

UNITED WAY OF GREENVILLE COUNTY 2024-2026 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



UNITED WAY OF GREENVILLE COUNTY



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Organizations interested in applying for funding should read the Request for Proposals in its entirety prior to submitting a grant application.

All proposals must be submitted in the online application portal by 5 p.m. on June 1, 2023. Late proposals will not be considered for funding.

Informational meetings will be held for current grantees and prospective grantees in May 2023. To register for meetings and for more information about the application process, visit www.unitedwaygc.org/rfp.

Questions and other inquiries can be directed to rfp2023@unitedwaygc.org.

United Way of Greenville County's (UWGC) vision is a community where all people have access to the opportunities to achieve their full potential. We work to create long-lasting change through our mission of mobilizing people and resources to improve lives, strengthen the community and advance equity for the benefit of all. By bringing people together who share the same goals, we address issues that no single organization can solve alone.

Approved by the Board of Directors on December 7, 2022, UWGC's 2023-2030 organizational strategy "How We Win" is designed to fight the persistence of poverty. We believe that to reduce barriers to higher earnings for low-income community members, we must increase access to affordable housing; high-quality, affordable childcare; post-secondary education and industry certifications; and transportation—all of which are achieved by UWGC's application of systems change tools such as investing resources, leveraging relationships, influencing policy, and shaping public narratives.

- **Affordable Housing:** Based on a 2020 study of Greenville City and County, 80-90 percent of renters earning less than \$22,000 per year spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing. Households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing are considered "cost-burdened" and often have difficulty affording other basic needs.

- **Affordable, High-Quality Childcare:** In Greenville County, the average household spent 18 percent of its income on childcare¹. Lack of access to affordable, high-quality childcare can impede parents from pursuing further education or participating in paid work and can dispossess children of the lifelong health and development benefits correlated with high-quality childcare.
- **Educational Attainment:** In Greenville County, approximately 47 percent of working-age adults have a high-quality, post-secondary credential or degree.² Increased educational attainment creates pathways to good, stable jobs, strengthening stability at home, and leading to better economic, social, and health outcomes for families.³
- **Transportation & Mobility:** Having access to consistent, reliable, and affordable transportation impacts residents' employment and health. In a 2015 survey, 22 percent of employed residents had trouble getting to their job due to transportation and 21 percent had trouble getting to the grocery store or pharmacy.⁴ Nearly half of car owners said at least a few times a month they could not drive due to the cost of gas or maintenance.

The UWGC Request for Proposals is the foundation of our grantmaking process that allows applicants to demonstrate how their organization aligns with the identified priority areas and their potential to help achieve UWGC's impact goals.

<p>Monday, May 1, 2023</p>	<p>Request for Proposals is released. Grant applications begin to be accepted through online platform.</p>
<p>Thursday, June 1, 2023, 5 p.m.</p>	<p>Request for Proposals ends and deadline for grant applications.</p>
<p>June – July 2023</p>	<p>Grant applications are evaluated and site visits are conducted.</p>
<p>August 2023</p>	<p>Investment recommendations are sent to UWGC’s governing bodies for review and approval.</p>
<p>September 1, 2023</p>	<p>Grant awards are announced.</p>
<p>September – December 2023</p>	<p>2024-2026 investment grantees are onboarded.</p>
<p>January 1, 2024</p>	<p>Funding begins for grantees.</p>

ABOUT UNITED WAY OF GREENVILLE COUNTY

For more than 100 years, United Way of Greenville County has united the community to help people live better, safer, and more successful lives. While our work has evolved over the last century to meet the challenges of the day, our vision remains much the same: We work to create a Greenville County where all people have access to opportunities to achieve their full potential.

No single person, partner, or program can solve the tough challenges we face in Greenville County. But by gathering diverse voices around the table and uniting donors, volunteers, corporate and nonprofit partners, we can make the change we want to see. And it's in this unity that we remain committed and focused on building a stronger, more equitable Greenville County for all.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? POVERTY IS PERSISTENT.

