Background

United Way Elgin Middlesex (UWEM) creates real, lasting change to improve the quality of life in our communities. United Way identifies and understands the root causes of social issues; brings together research, experts and resources; initiates and invests in effective programs and services; and builds capacity in the non-profit sector.

We believe the root of all action for change is the ability to see and feel ourselves in the situations of others. We believe all people and all communities have the potential to overcome challenges. We treat people with dignity, fairness and equality. We make decisions based on the needs and expectations of our community and we believe it is imperative to measure and communicate our impact.

Poverty prevention and reduction

UWEM emphasizes poverty as a way to focus our work and impact in the community.

UWEM defines the state of poverty as one in which income is too low to provide for an adequate standard of living. Poverty is about more than income and is also about exclusion from resources, opportunities, and connections. For UWEM, poverty is not always about an income-test or an income cut-off line.

For the purpose of this application process, poverty reduction and/or prevention programs must:

- Serve people who are living in poverty and/or;
- Serve people at risk of living in poverty and/or;
- Lessen the effects of poverty and/or;
- Prevent poverty and/or;
- Reduce the incidence of poverty in our community and/or;
- Address the root causes of poverty.

Agencies must present evidence and/or descriptive information to identify how the proposed program reduces or prevents poverty in at least one of the following ways:

1. Target population
   - The program prioritizes service to a specific group of people who are experiencing poverty or are at risk of experiencing a higher incidence of poverty than the general population. This could be based on demographics, a geographic area, etc.

and/or

2. Program design and impact
   - The program lessens the effects of poverty and/or;
   - The program prevents poverty and/or;
   - The program helps people break the cycle of generational poverty and/or;
   - The program helps people move out of poverty and/or;
   - The program creates systems change that reduces the incidence of poverty in our community.

Alignment to UWEM Community Impact Strategy
UWEM focuses on three impact areas through a poverty and equity lens:

- From poverty to possibility - Meeting basic human needs and supporting people in moving out of poverty
- All that kids can be - Helping children and youth reach their full potential
- A strong community with resilient & healthy people - Supporting personal well-being and strengthening communities

The UWEM Community Impact Strategy outlines four strategies to create social change in our community. These strategies are:

- Ignite awareness and understanding of the root causes of social challenges
- Inspire contributions of dollars, influence, time and knowledge for social change
- Influence systems and policies through advocacy
- Invest resources in programs, services and community convening

In addition to meeting poverty reduction and/or prevention requirements, the program must align with one impact area in the UWEM Community Impact Strategy. A program may have several objectives and may fit under more than one of the impact areas. Agencies must select one impact area by considering the following:

- Choose the area that most clearly aligns with the primary focus of the program
- Choose the area for which the agency has the best ability to measure and report on. Successful applicants will be required to report outputs and outcomes for the impact area selected as outlined in the UWEM measurement framework.

Community Fund funding streams

As part of our investment strategy, UWEM makes three funding streams available through the Community Fund:

- Core agency funding (Launch date: TBD) will provide general operating and program funding for core agencies that are key to a strong social safety net in Elgin Middlesex and that have a primary goal of preventing and reducing poverty.
- Program funding (Launching Fall 2021) will support evidence-based poverty reduction and prevention programs and services in Elgin and Middlesex.
- Project funding (Expected launch: Winter 2022) will provide one-time funding for time-bound projects that meet stated criteria.

Grant framework

Grants in the program funding stream will be provided for a period of 2 years. Grants will be up to $300,000 annually per program. Funding agreements will start April 1, 2022 and end March 31, 2024. Agencies may apply for one to three programs in this funding stream. Separate applications must be submitted to UWEM for each proposed program.

Eligible organizations

The UWEM Community Fund – Program funding stream is open to all registered charities and qualified donees meeting stated criteria. Check the Canada Revenue Agency list of qualified donees by clicking here. Organizations must be providing service in Elgin Middlesex and preference will be given to organizations located in Elgin Middlesex.
Note: Organizations currently funded through UWEM Community Fund are not guaranteed funding after April 1, 2022.

