

Greater Twin Cities United Way 2022-2025 Community Investments Request for Proposal Guidelines

Summary: Greater Twin Cities United Way seeks to award grants to organizations that meet the requirements of this Request for Proposal.

Applications are due Thursday, **October 14 at 4pm** in our grant portal. Please visit our [website](#) to begin your application.

Key Dates for Applicants

Application Opens	September 8, 2021 9am
RFP Application Information Session (Sign-up here)	September 8, 2021 1:30-3pm
Applications Due	October 14, 2021 4pm
Applicants Notified of First Round Decisions	December 2021
Site Visits Held	January 2022 – March 2022
Applicants Notified of Final Round Decisions	May 2022
Grant Term Begins	July 1, 2022

For more information, contact:

Email inquiries: rfp@gtcuw.org

Many community stakeholders provided insight, input and feedback into the Community Investments funding opportunity. Greater Twin Cities United Way would like to extend a special thank you to the Community Advisory Committee that helped develop this Request for Proposal.

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Introduction

Greater Twin Cities United Way exists to fuel lasting change toward our vision of a community where all people thrive regardless of income, race, or place. Our mission is to unite changemakers, advocate for social good, and develop solutions to address the challenges no one can solve alone.

Greater Twin Cities United Way seeks to disrupt the extent to which income, race, or place predicts a person's ability to thrive. We do so by advancing household stability, educational success, and economic opportunity, toward outcomes where:

- Episodes of homelessness and food insecurity are rare, brief, and nonrecurring.
- All children and their families enter kindergarten ready to learn and thrive, and all youth have the skills, mindsets, and relationships to choose and direct their own future success.
- All adults enter the workforce prepared for skilled employment and increased wealth.

These outcomes reflect the voices and goals of our community, and we work in partnership to achieve them.

We leverage our resources and relationships to create lasting change by **investing in proven practices** to provide a stabilizing response to urgent needs, **innovating promising strategies** to catalyze sustainable, systemic impact and **multiplying success** through coalitions and policy change.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks to fund organizations advancing greater racial equity through direct services that align with Greater Twin Cities United Way's outcomes.

Specifically, the RFP will prioritize organizations led by and serving Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander communities and communities of color, pursuing responsive, community-powered work, and hold a clear vision for a more equitable and just future for those they support.

Funding Opportunity Overview

- Greater Twin Cities United Way **will provide annual grants** for organizations working in the [nine-county metro](#) in one or more of our five portfolio areas: Housing, Food Security, Career & Future Readiness, Early Childhood Education, and Economic Opportunity.
- Greater Twin Cities United Way **makes a three-year commitment to fund organizations**. However, grants are annual and will be renewed each year. Grant amounts may vary year to year based on available Greater Twin Cities United Way funds.
- Grants are **unrestricted, general operating funds** with a requirement for grantees to track outcomes over the grant period. Grant funds may not be used for direct lobbying and capital improvements.
- Organizations that receive grants will **report annually on a mix of required and grantee-determined outcomes that illustrate impact and progress over time** toward Greater Twin Cities United Way's [long-term outcomes](#).
- The minimum grant size is \$50,000 annually. Grant awards will be no more than 20% of an organization's budget. Grant awards will be dependent on total funds available and total number of applicants. In past funding cycles, most grants ranged from \$50,000-\$150,000 annually.
- Greater Twin Cities United Way seeks to **fund organizations with a strong focus on racial equity** and will prioritize these organizations when making decisions about grants.
- Greater Twin Cities United Way seeks to **fund organizations in its [nine-county service region](#)**.
- Greater Twin Cities United Way **welcomes applications from organizations doing work in partnership**. If applying as a partnership, select one organization to be the "lead applicant". The "lead applicant" will fill out the application on behalf of the partnership. If funded, the "lead

applicant” will be the organization that receives grant funds. Please see Frequently Asked Questions on our [website](#) for more information on applying as a partnership.

- **Organizations new to Greater Twin Cities United Way are encouraged** to apply. To learn more about being a Greater Twin Cities United Way grantee, click [here](#).