Our local economy has flourished, but our hard-won success is fragile. Attitudes, power dynamics, and policy choices protect economic interests for some while maintaining barriers for others, creating a fixed underclass where only a few people can reach the middle class or above. Right now, 17,400 families have an income of less than \$25,000 a year. Many thousands more are just one unexpected expense or emergency away from being unable to make ends meet. Today, in Greenville County, a child born in a family experiencing poverty has less than a five percent chance of reaching the top 20 percent of household income (approximately \$100,000) during their lifetime. We know these dismal odds are even lower in Black and Hispanic communities as well as across other historically marginalized populations.

Despite all the wins we've experienced as a community over the last 30 years, poverty remains a persistent and urgent problem in Greenville County. To meet that challenge head on, in December 2022 United Way's Board of Directors approved a new organizational strategy, How We Win, that outlines our path forward for the next seven years.

We believe that to reduce barriers to higher earnings for low-income community members, we must increase access to affordable housing; high-quality, affordable childcare; post-secondary education and industry certifications; and transportation—all of which are achieved by applying systems change tools such as investing resources, influencing policy, and shaping public narratives.

United Way of Greenville County's 2023-2030 How We Win organizational strategy identifies four barriers to higher earnings—housing, childcare, education, and transportation—for low-income⁵ households in the Greenville County region.

Higher earnings. Despite a strong local economy and continued growth, financial stability is an elusive dream for

many in Greenville County. Nearly 60,000 people in Greenville County are living in poverty—one third of which are children. People of color in Greenville County are disproportionately affected by poverty, with 21 percent of Black and 22 percent of Hispanic people living below the poverty line, compared to nine percent of whites.

Across our community today, many families struggle to stretch their wages to meet the cost of basic needs. Though often not deemed "poor" by official poverty measures, these families lack enough income to meet the rising cost of essentials such as food, housing, transportation, and health care.

What do you mean by "earnings?" There are many definitions we considered—earnings, income, wages, wealth—and the definitions for each varies widely. Our definition of "earnings" is inclusive of the total wages and benefits a household receives on an annual basis.

Approximately 17,400 Greenville County families have an income of less than \$25,000, which according to the [Self-Sufficiency Standard](#) in South Carolina, would barely be enough to make ends meet for a single person, let alone an entire family. Access points include:

- Education & training. Provide education and training programs that lead to higher-paying careers.
- Financial services & benefits. Increase access to tools to save and protect against a personal financial crisis, while gaining long-term assets like a home or business.

Housing. Our region's substantial and steady population growth has put strains on the housing market. The market has had difficulty keeping up with demand which has increased the competition and cost of housing. Median household income is not keeping up with the cost of housing,

decreasing the affordability of housing⁶ for families in Greenville County. Access points include:

- **Preserve & produce.**⁷ Use legislative, operational, and financial methods to facilitate the construction of more housing and preserve and improve quality of units that are already affordable.
- **Access to private market housing.** Increase low- and moderate-income households' access to private market housing.
- **Housing stability & displacement.** Increase housing stability for tenants at risk of displacement and homelessness.
- **Permanent supportive housing.** Connecting individuals experiencing chronic homelessness with stable, unconditional housing and support services.

Childcare. In Greenville County, the average household spent 18 percent of its income on childcare.⁸ Lack of access to affordable, high-quality childcare can impede parents from pursuing further education or participating in paid work and can dispossess children of the lifelong health and development benefits correlated with high-quality childcare. Access points include:

- **Early childhood workforce supports.** Initiatives to train, recruit, and retain educators and caregivers to deliver evidence-based childcare and early education programming.
- **Family flexibility.** Increase access to childcare during nonstandard hours.
- **Childcare & early education programs.** Supervision, curricula, programming, and healthy learning environments for children ages 0-5.

Education. Increased educational attainment creates pathways to good, stable jobs, strengthening stability at home, and leading to better economic, social, and health outcomes for families. In Greenville County, approximately 47 percent of working-age adults have a high-quality, post-secondary credential or degree.¹⁰ Education is one of the most powerful antipoverty levers. While employment may be essential to lifting an individual above the poverty line, education is the primary and most consistent driver of sustained upward mobility. Access points include:

- **Guidance & supports for post-secondary success.** Deliver academic, financial, and other services to youth and working-age individuals pursuing a high school diploma, general equivalency diploma, post-secondary credential, industry certification, etc.

