

Admissions and Venture Grant Processes

1. Purpose

The purpose of Venture Grants is to stimulate creative, collaborative solutions to new and emerging needs in order to effect change.

Policy: When possible, a portion of the community funds will be made available to any eligible private, nonprofit 501c (3) through Venture Grants.

Procedures: Venture Grant applications may be considered through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process, or through direct application. Organizations applying for program funding from United Way Venture Grants may apply for one of two funding tracks: 1) Grant Track or 2) Admission Track. The purpose of the two tracks is to ensure both United Way and the organization have the same understanding of future plans for the program and its relationship with United Way. Applicant organizations must declare which track their program is on when applying for Venture Grant Funds.

2. Process

A Request for Proposal, or direct application, will be issued, or accepted, only when funds are available for Venture Grants. Admission or Venture Grant funding requests must meet United Way's granting interests. Areas of emphasis, and funding priorities will be included in the request for proposals or will be available from the United Way office. United Way volunteers will set funding priorities and make final decisions on both grants processes.

Venture Grants will be submitted to the Budget and Allocation Committee for their recommendation and forwarded for approval to the United Way Executive Committee who will then forward the grant application to the full Board of Directors for final approval.

The Admission request will be submitted to the Membership and Review Committee then the Executive Committee and finally to the Board of Directors. The agency, if accepted, will participate in the next Budget and Allocations funding cycle.

Funding recommendations will be based on the merits of each proposal, using criteria identified by volunteers and included in the request information. Some examples of review criteria include how well the proposal:

1. demonstrates accessibility
2. demonstrates services to at risk populations.
3. plans to bridge gaps in service
4. is creative, client-centered and prevention oriented.
5. models other successful programs
6. obtains active participation from community residents
7. sets, measures, and meets objectives.
8. utilizes other funding
9. achieves positive results
10. provides BC UW with outcomes measures

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Program Eligibility

Burke County United Way reserves the right to alter eligibility criteria from year to year, as changing funding and community conditions may warrant. However, there are several consistent eligibility criteria that are not likely to change. These include:

United Way will consider Venture Grant proposals from any private 501 c (3) organization.

Only programs addressing high priority needs, as identified in the current needs assessment, are eligible. The priority needs are set by the full Board of Directors.

United Way member organizations cannot request grant funds for programs already funded through the Budget and Allocations review process.

The organization applying for program funding must meet all applicable standards.

Programs applying for continued funding must clearly document progress in meeting objectives, adequately demonstrate program results, and act upon all United Way recommendations.

General Overview and Funding Parameters

The funding parameters vary depending on which Funding Track the program follows. The common parameters for all grantees are as follows:

1. Programs can ask for no more than the stated maximum set by the Budget and Allocations Committee.
2. Organizations with programs funded through Venture Grants must avoid all fundraising during the United Way blackout period, August 30-November 8.
3. Organizations with programs funded through Venture Grants must not solicit United Way donor designations.
4. Organizations must sign a Statement of Agreement that will remain in effect for the year the organization receives Venture Grant monies.

No one is required to contribute to United Way, regardless of his/her organization's funding status. However, Organization Directors are expected to set a positive tone within the organization for the annual United Way campaign, and should provide staff with the opportunity to contribute by allowing a volunteer to solicit contributions directly from employees and organization volunteers (Board of Directors).

Grant organizations are required to provide reports documenting achievement of program objectives throughout the funding period. These reports should define the current status of the program's objectives and outcomes. Reports should be submitted at the funding mid-point by January 15 and at the conclusion of the funding year by July 15th. The final report should include 1) a final financial statement of total revenues and expenditures associated with the

program and 2) a final program report documenting outcomes and achievement of objectives. (United Way Outcomes forms will be a part of this process.)

Please refer to the next two sections for details about the funding parameters for each Track.

Funding Parameters for Programs on the Grant Track:

The Grant Track is designed to fund projects that desire start up funds only. Organizations with programs that do not wish to be funded on an ongoing basis from United Way are encouraged to participate in Venture Grants through the Grant Track. An example of the Grant Track would be if an organization wanted one-time funds to do Project Graduation, a one time Health Fair, a multi-cultural event, or any thing that is listed as a priority in the application process. These grant funds can be used to start a new program, however, it is important to remember this pot of money **is not** for sustaining a new organization program. The maximum amount a program can be funded through a given year will be listed in the application process.

Funding Parameters for Programs on the Admission Track:

The Admission Track is designed to fund projects that intend to become United Way Partner Organizations. Competition for admission to United Way is strong, and United Way has high expectations of programs on the Admission Track. A program successfully completing two years of Venture Grant funding is eligible to request admission upon applying for its third and final year of funding through Admission and Venture Grant Processes.

As an organization on the Admission Track, you will be required to come into compliance with United Way minimum standards and all United Way policies and procedures. The fact that an organization is on the Admission Track is not a guarantee of a funding amount or admission. The compliance schedule for organizations on the Admission Track can be found in the application packet. In instances where organizations do not meet the minimum standards it should clearly indicate that in the written proposal with a timeframe for meeting the standards.

Organizations on the Admission Track will receive a reduction in funding for year 2 and 3 according to the following schedule:

2nd year: 15% less than 1st year

3rd year: 25% less than original grant.

This will gradually decrease United Way funding and prepare the organization to be financially independent.