



How to use this rubric:

United Way of Olmsted County takes a holistic approach to reviewing grant applications. This means reviewers consider how the overall application meets the criteria of eligibility, equity, impact, and budget as described below. We understand that these criteria are related; for example, an equitable program will make a bigger impact. We also know that a response to a single application question or a discussion at a program meeting can provide reviewers with information about multiple rubric elements. For this reason, you will notice that there is not a single application question for each element on the rubric below.

In the lefthand column of the rubric, you will see 9 specific rubric elements. Reviewers will rate applications on each of those elements. In the righthand column, you will see a list of *examples* that describe what a strong application *may* look like. We provide these examples to help you better understand what we are looking for when reviewing applications. **This is not a list of requirements!** A highly aligned, equitable, impactful, and fiscally sound program will do some of these things, but no program will do all these things. We also know that we haven't thought of everything—there are many ways to demonstrate success in these areas.

So, how should you use this rubric? Use the rubric to help you understand what we hope to learn about your program. You probably won't be able to address each element at each stage of the application process, but successful applicants will demonstrate strengths in most rubric elements by the end of the process (including full proposal and program meeting).

| Evaluation Focal Area | MAY LOOK LIKE |
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| 1. Impact: | Examples of what impact may look like: |
| 1a. If an existing program, demonstrates improved outcomes; if a new program, demonstrates strong potential for impact. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -If proposing a new program, the organization has demonstrated success in other programs -Defines what program success looks like and uses qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate program success -Benchmarks performance against external organizations with similar missions and populations served -Disaggregates outcomes data by race and income; demonstrates positive outcomes for participants across racial and socioeconomic segments |
| 1b. Program demonstrates learning mindsets, including a commitment to continuous improvement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Integrates participant feedback into continuous improvement practices -Regularly evaluates progress toward goals, identifies areas of growth, and modifies program implementation -Seeks out new learnings and encourages employees/volunteers to do the same -Seeks new practices and creative solutions to achieve program goals -Anticipates new community needs and adjusts programming response accordingly -Uses local-level data to inform program -Equity is included in continuous improvement plans |
| 1c. Program effectively collaborates with participants, partners, or other stakeholders to meet shared goals for the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff understand and can explain program's relevance to the communities they serve -Demonstrated history of positive collaboration -Demonstrates ability to discuss past mistakes and learnings associated with partnerships and collaborations, as well as current challenges -Knowledgeable about other community resources that impact food security for participants -Builds mutually beneficial partnerships with other agencies to meet the needs of program participants, rather than duplicating services -Aware of cultural, resource, and power dynamics between agencies; budgets to pay less-resourced agency partners for services -Meaningfully engages participants in decisions that impact how services are provided |

| 2. Equity: | Examples of what equitable practices may look like: |
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| <p>2a. Program effectively serves primarily low-income individuals and/or families (those with an income at or below 185% federal poverty level).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Disaggregates program outcome data by income level and demonstrates positive outcomes for individuals across income levels -Intentionally removes income-based barriers for participants to access service -Program is offered on a no-cost, low-cost, or sliding fee scale basis -Understands how factors like race, disability, and language shape access to income and wealth -Ensures programming is accessible to those most likely to live at less than 185% of federal poverty level |
| <p>2b. Program actively and intentionally works to tailor programming to target populations served.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program design is responsive to the demographics of program participants -Describes how participants' identities and cultures may impact accessibility and appropriateness of services provided -Offers translated program information and/or interpretation services in the home language of participants -Staff/volunteers reflect participant demographics -Disaggregates program outcomes data by relevant demographics; demonstrates positive outcomes for all demographic segments -Participants are involved in program design and continuous improvement -Provides appropriate training and support for staff and volunteers to understand racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic discrimination and disparities; participants' cultural values and contexts; and how to minimize barriers to accessing food |
| <p>2c. Program design and implementation is informed by thinking about racial, disability, and socioeconomic justice (equity lens)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff takes responsibility for creating a culture where people of different identities and experiences feel included -Organization prioritizes equity training for staff/volunteers -Addresses patterns of systemic bias and inequitable outcomes -Equity is part of continuous improvement plans -Program design is responsive to the demographics of program participants, centering those who experience the greatest barriers to food security |

| 3. Program Sustainability: | Examples of what sustainable programs may look like: |
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| 3a. Program demonstrates history of financial sustainability or potential for financial sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program has well thought-out plan for financial sustainability, including future revenue generation -Program has other sources of support beyond United Way funding or has high likelihood of receiving other support. UWOC funding provides approximately one-third or less of the entire program budget. |
| 3b. demonstrates strong potential for sustained impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program has well thought-out plan for longevity, which may include a plan for growth over time -Program demonstrates adequate staffing and/or volunteer leadership to ensure program longevity -Existing programs: demonstrated progress in achieving internal/organization's long-term goals for program progress and/or growth -Program plans and goals can reasonably be achieved with available resources |
| 3c. Budget: Request amount is appropriate to program size, program plans, and available resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearly presents full program budget with detail sufficient to understand how and when funds will be used - Cost per participant is reasonable, given program design and projected -High cost per participant associated with high-frequency participant contact and long-term outcomes -Low cost per participant with many people served -Costs may be higher for initial investment in a new program |