Host organizations

A registered charity or other qualified done can act as a host organization for a nonprofit organization that does not have charitable status and is not a qualified donee as defined by Canada Revenue Agency. In this case, the host organization will enter into a funding agreement with UWEM and assume financial and legal responsibility for the funded program including reporting requirements and agency expectations. Funding will be provided to the host organization.

Eligible costs

Eligible costs include:

- Wages and employment-related costs for program staff
- Fees for professional service,
- Accommodation and supports for program staff, volunteers and program participants,
- Program materials and supplies
- Printing and communication
- Travel costs for staff and volunteers
- Utilities, insurance, and rental of premises where program occurs
- Lease, purchase and maintenance of program equipment
- Administrative costs including evaluation, data collection, and other administrative costs directly associated with the program.
- Small capital expenditures ($3,000 or less) for essential program equipment

Exclusions

United Way Elgin Middlesex does not fund the following:

- Organizations that do not have charitable status and are not a qualified done as defined by Canada Revenue Agency
- Individuals, including fees for travel to conferences, etc.
- Foundations, unions and professional associations
- For-profit organizations
- Organizations whose purpose is solely related to political activity
- Organizations that could be deemed discriminatory, as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Organizations without a clear delineation between religion and community service as evidenced in the organization’s bylaws

United Way Elgin Middlesex funds may not be used for the following program costs/activities:

- Fundraising events
- Public education or awareness programs
- Conferences, films or videos
- Programs/services operating outside of Elgin Middlesex
- Programs/services not primarily focused on poverty reduction and/or prevention as defined in this document
- Programs/services that could be deemed discriminatory, as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Deficit or emergency funding
- The principal portion of mortgage payments or depreciation of buildings and equipment
• Capital campaigns or large capital expenditures exceeding $3,000 (Note: small capital expenditures of essential program equipment are eligible)
• Religious activities
• Partisan political activity as defined by Canada Revenue Agency
• General operating funds for the purpose of organizational stability and/or COVID-19 pandemic recovery

Overall criteria
• Program aligns with UWEM’s Community Impact Strategy
• Program reduces or prevents poverty* in our community
• Program prioritizes service to one or more equity-seeking populations*
• Program operates using the principle of ‘nothing for us without us’*
• Program is led by an organization that is sustainable, stable and strong
• Program addresses an urgent need facing our community

Specific criteria

Eligibility
• The organization is a registered charity or qualified donee as defined by Canada Revenue Agency
• The organization has an active Board of Directors
• The organization has financial statements that have been audited by a licensed public accountant or, for those with annual revenues less than $100,000, an annual financial review
• The organization has the capacity to fulfill UWEM reporting and outcome measurement requirements
• The organization serves one or more equity-seeking populations*
• The organization operates in Elgin Middlesex
• Organization complies with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws and does not infringe upon any right under the Ontario Human Rights Code.
• The organization is working to reduce and/or prevent poverty* in Elgin Middlesex

Program design & impact
• The program reduces and/or prevents poverty* in Elgin Middlesex
• The program meets a current need for the identified equity-seeking population(s)*
• The program produces significant outcomes aligned with UWEM Community Impact Strategy
• The program is proven, viable and evidence-based*
• The program takes a strong partnership/collaborative approach (if appropriate and needed)
• The program is connected to the local coordinated social services system* (if appropriate and needed)

Equity
• The program serves one or more equity seeking population(s)*
• The organization is experienced working with the population served
• The population being served has a role in designing and delivering the program; meaning the organization operates using the principle of ‘nothing for us without us’*

Financials
• The organization is financially sustainable
• The organization has accessed all available internal sources of program funding prior to applying to UWEM (e.g. endowment funds, affiliated foundation revenue, reserve funds, fundraising, etc.)
• All sources of combined program funding do not exceed 100% of required program costs
The program budget appears sound (i.e. sufficient revenue, balanced, reasonable expenses)
The program budget includes operating expenses only
The program budget includes expenses that support accessibility and inclusion appropriate to the population(s) being served

Please note: It is not a requirement that UWEM is the sole funder of the program being considered.

Application process

Agency partnerships & investment committee

Volunteers play a critical role in our funding allocation process. The Agency partnerships & investment (API) committee is comprised of local volunteers who support the application review process, provide funding recommendations to the Board of Directors, and support the ongoing review of UWEM Community Fund investments on behalf of our donors.