- **Job placement services & supports.** Help residents experiencing long-term unemployment find secure jobs and stable income.
- **Sector-specific job training.** Preparing adults for careers, mainly in rapidly growing industries such as advanced materials, automotive, aviation/aerospace, and biosciences.
- **Transitional employment & reentry support.** Facilitate residents' transitions to full-time employment through subsidized jobs and wraparound support services.

What do you mean by "post-secondary?" While this term usually evokes images of 19-year-olds pursuing a 4-year higher education degree immediately after graduating high school, we expand this term to include a broader definition of educational attainment that also includes apprenticeships, re-skilling, upskilling, etc. for all working-age adults.

Transportation. Having access to consistent, reliable, and affordable transportation impacts residents' employment and health. In a 2015 survey, 22 percent of employed residents had trouble getting to their job due to transportation and 21 percent had trouble getting to the grocery store or pharmacy.¹¹ Nearly half of car owners said, at least a few times a month, they could not drive due to the cost of gas or maintenance. Access points include:

- **Public transportation access & subsidies.** Make public transit accessible through physical infrastructure, service improvements, and financial supports. Increase public transit service hours, routes, and route frequencies countywide.
- **Traffic & street safety improvements.** Maximize the number of people—including drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians—who can safely and efficiently utilize public streets and thoroughfares.

One foundational tenet of United Way's How We Win strategy also serves as the impetus for this Request for Proposals: "Invest In Only What Works." This principle guides all United Way funding decisions, ensuring careful stewardship of the dollars generously provided by our investors. Maximizing the impact of our donors' gifts by investing in the most impactful community solutions remains our top priority.

OUR GRANTMAKING PHILOSOPHY

As we embark on our second century of service, UWGC is transforming the way we work in our community, including our grantmaking. In 2023, we are seeking to award grants to qualified community organizations to pursue the outcomes outlined in our *How We Win* strategy. Here's our approach to grantmaking:

Alignment to Organizational Strategy. We will award grants for community solutions that increase access and reduce barriers to higher earnings for low-income earners in the areas of housing, childcare, education, and transportation.

Meaningful Investments. We seek to provide three-year funding to support programs and general operations at amounts that create a meaningful impact for our community.

Bold & Simple. We will be less prescriptive in the application, allowing greater possibility for audacious community solutions. We will also streamline the application process, making it simpler than ever to apply for our grants.

High Engagement & Communication. Because of this bold, evolved direction, we will create multiple opportunities for engagement and communicate clearly and frequently with current and potential grantees.

INVESTMENT GUIDELINES

Through an open and competitive process, UWGC will provide grant investments ranging from \$25,000 to \$250,000 to eligible organizations demonstrating strategy alignment and impact.

Eligibility

- Eligible organizations must be 501(c)(3) tax-exempt or quasi-governmental organizations that are a governmental entity but managed independently. Organizations that don't have either of these statuses must apply under an eligible fiscal sponsor.
- Organizations must be in existence at least two years upon application submission and be able to demonstrate financial and organizational capacity to implement proposed initiatives.
- Eligible organizations must primarily serve those living in Greenville County. Service to low-income individuals/households and historically disconnected and marginalized populations will be assessed to determine grant awards.
- Eligible organizations must demonstrate alignment to focus areas outlined in *UWGC's How We Win* strategy and the Request for Proposals.

Investment Considerations

- UWGC will be clear about the problems and barriers facing low-income members of our community. In return, we expect organizations to present their best possible solutions, whether through direct services to individuals and/or systems-level initiatives and approaches.
- Organizations whose mission or projects exclude any group of individuals based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, or disability will not be considered.
- Preference will be given to solutions that increase the ease and ability of low-income community members to navigate resources, both internal and external of the applicant organization.
- Organizations need not apply for multiple programs or initiatives with their organization. General operating funds will be awarded for collective results and strategy alignment of solutions outlined in the proposal. Applicants are encouraged to think holistically about how their organization's initiative(s) and program(s) collectively align with UWGC's strategy.
- Capital projects and campaigns will not be funded through the investment process.
- Proposals must illustrate measurable impact and organizations must agree to measure and report on defined outcomes if funding is awarded.
- UWGC values proposals that demonstrate collaboration. This can include, but is not limited to, partnerships with nonprofits, government, faith-based, and business entities.

