

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

October 19, 2022

Re: **IMPORTANT UPDATE** -- Expectations for Community Impact Grant Letters of Intent

This document introduces an updated version of the Letter of Intent for the United Way Impact grant funds, which is now available at <https://www.capeandislandsuw.org/loi>. This new version should be reviewed before submitting your LOI because it now incorporates the **Rubric Scoring Criteria** as well as the Scoring Scale. The **criteria** are designed to make as clear as possible what Cape and Islands United Way (CIUW) expects in the narrative segments, numbers 8-14. We are also incorporating here advice from the Zoom workshop on October 6, 2022.

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. Any non-profit organization may apply for one Impact grant per year;
3. CIUW Impact grants range from \$5000 to \$30000;
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. These are at: <https://www.capeandislandsuw.org/our-work>.
5. Impact grants are not allowed for capital improvements for non-profit facilities.
6. CIUW has three other forms of grants, so if your LOI does not meet #2 and #3 above we are happy to talk with you about one of the other forms.

B. LOI Submission

1. Submission is through an on-line process at: <https://www.capeandislandsuw.org/loi>
2. The written answers have no word limit, but we urge clear focused language that achieves the specific content and criteria for each question.
3. Questions before submission can be sent to Jackie Barber at Jbarber@uwcapecod.org, and follow-up conversation is welcomed.

C. Question Content and **Rubric Criteria**

1. Each question states a target for content to be provided and each narrative question will be read and **scored with criteria** in mind. Please craft each answer to meet these expectations.
2. The **specific criteria have been added to each applicable question of the LOI** at the link in B. 1 above. PLEASE BE VERY CAREFUL TO REVIEW THEM.
3. Each LOI question receives a score, and these aggregate into an over-all score:
Scoring rubric: 4—Exceeds criteria
3—Successfully meets all criteria
2—Adequately meets most criteria
1—Minimally meets some criteria
0—Fails to meet criteria
4. CIUW understands that the rubric is an inexact scoring tool intended to assist writers to have the same expectations. It also improves consistency among readers and provides clearer discussion of the perceived merits of an LOI.

D. Specific LOI Questions

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**1. Select the Community Impact area to which you are applying**

- a. There are specific projects that might fit under the community outcomes of more than one Impact area. Be careful as you select, and ask advice if in doubt. Be certain that your project aligns with the specifics of the area you select.
- b. CIUW reserves the right, with notice to you, to move your project to a different area if it seems more appropriate. Also, we may advise a different funding process if we feel there is not significant connection to one of the prescribed community outcomes.
- c. As the program narrative questions are written the connection back to the specifics of the Impact Area will be crucial.

2. Program title

- a. Moving forward in the LOI, “program” is the term for the project you wish to have funded, the specific set of activities designed to achieve specific outcomes. Most of the questions focus on it but a few request information about the broader agency or organization. It is fine with CIUW if your program is the sole work of your agency; but if it is a piece of a larger picture CIUW will be interested in how it fits.

3. Total annual cost of program for which you are requesting funding**4. Total requested from United Way**

- a. Both are for the specific project; and you will be asked to be more detailed about the funding requested under question 13. CIUW is prepared to work with programs for which we are the sole funding agency; although the responding to issue of sustainability is more challenging.

5. List prior Cape and Islands United Way funding. Include year, funding amount and name of funded program.

- a. CIUW is open to maintaining funding for the same program, while at the same time hoping that agencies can reduce relying too heavily on Impact grant funding.
- b. This question should delineate past funding for this program, but also should list CIUW funding for other programs as appropriate.

6. What areas would this program serve? (select as many as apply)

- a. This question wants only the areas in which outcomes of the program being funded are expected

7. Organization’s Mission Statement**8. Agency Description (brief overview of your organization, including purpose, who/where you serve, vision)**

- a. If the applicant has multiple programs, these questions 7 and 8 ask for the broad perspective. But even if there is only one program, these questions need to avoid the reader wondering how and why this request to fund this program is being brought. There will need to be clear alignment of these answers with question 12 or an explanation there of any lack of fit.
- b. Question 7 is the formal approved mission; question 8 is related organizational information.
- c. Note that vision essentially asks: What is your organization’s hope for the future if your mission were fully accomplished.

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

9. Program Description (brief overview of program and who it serves)

- a. What will be provided and what will be the results of receiving it? How provided?
- b. Use of proven best practices is an important element of this answer. While local proof of effectiveness is very desirable, the answer may draw on state or national successes that point to successful use here.

10. What is the need in our community and how is the need for the program established?

- a. The strongest answer has the most local and objective measure of need possible, based on data from your own agency, town, school district, or county. Less strong but valuable is objective data from like communities or state or national measurement. Least strong is anecdotal observation.

11. Program Goals (Be specific about actual program results/anticipated outcomes, include number of clients served).

- a. To the greatest degree possible this answer should distinguish outcomes from inputs. It should try to differentiate a service provided to people (input) from a desired result of receiving it(outcome). What will be the intended impact of the program for those served?
- b. Are the outcomes measurable?

12. How does the program for which you are requesting funding fit into the total scope of your organization?

- a. How important is CIUW funding to the success of this program?
- b. If your agency has one program, how did this become the one? If multiple programs exist, how is this related to or a departure from others?
- c. This answer can help establish the capability of the agency to successfully run this program,

13. Please itemize the costs associated with your funding request.

- a. Whether a CIUW grant is a portion of the total program cost or full funding, we need to know how it breaks down among personnel, supplies, contracted services, and other such expenses.
- b. Please be sure to include costs and revenue sources for just the program requesting funding, not data for the entire organization.

14. Describe future sustainability plans for this program.

- a. Are future sources of non-CIUW funding foreseen that could eventually replace CIUW some or all funding?
- b. This answer may also deal with forms of agency support and collaboration with others.