Organization Eligibility Requirements

In order to apply to this RFP, your organization must answer YES to all of the following criteria.

Please note that there are additional eligibility criteria specific to each portfolio area. Please go to the relevant portfolio area section below to learn more.

- Your organization must be a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization OR a fiscally sponsored group by an organization that is classified as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.
- 50% or more of the people served by your organization are living at or below [200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines](#).
- 50% or more of the people served by your organization reside in the [nine-county metro region](#).
- Your organization provides direct services to individuals.
- Your organization has been in operation for at least two years OR you are a fiscally sponsored group that has been in operation for at least two years.
- Your organization’s current budget is at least \$250,000 OR you are a fiscally sponsored group and your group (not simply your fiscal sponsor) has a budget of at least \$250,000.
- For organizations required to complete an audit, your most recent audit DOES NOT contain a [Going Concern disclosure](#) and your audit opinion is [not qualified and free of material weaknesses](#).

For any special considerations related to these criteria, please contact us to determine your eligibility.

Note on Financial Review: Your organization must meet the financial standards for Greater Twin Cities United Way grantees based on a review of your financial documents in order to receive funding. You will be asked to upload financial documents as part of this application.

Funding Priorities

Organizations that meet or exceed the following criteria will be most competitive for funding:

- Your organization serves at least 60% of people who identify as Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander and/or People of Color.
- At least 50% of your organization’s executive leadership team (defined as Director-level and above) identifies as Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander and/or a Person of Color.
- Your organization demonstrates strong community involvement and responsiveness to community issues and solutions.
- The history and mission of your organization is explicitly focused on supporting and advancing the goals of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander communities and/or Communities of Color.
- Your organization’s work aligns with and drives change toward Greater Twin Cities United Way’s long-term outcomes.
- Your organization articulates how its work creates impact for the people it serves.

- Your organization demonstrates a strong approach to the continuous improvement of programs and services.
- Your organization holds a clear vision for future success or impact that drives change toward racial equity.

Portfolio Areas

Organizations must apply in at least one portfolio area. Where there are multiple strategies within a portfolio, organizations may choose one or more. Organizations are welcome to apply in multiple portfolio areas if you meet the eligibility requirements. We anticipate funding organizations working in a single portfolio area as well as those working in multiple portfolio areas. Applying in multiple areas will neither advantage nor disadvantage an organization in the scoring and review process.

See the tables below for the eligibility requirements, funding priorities, and required outcome measures for each portfolio area. We will ask organizations that receive grants to report annually on required outcome measures broken down by race/ethnicity, income, and county.

Please reach out to Greater Twin Cities United Way if you have questions about whether your organization meets these considerations.

PORTFOLIO AREAS & LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Early Childhood Education: *Parents & children enter kindergarten ready to learn & thrive.*

Career and Future Readiness: *Youth are equipped with the knowledge, skills, mindsets and relationships to choose and direct their own future path and contribute to their communities.*

Housing: *Homelessness is prevented where possible and where not, is rare, brief, non-reoccurring.*

Food Security: *People have access to food that is nutritious, culturally-relevant and affordable, toward long term food security.*

Economic Opportunity: *Adults enter the workforce prepared for skilled employment and increased wealth.*

Early Childhood Education

<p>Early Childhood Education – Eligibility</p> <p><i>In order to apply in this portfolio area, organizations must answer YES to all of the following criteria. Organizations may apply under one or both strategies.</i></p>
<p>Strategy 1: Early Childhood Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs and services are Early Childhood Education program that serve children ages birth through Kindergarten. • At least 60% of families served by programs are at 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or below at program entry.
<p>Strategy 2: Parenting Programs</p>

- Programs and services serve the parents/caregivers of children from ages birth through Kindergarten.
- At least 60% of families served by programs are at 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or below at program entry.

Not Eligible: District public, private, or charter public PK-12 schools or school-operated programs

Early Childhood Education – Funding Priorities

Organizations that meet or exceed the following criteria will be more competitive for funding.