Program or initiative – what's the difference? We know that addressing poverty in our community can take many forms. Organizations may fulfill their mission by implementing either or both of the following approaches:

Program: A singular service or culmination of interrelated and mutually reinforcing services that meets goals and outcomes in a targeted manner. Examples can include individual-level job training and placement, case management, etc.

Initiative: UWGC considers an initiative as an approach with the ability to scale across geography, service populations, and programming of a singular organization. Examples include efforts such as coalition-building, influencing public policy, and multi-organization collaboratives.

UWGC is soliciting applications to invest in eligible and impactful organizations that address these pressing barriers and equip low-income community members with access and opportunities that increase their earnings. To make our 2024–2026 grantmaking process “bold and simple,” we’re doing a few things differently:

- **Solutions-Focused Proposals.** Instead of UWGC prescribing solutions, outcomes and metrics, we’re asking organizations to present the best possible solutions to clearly defined community problems and barriers outlined in the Request for Proposals. Organizations should demonstrate how they’re best equipped to deliver impact and measure success. Shared metrics will be developed in partnership with grantees upon funding decisions.

- **Essential Due Diligence.** We’re only requiring essential compliance documents and providing clear expectations to assess an organization’s viability and capacity to implement proposed solutions.
- **A Straight-Forward Application.** We’re asking critical narrative questions aimed to best assess strategic alignment, impact of proposed solutions, and how potential grantees can serve as a strong partner with UWGC.

This document provides an overview of the application and is intended to assist your organization in submitting a grant proposal. Please note this document is for reference only. The application can be found on our [website](#). **Only online submissions will be evaluated.** All proposals must be submitted in the online application portal by 5 p.m. on June 1, 2023.

ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY, CAPACITY & ALIGNMENT

Organizations should demonstrate alignment with UWGC’s *How We Win* strategy, as well as financial and organizational capacity to implement proposed solutions.

UWGC will review and consider organizational documents to assess:

- Eligibility for UWGC investment
- The sources and diversity of funding for the organization
- Sound management of resources
- Adequacy of organizational documents
- Financial health

Organizations must upload the following documents:

1. Most recent IRS Form 990, if applicable
2. Current SC Secretary of State Registration, if applicable
3. Certificate of Insurance, demonstrating General Liability and Directors and Officers coverage through at least 2023
4. List of current Board of Directors, including service terms and corporate affiliation, if any
5. Organizational chart
6. Organizational Affirmative Action policy, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) statement, and/or anti-discrimination statement
7. Annual audit, independent financial review, or board-approved financial statements, dependent upon organizational revenue size

Annual Revenue	Required Document	Document Definition
Greater than \$500,000	Most Recent Annual Audit	An audit should be conducted by an independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) according to the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) which includes an opinion regarding the accuracy of the agency's financial reports.
\$499,999–\$250,000	Most Recent Independent Financial Review	An Independent Financial Review is a management inquiry conducted by an independent CPA firm according to GAAP, including an understanding of internal controls and an analytical review of financials and trends.
Less than \$250,000	Financial Statements with Narrative	Financial statements (i.e. Balance Sheet, Profit & Loss statement, etc.) should be for the current fiscal year and be board approved. Must be accompanied by a narrative that details the use of United Way funds.

Alignment

- a. Provide your organization's mission statement. (100 words)
- b. Describe your organization's mission alignment with UWGC's *How We Win* strategy and/or barriers outlined in pages 3-4. (500 words)
- c. Define your organization's primary service population(s). Select all that apply.
 - a. Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC); list specific population(s)
 - b. Immigrants
 - c. Individuals 60+ years of age
 - d. Low-income individuals/households
 - e. Individuals impacted by the criminal justice system
 - f. Individuals residing in Greenville County
 - g. Individuals with disabilities
 - h. LGBTQIA+ individuals
 - i. Refugees and/or asylum seekers
 - j. Veterans
 - k. Other

Applications will be reviewed to ensure the basic alignment and eligibility expectations are met. Organizations that do not meet eligibility criteria will be less competitive throughout the remainder of the application process.