Additional volunteers are recruited to support the API committee for the period funding allocations process as needed.

The API committee and allocation volunteers are supported by and work alongside UWEM staff.

Application review process

1. Round 1 applications will launch by the beginning of September 2021. Eligible organizations will be asked to provide preliminary information in the form of a Round 1 application online.

2. Round 1 applications will be reviewed by UWEM staff and volunteers. All Round 1 applicants will receive a status update on their application before October 29, 2021.

3. A short list of organizations will be selected by UWEM staff and volunteers to proceed to Round 2 of the application process. The short-listed organizations will be provided with a web link to submit a Round 2 application online. Details on how to access and use the UWEM online application system will be provided at that time.

4. Round 2 applications will be reviewed by UWEM staff and volunteers. Each member of the review team will score the application using criteria outlined above in the categories of program design & impact, equity and financials. The review committees will make a funding recommendation for each proposed program to the UWEM Agency Partnership & Investment (API) committee.

5. The API committee will review all Round 2 funding recommendations and bring forward final regional recommendations to the UWEM Board of Directors.

6. The UWEM Board of Directors will make final funding decisions.

At various points throughout the process, applicants may be asked to provide additional information and/or participate in a web conference or in-person meeting with UWEM staff and/or volunteers.

All Round 2 applicants will receive notification of funding decisions prior to March 31, 2022.

Expectations of funded agency partners

Successful program funding stream recipients will be expected to:

• Meet the requirements of the funding agreement
• Participate in UWEM donor engagement* activities as requested and where appropriate including:
- Impact stories and photo content (where appropriate)
- Program testimonials or impact stories
- Impact experiences and agency tours
- UWEM Speakers’ Bureau
- Corporate volunteering
- Annual UWEM Day of Caring and other UWEM events
- Provide space to UWEM for meetings, events and media opportunities (where and when appropriate)
- Connect UWEM to program participants/past participants to participate in media, events and/or donor engagement* activities (where appropriate)
- Report annually on program results as outlined in UWEM funding agreement

Annual reporting

Funded agencies will be required to submit annual year-end reports highlighting expenditures and results for program(s). We understand UWEM funding may be used to leverage additional funding sources for programs and, in these cases, the applicant will be asked to identify and report on the impact of UWEM funding specifically.

Information about the UWEM year-end report will be provided to all funded agencies by mid-April 2023 and 2024 and reports will be due by the end of May 2023 and 2024.

Funded agencies are expected to annually provide the following:
- Audited Financial Statements (or Annual financial review if organizational revenue is less than $100,000)
- List of Board of Directors

Financial statements will be reviewed and assessed annually by UWEM staff and volunteers.

UWEM staff will attend agency events such as Annual General Meetings whenever possible to further understanding of the agency and its work and to maintain a positive working relationship.

Measurement framework

As part of annual reporting, funded agencies will be required to submit data related to indicators included in the UWEM Community Fund measurement agreement. Prior to finalizing the funding agreement, indicators will be selected by UWEM and the funded agency to reflect the objectives of the program and its alignment to the UWEM Community Impact Strategy. Year-end report data will be aggregated and used by UWEM for external communication, donor stewardship and community planning.

Timelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information sessions</td>
<td>August 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 1 application opens</td>
<td>August 30, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 1 application deadline</td>
<td>October 1, 2021 12:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Round 1 notification</td>
<td>October 29, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Round 2 application opens</td>
<td>October 29, 2021</td>
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<tr>
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<td>November 15, 2021 12:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 1 notification</td>
<td>March 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Application support

UWEM is committed to supporting applicants throughout the application process.
An online information portal is available with supporting documentation including an applicant guide, FAQs and more:
www.unitedwayem.ca/whatwedo/community-fund-grants

For technical assistance and questions contact:
Jennie Malone, Community Impact Specialist
jmalone@unitedwayem.ca

* Please see Appendix 1: Definitions for explanation of this term.
APPENDIX 1: Definitions

Poverty reduction and/or prevention
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Equity-seeking populations
Poverty and other social challenges impact everyone, but some groups and communities are disproportionately impacted because of deeply embedded social and structural inequities. The ongoing legacy of systemic discrimination and racism continues to influence our current system of laws, our institutions, and our culture. As a result, many people in the community are denied opportunities to reach their full potential. These populations are considered to be equity-seeking.

