



## UNITED WAY OF GREATER NEW BEDFORD'S INNOVATION FUND

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Eligibility

##### **Our organization is not a traditional nonprofit – can we apply?**

Yes. Nonprofits with 501c3 status, city and town departments, councils, Boards, schools, and social enterprises are eligible to apply, as long as the project aligns with the mission and impact areas of United Way of Greater New Bedford. Cross-sector collaborations, task forces, and other collaborative efforts are encouraged to apply under an entity that has the capacity to serve as the fiscal conduit.

##### **What is not eligible for funding?**

The following types of applications are not eligible for funding:

- Applications that seek support to maintain ongoing, established programs.
- Applications less than \$20,000 are not eligible for funding.
- Applications for political purposes, religious purposes, or programs requiring religious participation are not eligible.
- Applications for capital campaigns.
- Applications requesting compensation for program's loss of another revenue source.
- Applications that seek funds for fundraising expenses or debt reduction.
- Applications for funds to directly benefit an individual or family.
- Funding for organizations with programs or activities which are incompatible with the mission of the UWGNB, as determined by the UWGNB Board of Directors.
- Applications that do not serve or benefit the Greater New Bedford community.

##### **Our organization currently receives United Way of Greater New Bedford funding for another program/service/project – can we apply?**

Yes. However, you must apply for funding for a new project/program/service.

##### **We are planning a project that will only help a town outside of Greater New Bedford – can we apply?**

No. The project must benefit one or more communities within the United Way of Greater New Bedford service area. We serve a total of nine communities, including: New Bedford, Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Freetown, Marion, Mattapoisett, Rochester and Wareham.

##### **I'm currently receiving funding from other sources for this project, but United Way of Greater New Bedford's funding is required to get the project off the ground. Can I apply?**

Yes. While the hope is to fund smaller pilot or experimental projects that can eventually be scaled, we realize that often multiple funding sources may be necessary to get an innovative pilot off the ground. We

do require that you tell us about these funding sources in your application; note them in your budget and describe how those funding sources will be used relative to United Way funding in your budget narrative.

### **What makes a project innovative?**

United Way of Greater New Bedford defines “innovative” as a novel approach that is more effective, efficient, collaborative, and/or sustainable than current approaches or solutions. Programs, services, and other types of projects that may result in breakthroughs in United Way of Greater New Bedford’s impact areas are encouraged.

Proposals from health & human service organizations for ongoing, established programs may be better suited for United Way of Greater New Bedford’s upcoming open RFP in the Spring of 2018. Please reach out to Allie Yates-Berg at [ayatesberg@unitedwayofgnb.org](mailto:ayatesberg@unitedwayofgnb.org) if you have any questions about your project before submitting your application.

### **Does my project need to move the needle on one or more United Way Health, Education, and Financial Stability program indicators by the end of the grant period?**

No. United Way recognizes that the social impact of innovative projects may not occur until down the road. Successful projects will be directly aligned with United Way’s program indicators, but may not move the needle on these indicators before the end of the grant period.

Effective proposals will clearly define what “success” is for that project and how the project will go about measuring that success over the course of the grant period and beyond.

### **Request**

#### **Is there a maximum funding amount? Is there a minimum funding amount?**

Yes. The maximum request is \$100,000 (although there is some flexibility for exceptionally compelling projects). The maximum request could be \$100,000 for a 1-year project or \$50,000/year for a 2-year project. The minimum request is \$20,000.

#### **Can my organization apply for multiple years of funding?**

Yes. Applicants may apply for up to 3 years of funding, with one year of funding guaranteed, and funding in year 2 and year 3 dependent on the progress of the project and the availability of funds.

### **How to apply**

#### **How do I apply?**

You must submit an electronic copy of your application via United Ways of Greater New Bedford’s CommunityForce website - [unitedwayofgnb.communityforce.com](http://unitedwayofgnb.communityforce.com). Paper applications will not be accepted. This is an Innovation Fund after all! Late applications submitted after the deadline – October 31, 2017 11:59pm – will not be accepted.

#### **What are the application requirements?**

Applicants must submit their proposals via CommunityForce by October 31, 2017 11:59pm. Finalists will be required to attend an interview with select Innovator Panel members, likely to take place in the last week of November and the first week of December. Note that applicants will be required to submit documents about

their organization – please review the application well in advance of the application deadline to prepare accordingly. Letters of support from partner organizations will be required.

**My project involves multiple partners. Do we need to provide letters of support from each partner agency?**

Yes. The application will require you to upload letters of support from partner organizations participating in the project.

**What is the deadline to apply?**

October 31, 2017 11:59pm – late applications will not be accepted.

## **Review Process**

### **What is the review process and timeline?**

The Request for Proposals for the Innovation Fund will launch on September 25<sup>th</sup> via our CommunityForce website: [unitedwayofgnb.communityforce.com](http://unitedwayofgnb.communityforce.com). Applications will undergo an initial review by United Way of Greater New Bedford staff to check for eligibility. Once eligible applications are screened, they will proceed to a cross-sector Innovators Panel of community leaders. The panel will score applications using the Innovation Fund scoring rubric and the top 10 applications will become "Finalists". Those Finalists will proceed to an interview round with the Innovators Panel. Innovation Fund awards will be announced in December of 2017.

### **What is the scoring criteria for applications?**

Applications will be scored based on the following criteria (in order of importance):

- Potential for social impact
- How compelling, innovative, and inventive an approach is
- Understanding of risk and mitigation plans
- Experience and track record of organization and staff taking on the project
- Expected timeline and project deliverables/milestones
- The evidence base supporting the project
- Sustainability of the project beyond the grant period
- Whether there is an identified clear need for the project
- Reasonableness of budget relative to expected project outcomes