SOLUTION PROPOSAL

In this section, organizations should outline how they are best equipped to positively impact one or more of the issues outlined in UWGC's *How We Win* strategy. Organizations can highlight a culmination of services, programs and/or initiatives that would be offered to accomplish the anticipated impact and supported through UWGC's allocation of general operating funds.

- a. Describe the program(s) or initiative(s) for which your organization is seeking general operating funds.
- b. UWGC has identified four barriers to low-income individuals increasing earnings: housing, post-secondary education, childcare, and transportation. How does your organization's program(s) and initiative(s) contribute to higher earnings for low-income individuals in one or more of these four areas? *Describe how your organization addresses this issue(s) through initiatives, programs and/or services. Explain the organization's value and benefit to clients and the community. (1000 words)*

- c. Describe how your organization serves the population(s) selected in the previous section. *Share any engagement and outreach efforts, customized implementation approaches, cultural competency efforts, etc. (250 words)*
- d. Describe your organization's staff capacity to effectively implement the solution(s) proposed. *Include role and responsibilities of key implementation staff and organizational leaders. (500 words)*
- e. *Describe how your organization measures and analyzes the impact of initiatives, programs and/or services. How is evaluation used to improve initiatives, programs and/or services? Share evaluation plans or tools, success indicators and metrics, measurement tools, and evidence of outcomes. (1000 words)*

GRANT REQUEST

How much funding does your organization request to achieve the selected proposal and anticipated outcomes?

Please note: This is simply to provide UWGC more context for understanding the scope of your proposal. Organizations are not guaranteed an allocation of the entire request amount.

SITE VISITS

Organizations that meet basic alignment and eligibility criteria will host a site visit with UWGC staff and volunteers as part of the evaluation process. Site visits will last no longer than one hour and, prior to the site visit, applicant organizations will receive additional guidance to help prepare for the visit. Visits will be held June 12–July 14, 2023. In the online application portal, organizations will select preferred dates and times for site visits.

Organizations will be notified of scheduled site visits by June 7, 2023.

All applications will undergo an objective and equitable evaluation by a team of UWGC staff and community volunteers. Leveraging an array of evaluation tools, proposals will be assessed on the following:

- Fulfillment of core eligibility requirements, as outlined in the Investment Guidelines.
- Ability to demonstrate alignment with UWGC's *How We Win* strategy.
- Ability to demonstrate, if awarded grant funding, capacity to implement solutions and deliver impact.
- Availability of UWGC's allocable grant funds.

Grants are awarded pending approval by UWGC's volunteer governing bodies, including our Board of Directors.

All applying organizations will be notified of funding decisions on September 1, 2023. Grant awards and allocations will begin January 1, 2024, and end December 31, 2026.

QUESTIONS

Organizations are encouraged to visit www.unitedwaygc.org/rfp to read the Frequently Asked Questions section. All other inquiries can be directed to rfp2023@unitedwaygc.org. We will update the FAQ throughout the process.

SOURCES

¹ For two children. See County Health Rankings & Roadmaps' [County Health Rankings](#).

² <https://dashboards.mysidewalk.com/greenvillesc/growing-a-greater-greenville>

³ Economic Mobility Catalog, [Post-Secondary Education & Workforce Development](#)

⁴ pp. 42-43 of Piedmont Health Foundation's [Mobility Study](#)

⁵ Low-income is defined as any household earning below twice the poverty level, the standard for self-sufficiency in Greenville County (dependent on family size). See p. 18 of the [2020 Self-Sufficiency Standard](#)

⁶ Based on a 2020 study of Greenville City and County, over 80-90 percent of renters earning less than \$22,000 per year spend over

30 percent of their income on housing. Households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing are considered "cost-burdened" and often have difficulty affording other basic needs.

⁷ <https://greenvillehousingfund.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ghf-gcra-affordable-housing-strategic-plan.pdf>

⁸ For two children. See County Health Rankings & Roadmaps' [County Health Rankings](#).

⁹ <https://dashboards.mysidewalk.com/greenvillesc/growing-a-greater-greenville>

¹⁰ Economic Mobility Catalog, [Post-Secondary Education & Workforce Development](#)

¹¹ pp. 42-43 of Piedmont Health Foundation's [Mobility Study](#)