Work in this area should be focused on ensuring that parents/caregivers and children enter Kindergarten ready to learn & thrive.

Strategy 1: Early Childhood Programs

- Early Childhood Education programs are 3- or 4-star Parent Aware rated.
- Address the social and mental health of children and parents/caregivers.
- Support parents/caregivers in developing and actualizing their own goals.
- Provide interventions and/or referrals for children who are not on track for age-appropriate development.
- Provide or connect the household to supportive services in addition to core programming. *(For example: food, transportation, and/or other services for children and their families.)*

Strategy 2: Parenting Programs

- Address the social and mental health of children and parents/caregivers.
- Support parents/caregivers in developing and actualizing their own goals.
- Provide interventions and/or referrals for children who are not on track for age-appropriate development.
- Provide or connect the household to supportive services in addition to core programming. *(For example: food, transportation, and/or other services for children and their families.)*

Early Childhood Education – Required Outcome Measures

Outcome measures broken down by race/ethnicity, income and county.

- Number of children served through Early Childhood Education programs and services
- Number of adults served through Early Childhood Education programs and services
- Number of children who are on-track to be ready for Kindergarten
- Number of children not on-track for school who demonstrate growth

Career and Future Readiness

Career & Future Readiness – Eligibility

In order to apply in this portfolio area, organizations must answer YES to all of the following criteria.

- Programs and services serve youth from Kindergarten to 12th grade.
- Programs provide a minimum of 60 hours of programming a year.

Not Eligible: District public, private, or charter public PK-12 schools or school-operated programs

Career & Future Readiness – Funding Priorities

Organizations that meet or exceed the following criteria will be more competitive for funding.

Work in this area should be focused on ensuring youth are equipped with the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and relationships to choose and direct their own future path and contribute to their communities.

- Support 50% or more of middle school youth (grades 6-9).
- Build strong social-emotional learning skills, mindsets and behaviors.
- Facilitate connections to caring adult relationships.

- Provide youth empowerment, voice, and/or leadership opportunities.
- Provide or connect participants to supportive services in addition to core programming. *(For example: food, transportation, childcare for younger siblings, internet connectivity and/or other supports for youth and their families.)*

Career & Future Readiness – Required Outcome Measures
Outcome measures broken down by race/ethnicity, income and county.

- Number of youth served through Career and Future Readiness programs and services
- Number of youth who build strong social-emotional learning skills, mindsets and behaviors

Housing

Housing – Eligibility

In order to apply in this portfolio area, organizations must answer YES to all criteria under each strategy they choose. Organizations may apply under one or both strategies.

Strategy 1: At-Risk of Homelessness

- Programs and services must serve those that meet Agency of Housing and Urban Development's [definition](#) of at-risk of imminent homelessness.
- Programs and services keep people imminently at-risk of homelessness in safe, stable and affordable housing.

Strategy 2: Experiencing Homelessness

- Programs and services must serve those that meet the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency [definition](#) of homelessness.
- Programs and services support people experiencing homelessness in obtaining and maintaining safe, stable, and affordable housing.

Housing – Funding Priorities

Organizations that meet or exceed the following criteria will be more competitive for funding.

Work in this area should be focused on ensuring homelessness is prevented where possible and, where not, is rare, brief and non-recurring.

Strategy 1 & 2: At-Risk of Homelessness & Experiencing Homelessness

- Participate in coordinated systems of access, where available and appropriate.
- Support participants in developing and actualizing their own goals.
- Provide or connect participants to supportive services in addition to core programming that contributes to long-term stability. *(For example: education, training and employment and/or other supports for individuals.)*

Housing – Required Outcome Measures

Outcome measures broken down by race/ethnicity, income and county.

- Number of individuals served through housing programs and services
- Number of individuals who maintain housing because of programs and services
- Number of individuals who obtain housing because of programs and services

Food Security

Food Security – Eligibility

In order to apply in this portfolio area, organizations must answer YES to all criteria under each strategy they choose. Organizations may apply under one or both strategies.