For the purpose of this application process, UWEM has prioritized the following equity-seeking populations (in no specific order):

- People with low income or living in poverty including children and youth
- Indigenous peoples
- Racialized communities
- People experiencing homelessness
- Immigrants and refugees
- People who live in rural or remote communities
- Women and girls
- People experiencing intimate partner or gender-based violence
- People living with mental illness and/or addiction
- Persons with disabilities
- People who identify as LGBTQ2S+ or non-binary

Principle of ‘nothing for us without us’
This principle recognizes that individuals with lived experience (and/or current program participants) know what is best for themselves and their community, and that their participation is integral to the success of the program. Therefore, when the principle is used, the agency allows the needs and aspirations of the people being served to guide their work by providing meaningful opportunities for participation in program planning, leadership, evaluation, promotion, etc.

Program
A program is a group of clear, related, complementary activities that are intended to achieve a desired outcome among a target group. The scale of a program can vary. A program may deliver a specific service (e.g. subsidized counselling for low-income families) or a broader collection of related services (e.g. a youth leadership program that provides wrap-around supports).
Evidence-based programs
Programs that rely on evidence for design, development and decision-making. Programs that are not
evidence-based may rely on intuition, or other unproven methods.

Advocacy, research and public policy
Activities and programs that focus on:

- Identifying and researching social and/or policy issues
- Providing policy analysis, development and/or advocacy
- Strengthening community-based policy activities
- Engaging constituents (organizations or individuals affected by poverty) in research, policy and
  advocacy work

Note: Advocacy on behalf of individual clients is not included.

Coordinated social services system
An efficient and effective social services system that allows individuals and families to receive the
programs and services they need and fully participate in their community.

Donor engagement activities
Activities designed to connect UWEM donors and prospect donors with UWEM Community Impact work,
increasing understanding of social challenges facing our community and providing opportunities for
individuals to learn more about and contribute to social change. For example: UWEM speakers’ bureau,
Day of Caring, community impact experiences.

Budget items

Annual program revenue
- United Way Elgin & Middlesex - The annual amount requested from UWEM.
- Government funding - Funding received from various levels of government.
- User fees - Fees collected from clients.
- Fundraising - Dollars raised as a result of fundraising efforts by your agency.
- Investment income - Income earned through investments.
- Other revenue - Revenue that does not fit into stated categories. Please provide an explanation
  for all additional revenue.

Annual program expenses
- Staff Salaries and benefits - Wages earned by employees and contract staff who work full or part-time;
  and the costs incurred by the agency for any expenses related to health, dental, life, pension, and
  disability coverage, etc. for employees.
- Fees for professional services - Costs associated with program delivery such as accounting
  services (audit), organizational assessments, legal services, etc.
- Accommodation and supports - Costs incurred in supporting staff, volunteers and/or client involvement
  in development and delivery of programs. e.g. honorariums, etc.
- Program materials and supplies - Any supplies directly related to program operations including purchase
  of basic needs items like food, meals and hygiene items.
- Printing and communications - Supplies such as stationary, paper, pens, envelopes and folders;
  marketing and communication expenses; expenses related to digital communication, internet access, and
  technology including web conferencing and digital program platforms.
- Travel for staff and volunteers - Authorized travel expenses for staff and volunteers. This may include
  use of agency vehicles, and transporting clients. Direct assistance to clients for travel should be
  included in Accommodation and supports.
- Utilities, insurance and rental of premises - All hydro, water and other related expenses for location
  where program occurs. Costs associated with insurance including liability, vehicles, etc. Costs
  associated with the mortgage, lease, or rental of program facility including property tax.
• Lease, purchase and maintenance of program equipment - Any equipment directly related to the delivery of the program, excluding program materials and supplies included in a previous category.
• Administrative costs - Costs directly associated with program delivery such as evaluation, data collection, etc.
• Small capital expenditures for essential program equipment - Capital expenditures of less than $3,000 for essential program equipment, excluding program materials and supplies included in a previous category.
• Other expenses - Expenses that do not fit into stated categories. Please provide an explanation for all additional expenses