitted to the Community Impact Committee of the UWDATS Board of Directors for review and vetting. Final review and approval is the responsibility of the UWDATS Board of Directors. All board-approved funding decisions are final.

An important part of the evaluation process is providing feedback to applicants. After the 2026-2028 Investment Process is completed, UWDATS will provide organizations with overall feedback from the Investment Review Volunteers upon request. Specific scores will not be released.

UWDATS makes its evaluation point values for the grant applications available through a rubric. The Scoring Rubric can be found on the UWDATS website under About Us/Community Impact Grant.

Please note the grant software, e-Clmpact, does not allow the use of bullets (please use dashes) and spell check.

**Grant Application Website:** <https://agency.e-cimpact.com/login.aspx?org=17175U>

## Funded Partner Requirements

Agencies awarded funds will be required to sign a Funded Partner Agreement agreeing to:

- Provide Quarterly Financial Reports
- Submit Midyear (December 31<sup>st</sup>) and Year End (June 30<sup>th</sup>) outcomes reports which include;
  - Beneficiary numbers (total number of unduplicated people served, county, and gender. Reporting on race and ethnicity will not be required but highly encouraged as it strengthens our ability to understand who is being served and tells a more accurate story about community needs.),
  - Outcome and outputs data,
  - Success story: a minimum of one; two are preferred.
- Have at least one organizational representative attend quarterly funded partner meetings
- Identify and promote the partnership with UWDATS
- Run a workplace campaign at your agency, offering employees the opportunity to donate to UWDATS

This is not an exhaustive list of all Funded Partner agreement requirements.

## Key Dates

### Community Impact

**January 12, 2026:** Grant Guidelines are available and Grant Application is open on e-ClImpact. UWDATS will accept any grant questions in writing. Questions will be answered in writing via a Funding/Process FAQ, which will be updated and posted on the UWDATS website each Friday (with the last postdate of February 6, 2026) so that all have access to the same information. Names of organizations asking questions will not be disclosed.

**January 13<sup>th</sup> 3 pm – 4 pm and January 14<sup>th</sup> 9 am – 10 am Community Grant Information Sessions:** Virtual overview of grant process with Q&A. Highly recommended for all applicants. Teams links will be posted on the UWDATS website.

**February 13, 2026:** All grant applications must be submitted online by 5 pm. No late submissions accepted.

**February 23 – March 31, 2026:** Volunteers will review grants. Applicants may provide clarification to any questions asked of them during the review process.

**\*April 30, 2026:** Grant Awards announced (\*dependent upon UWDATS Board approval).

**June 1, 2026:** Funding begins.

## Funding FAQ

**Our agency has received United Way funding in the past. Can we apply for the 2026-2028 Community Impact Investment Process?**

Yes, you can apply for funding if you meet the grant guidelines.

**What are the minimum requirements to apply for Community Impact funding?**

- Be recognized as an organization exempt from federal income tax under I.R.S. Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Be incorporated and actively conducting business for at least two years at the time of this application.
- Programs must impact those experiencing or at risk of experiencing poverty and align with the pillars of healthy communities, youth opportunities, or financial security.
- Programs must serve participants in all or parts of the UWDATS 10-county service area.
- Have an independent, volunteer governing body.
- Have an annual audit or another form of financial review and a recent Form 990.

**If my organization is headquartered in a county outside the 10-county region that UWDATS serves but offers programming within the 10-county region, can I apply for funding?**

Yes. However, your organization must be able to break down the data and report on the service area within our 10-county region. If unable to break down the data and report by our service counties, you will not be eligible. The agency must also ensure that UWDATS dollars are only being spent in the UWDATS service area.

**How do I know if I am eligible for Community Impact funding?**

Eligibility is determined through the Eligibility Questionnaire on UWDATS's e-ClImpact site. If you complete the form and are eligible for funding, you will have access to a grant application.

## **Can my organization submit multiple grant applications in the 2026-2028 Investment Process?**

No. Qualifying organizations may only submit one request.

## **Are there funding guidelines?**

Funding requests can be no less than \$5,000 and are capped at 20% of the organization's annual operating budget. United Way best practices encourage all funded programs to have diversified funding streams.

Annual funds awarded must be expended by May 31. Any unspent funds must be returned to UWDATS.

## **Who decides how grant applications are funded?**

Led by UWDATS staff and Community Impact Committee Chair, the grant applications are evaluated by a volunteer Investment Review Panel made up of a wide range of local academics, professionals proficient in health and human services, community leaders and local investors. These individuals receive training on community needs and the process of reviewing grant applications. The panel's recommendations are submitted to the Community Impact Committee of the UWDATS Board of Directors for review and vetting. Final review and approval are the responsibility of the UWDATS Board of Directors. All board-approved funding decisions are final.

## **Am I guaranteed grant funding in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year?**

Second year renewal funding is based upon UWDATS Board approved funding allocation levels. Each year, the UWDATS Board of Directors determines the amount of grant money available, based on financial conditions and annual fundraising campaign results. Any specific amount of funding for the second year of this renewal extension cycle is also contingent upon the agencies demonstrated progress relative to their targeted program outputs and outcomes, as well as agency engagement. Organizations will complete a Midyear Report/Renewal Application that provides output and outcome data for consideration of renewal. Additionally, agency information such as meeting attendance and deadline compliance will be shared with the review panel.

## **For More Information**

Contact the UWDATS Director of Community Building & Impact for questions via email at [paula.paiderlicht@dbqunitedway.org](mailto:paula.paiderlicht@dbqunitedway.org).

Additional information can also be found on our website: [www.dbqunitedway.org/community-impact-grant](http://www.dbqunitedway.org/community-impact-grant)