Strategy 1: Short-Term Food Security

- Programs are categorized as food shelves, meal programs or food banks.
- Programs and services must provide or connect participants to supportive services in addition to core programming that contributes to long-term stability. *(For example: housing, education, training and employment and/or other supports for individuals.)*

Strategy 2: Long-Term Food Security

- Programs and services focus on long-term solutions to food security.
- Programs and services must focus on at least one of the following food system domains: food production, food distribution and/or food consumption.

Not Eligible: Programs and services where food is only a supplemental or occasional component.

Food Security – Funding Priorities

Organizations that meet or exceed the following criteria will be more competitive for funding.

Work in this area should be focused on ensuring residents have access to food that is nutritious, culturally relevant and affordable, toward long-term food security.

Strategy 2: Long-Term Food Security

- Provide solutions to food security that create long-term stability for individuals.
- Focus on food justice for Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander and/or People of Color that addresses access and affordability beyond SNAP and other public benefits.

Food Security – Required Outcome Measures

Outcome measures broken down by race/ethnicity, income and county.

Strategy 1: Short-Term Food Security

- Number of individuals served through food program strategies categorized as food shelves, meal programs or food banks.

Strategy 2: Long-Term Food Security

- Number of individuals served by long-term food security programs and services.
- Number of individuals that report increased food security.

Economic Opportunity

Economic Opportunity – Eligibility

In order to apply in this portfolio area, organizations must answer YES to all criteria under each strategy they choose. Organizations may apply under any strategies for which they are eligible.

Strategy 1: Employment and Training

- Programs and services provide employment and training support.

Strategy 2: Entrepreneurship Support

- Programs and services provide entrepreneurship support.
- Programs and services must specifically serve Native, Black, Latinx, Asian and/or Pacific Islander entrepreneurs.
- Programs must provide services for established small/micro businesses, supporting them to build capital, capacity, and business development.

Strategy 3: Financial Accessibility

- Programs and services support financial accessibility through the delivery of a financial product and/or service.
- Programs and services support individual-level wealth building by integrating a financial product and/or financial service into a program’s direct service. *(For example, an early childhood education program with a College Savings Account product or a housing program with a lending circle for participants.)*

Not Eligible: Organizations that provide a stand-alone financial product/service not embedded within a service delivery model. *(For example, an organization addressing financial accessibility solely through offering tax preparation would not be eligible.)*

Economic Opportunity – Funding Priorities

Organizations that meet or exceed the following criteria will be more competitive for funding.

Work in this area should be focused on ensuring that adults enter the workforce prepared for skilled employment and increased wealth.

Strategy 1: Employment and Training

- Support individuals in building their confidence and connectedness toward skilled employment and/or increased wealth.
- Focus on individuals with barriers to employment.
- Support participants along a participant-centered career continuum.
- Assess participants’ education, skills, and interests relative to placement in education and training.
- Align training, education and job placement with industry needs.
- Provide or connect participants to financial coaching, financial products, income supports or related services that support individuals towards increasing their financial health.

Strategy 2: Entrepreneurship Support

- Provide a continuum of access to unconventional and traditional capital (e.g. micro-lending, credit-building loans, SBA loans, etc.).
- Provide or connect participants to personal finance services including financial counseling, financial planning, and tax preparation.
- Works to change current structures and systems to allow for greater accessibility for Native, Black, Latinx, Asian and/or Pacific Islander entrepreneurs to capital and entrepreneurial services.

Strategy 3: Financial Accessibility

- Financial product/service must be a new financial innovation and must be in implementation phase. It must seek to ultimately create systems change through eventual expansion/replication.

Economic Opportunity – Required Outcome Measures

Outcome measures broken down by race/ethnicity, income and county.

