

To: Writers and Readers of Cape and Islands United Way Letters of Intent
From: Peter Clark, Chair of the Community Impact Council, and
Jackie Barber, Community Outreach and Administrative Manager
Date: January, 2026

Re: IMPORTANT GUIDANCE for Community Impact Grant Letters of Intent (LOIs)

This document introduces the 2026-27 Letter of Intent for the United Way Impact grant funds, which is now available at <https://www.caapeandislandsuw.org/loi>. These expectations should be reviewed before submitting your LOI. They incorporate the Rubric Scoring Criteria as well as the Scoring Scale. The criteria are designed to make as clear as possible to writers and to reviewers what Cape and Islands United Way (CIUW) expects.

CIUW will offer a workshop open to all, but it is particularly advised for agencies applying for the first time. It will be available in a Zoom meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 3:00pm. Please request an invite from Jackie Barber by emailing her at jbarber@uwcapecod.org.

A. Basic Guidelines:

1. The LOI is the first of two steps. In the past, more than half of the LOI submissions have been invited to move to the full application step.
2. A non-profit organization may apply for only one Impact grant per year.
3. CIUW Impact grants range from \$5000 to \$25,000.
4. Priorities for the grants are defined by CIUW within 4 impact areas--Improving Educational, Encouraging Financial Stability, Promoting Health, and Creating Housing Stability. Each area has two strategies, and each strategy has specified community outcomes see <https://www.caapeandislandsuw.org/our-work>. Successful LOIs must select from these established strategies and show a clear correspondence to the LOI project proposed. General requests for support across multiple programs will not be acceptable.
5. Furthermore, CIUW prefers that those who receive grants will strive to meet the following items a-h below. While there may be no direct questions on the LOI about most of them, if you advance to the Full Application phase, we will want to see that your organization is working to implement the following:
 - a. Program predominantly assisting those who face economic and/or other disadvantages.
 - b. Data-driven measurement of the quality of the results/outcomes of the program, using local data to the greatest degree possible
 - c. Application of “best-practices” to achieve the specific outcomes.
 - d. Trauma-informed approaches to clients to the degree applicable
 - e. Results-based outcome measurement
 - f. Collaborative efforts with other agencies to achieve maximum results.
 - g. Clear financial data
 - h. Program focused only on the Cape (loosely meaning east of the Canal) and Islands, although applicant may be headquartered off the Cape.
6. Impact grants are not allowed for capital improvements for non-profit facilities.

Also, CIUW cannot consider funding to support the general staffing budgets of day-care and pre-school programs.

8. CIUW offers three other types of grants, other than Impact Grants, so if your LOI does not meet #3 and #4 we will suggest that you look at one of the other types. Similarly, if the Pillar under which you have submitted your LOI is not the most appropriate, we will assign your LOI to the one we feel fits more appropriately.
9. Prior funding is not a determinant of continued funding for a project. Fulfillment of CIUW accountability procedures and competition in the current pool of applicants may impact further funding in any given year.

B. LOI Submission

1. Submission is through an on-line process at: <https://www.caapeandislandsuw.org/loi>
2. The written answers have a mandatory stated maximum word count. We urge clear, focused language that achieves the specific content and criteria for each question. The full application will provide space for more detail on most areas.
3. Questions before submission can be sent to Jackie Barber at jbarber@uwcapecod.org, and follow-up conversation is welcomed.

C. Budget

1. You are asked to indicate into which one to four categories your grant request will be allotted.
2. When selecting, please use the following list as a guide:
 - A. Personnel Expenses: (Indicate whether any expense areas are contracted with outside providers)
 1. salaries
 2. benefits
 3. mileage
 4. other staff incentives
 5. payroll/human resources services
 6. payroll taxes
 7. staff training
 8. conference fees and travel
 9. other (specify)
 - B. General Operating/Overhead Expenses: (Indicate whether any expense areas are contracted with outside providers)
 1. rent
 2. utilities
 3. insurance
 4. advertising/marketing
 5. fund-raising
 6. licensing and other fees
 7. property taxes
 8. client/participant transportation
 9. program design, monitoring, evaluation
 10. legal services
 11. accounting/bookkeeping
 12. web design/maintenance

13. custodial/maintenance
14. other (specify)
- C. Capital expenditures (Major purchases of items with long-term value; note CIUW does not fund improvements to facilities)
 1. machinery/equipment
 2. appliances
 3. vehicles
 4. electronics
 5. furniture
 6. other (specify)
- D. Supplies/materials (Short-term, expendable operating needs)
 1. educational supplies
 2. recreational supplies
 3. purchased software
 4. office supplies
 5. food supplies
 6. participant incentives
 7. other (specify)

C. Question Content and Rubric Criteria

1. Each question states the content to be provided. Each question will be read and scored with criteria in mind. Specific criteria have been added to each question of the LOI at the link in B.1 above.
2. Each LOI question receives one of the scores below, and these aggregate into an overall score:

Scoring rubric:

9—Exceeds criteria
7—Meets all criteria
5—Meets most criteria
3—Meets some criteria
0—Fails to meet criteria

3. The rubric is intended to assist writers and readers in apply expectations. While CIUW understands that it is an inexact scoring tool, it does improve consistency among readers and provides clearer discussion of the perceived merits of an LOI.
4. The rubric for rating LOIs is one of several sources of evidence to assess quality, along with prior experience with CIUW requirements, other knowledge of the applicant, other similar services in the same geographical area, and other factors.

D. LOI Questions 9, 15, 17, and 18 will be rated and scored using the “scoring criteria” included with each below:

9. State the unmet need to which your program is responding, with a strong preference for local Cape and Islands data to support need: (limit of 100 words)

Scoring Criteria: The need(s) and the degree to which they are unmet are clearly defined and based on local data to the greatest degree possible. The needs align well with the Pillar and Strategies selected for this grant.

15. Define who will be served under this grant and state the approximate non-duplicated number to be served during the program: (limit of 100 words)

Scoring Criteria: Those to be served are clearly associated with the unmet needs being met. The numbers estimated are reasonable and the non-duplicated count is clearly differentiated from total activities/services to be offered.

17. State the primary activities/services/inputs to be provided by the program within the grant period: (limit of 100 words)

Scoring Criteria: What the services/activities are and how they will be delivered are clearly defined and distinguishable from the benefits. Services/activities will be delivered with appropriate frequency and quality. There is a definition of what frequency of service delivery or activity will constitute a successful level of involvement to include an individual in the count of non-duplicated participants.

18. State the primary expected results/benefits for the participants; state the relevant metrics/data points to be used for measuring, where possible (limit of 100 words)

Scoring Criteria: The benefits are clearly defined in terms of improving the lives of the participants and distinguishable from the service/activities provided to create the benefit. The outcomes are aligned with the Desired Community Outcomes for the selected Impact Area Strategy (ies). The types of data and the appropriate changes in that data to signify meaningful benefits are described well.