

# United Way Rubric – 2026 Multi-Year Grants- Full Proposal

This rubric evaluates the Full Proposal submissions for the 2026 Multi-Year Grants.

*Scores of 3 represent solid, competitive, and expected responses.*

*Scores of 4 and 5 should be used only when a proposal demonstrates above-average clarity or exceptional strength.*

<b>CRITERION</b>	<b>1 – INSUFFICIENT</b>	<b>2 – NEEDS IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>3 – WELL DEFINED</b>	<b>4 – CLEARLY DEFINED</b>	<b>5 – EXEMPLARY</b>
<b>ALIGNMENT WITH INVESTMENT PRIORITY &amp; ASPIRATIONAL GOALS</b>	Does not demonstrate alignment with the assigned Investment Priority or Aspirational Goals.  Response may be inaccurate, irrelevant, or contradictory.	Some alignment with the assigned investment priority or an aspirational goal noted but vague, limited, or lacking rationale.  Little connection to program activities or outcomes.	Clear alignment with the assigned Investment Priority and at least one Aspirational Goal.  Provides a coherent explanation of how core program elements support these frameworks.	Strong, well-supported alignment showing how program strategies map to specific strategies within the Investment Priority and connect to more than one Aspirational Goal.	Exceptional and detailed alignment. Clearly demonstrates how multiple solution-based strategies within the priority area and multiple Aspirational Goals are advanced through program design, activities and outcomes. Alignment is deep, intentional and evident across multiple sections of the proposal.

CRITERION	1 – INSUFFICIENT	2 – NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	3 – WELL DEFINED	4 – CLEARLY DEFINED	5 – EXEMPLARY
<p><b>PROGRAM ACTIVITIES &amp; YEAR 1 TIMELINE</b></p>	<p>Activities are missing, unclear, extremely general or inconsistent with other proposal content.</p> <p>Timeline is absent, unrealistic, or unsequenced. Raises major concerns about feasibility.</p>	<p>Activities are provided but lack meaningful detail, specificity or clarity.</p> <p>Timeline is vague or incomplete.</p> <p>Activities do not align clearly with staffing, outcomes, or budget. May raise feasibility concerns.</p>	<p>Provides a clear, coherent set of Year 1 activities with appropriate detail.</p> <p>Timeline is logical, realistic, and sequenced.</p> <p>Activities are aligned with the program model, outcomes, and budget.</p> <p>Represents a solid and competitive response.</p>	<p>Activities are detailed, well-sequenced, and strongly aligned with program goals, budget, outcomes and the Investment Priority.</p> <p>Demonstrates thoughtful operational planning and readiness. All sections of the proposal (budget, outcomes, partners, staffing, strategy alignment) reinforce each other.</p>	<p>Highly detailed and comprehensive description of Year 1 activities, showing exceptional planning and operational clarity. Timeline is thoroughly developed, fully feasible and optimally sequenced.</p> <p>Activities demonstrate strong internal consistency across the entire proposal and reflect excellence in program design and implementation.</p>

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<b>OUTCOMES &amp; MEASUREMENT</b>	<p>Outcomes provided but unclear, overly broad or not meaningfully measurable.</p> <p>Measurement approach lacks detail, feasibility or logic. Alignment with the program model is limited.</p>	<p>Outcome(s) are stated but lack specificity or reasonable measurability.</p> <p>Methods to track progress are unclear or insufficiently tied to activities. Alignment to program goals or United Way strategies is limited.</p>	<p>Outcome 1 (# of people served) is in has a clear and reasonable method for tracking.</p> <p>Outcome logically aligns with the program description, Year 1 activities, and intended impact. Represents a solid, competitive response.</p>	<p>Provides more than one outcome, each with well-defined, realistic measurement methods. Strong alignment to the program activities and United Way’s strategies.</p>	<p>Provides more than one well-designed outcome that is clearly measurable, meaningful and tied directly to program activities. Demonstrates strong evaluation planning through thoughtful, credible methods. Shows exceptional alignment to United Way strategies and program goals.</p>
<b>BUDGET, NARRATIVE, &amp; FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY</b>	<p>Budget unclear or inconsistent with program activities. Insufficient detail. Raises major feasibility concerns.</p>	<p>Some budget detail but weak alignment to activities. Narrative lacks clarity. Feasibility uncertain.</p>	<p>Clear, reasonable budget aligned to activities. Narrative explains major costs and revenue sources.</p> <p>Demonstrates basic organizational capacity and describes how core programming could be sustained or adjusted if awarded less than requested.</p>	<p>Strong alignment across budget, activities, and outcomes.</p> <p>Narrative is detailed and transparent. Feasibility is well demonstrated.</p> <p>Shows clear organizational capacity and provides a credible, well-reasoned plan for sustaining implementation or</p>	<p>Exceptionally clear, detailed, and transparent budget with strong financial rationale.</p> <p>Demonstrates sustainability, efficiency, and strong stewardship. Clear contingency plans and alignment across the proposal.</p> <p>Provides strong evidence of organizational capacity and</p>

<b>BUDGET, NARRATIVE, &amp; FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY (CONT.)</b>	<p>Represents a solid, competitive response. adjusting scope appropriately if funded at a reduced level. a well-developed plan to sustain the program, and maintain impact, even if awarded less than the requested amount.</p>				
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<b>OVERALL IMPRESSION-FUNDING RECOMMENDATION</b>	<p>The proposal is not competitive for funding. Significant concerns exist regarding feasibility, alignment, clarity, or overall program design. The risks or gaps outweigh the potential impact.</p>	<p>The proposal has some strengths but still does not meet the level required for funding. Concerns remain in key areas that prevent recommending funding.</p>	<p>A solid, competitive proposal that meets expectations and demonstrates readiness. Funding is recommended at a reduced level due to scope, feasibility considerations, budget justification or the degree of clarity and detail provided.</p> <p>Represents a good program that could achieve impact with partial support.</p>	<p>A strong proposal with clear alignment to priorities, feasible implementation plans, solid measurement and a well-justified budget.</p> <p>Funding is recommended at the full requested amount, assuming resources allow.</p>	<p>An exceptional, top-tier proposal demonstrating outstanding alignment, clarity, feasibility and expected impact across all criteria.</p> <p>Represents one of the strongest candidates for full funding and should be prioritized.</p>