Strategy 1: Employment and Training

- Number of individuals served through employment and training programs and services
- Number of individuals who complete at least one training or education component
- Number of individuals who obtain employment
- Average wage at placement
- Estimated % of participants who retain their job for 12 months or more

Strategy 2: Entrepreneurship Support

- Number of individuals served through entrepreneurship programs and services
- Amount of loans/grants dispersed to entrepreneurs
- Number of jobs created
- % of businesses who achieve sustainability or growth

Strategy 3: Financial Accessibility

- Number of individuals enrolled in the product or service
- Number of participants who report increased wealth /financial stability

Greater Twin Cities United Way’s Learning Approach & Required Outcomes

In addition to the required outcomes for each portfolio area, Greater Twin Cities United Way staff will collaborate with organizations that receive grants to finalize at least one additional grantee-proposed outcome that represents organizations’ unique vision for success and impact through a racial equity lens. These grantee-proposed outcomes may be qualitative or quantitative in nature.

Organizations will be expected to provide data on an annual basis against required outcomes. As part of our commitment to centering racial equity in this RFP, in the application form we ask that organizations confirm your ability to provide this data broken out by race/ethnicity as well as income and county.

Greater Twin Cities United Way will also implement a learning agenda as a complement to the above impact measurements.

Application Process

Organizations wishing to apply for this RFP must submit an [online application](#) by **October 14 at 4pm**. Applications will be scored by a team of Greater Twin Cities United Way staff and community members against an evaluation rubric. The application will ask questions in each of the below areas and weight them as indicated.

Evaluation Rubric

Area of Assessment	% of Total Score
<i>Leadership Representation</i>	15%
<i>Responsiveness to Community</i>	30%
<i>Program & Services Approach & Impact</i>	50%
<i>Organizational Financial Assessment</i>	5%
Total	100%

Organizations with high-scoring applications will be invited to participate in a site visit with Greater Twin Cities United Way staff. At this point, organizations receiving site visits will undergo a financial

due diligence process to assess financial health. Advancing to a site visit does not guarantee funding. We anticipate receiving many more applications than we are able to fund.

Applicants that do not score high on their application will be notified in December 2021 that they are no longer being considered for this funding opportunity.

Following site visits, Greater Twin Cities United Way staff will recommend final grant decisions to the Greater Twin Cities United Way Board of Directors.

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions by phone call and email following the Board of Directors decision in May 2022.

Greater Twin Cities United Way reserves the right to make awards that support our cultivation of a balanced grant portfolio that most effectively advances our mission, goals, and priorities. Toward this end, and in addition to criteria identified in this RFP, funding decisions may include considerations of geography, scale and environmental factors, among other factors.

Timeline

The timeline for the RFP is as follows:

Key Dates	
Application Opens	September 8, 2021 9am
Applications Due	October 14, 2021 4pm
Applicants Notified of First Round Decisions	December 2021
Site Visits Held	January 2022 – March 2022
Applicants Notified of Final Round Decisions	May 2022
Grant Term Begins	July 1, 2022

Payments, Reporting and Other Grantee Requirements and Opportunities

- Grant payments are made on a monthly basis. Funded organizations will be asked to provide direct deposit information for payment.
- Grantees are required to submit written annual reports to Greater Twin Cities United Way that include outcomes data and narrative reporting. Greater Twin Cities United Way staff develop the annual report and will work with grantees to help them complete it.
- Grantees should expect quarterly check-ins with Greater Twin Cities United Way staff.
- Grantees will be invited to participate in the Greater Twin Cities United Way Council of Agency Executives and Community of Practice. More information about being a Greater Twin Cities United Way grantee can be found [here](#).

How To Apply

Grant applications must be completed online. The application will open September 8th. Please click [HERE](#) to begin your application.

Application Resources and Other Questions

During the application period, Greater Twin Cities United Way staff are available to answer your questions and assist with your application.

Online Training Session

September 8, 2021 1:30-3pm Please click [here](#) to register for the training session.

A recording of the training session will be available [here](#) beginning September 9th.

One-on-One Help

Greater Twin Cities United Way staff are available throughout the application process to answer questions.

- Contact us at rfp@gtcuw.org and a Greater Twin Cities United Way staff person will respond to your question within 1-2 business days.
- Sign-up directly to speak to one of our staff. Visit our [website](#) and follow directions on how to connect.

Frequently Asked Questions

Please see our [Frequently Asked Questions](#). We update this document on a weekly basis.