



**IMPORTANT REMINDER:**

Please reference the Community Investments Overview from the [Agency Resources webpage](#), which includes information about United Way’s population focus, Community Vision for Change, and types of investments. This resource contextualizes the Youth Success RFP within the overall framework of the United Way.

**Youth Success RFP**

Youth success is critical to the ability to thrive into adulthood and to the long-term viability of our region. Consequently, United Way has supported the needs and healthy development of our community’s youth since our founding.

Healthy youth development includes productively engaging youth in their communities, schools, organizations, and families; recognizing, utilizing, and supporting their strengths; and promoting positive outcomes by providing opportunities and fostering positive relationships.<sup>1</sup> When we focus on children’s strengths and building engagement and connection, they become assets to our community for the present and the future.

Research demonstrates that social, emotional, and cognitive development are inextricably linked.<sup>2</sup> In addition to academic competencies, youth need a sense of belonging and purpose, the ability to set and pursue goals, resiliency and perseverance to overcome obstacles, and teamwork skills to succeed in school and life. This social-emotional learning is foundational to our Youth Success framework.

In addition to social-emotional learning, United Way recognizes that a key aspect of closing the achievement gap for under-resourced students is improving literacy skills. The ability to read proficiently is a fundamental skill that affects the learning experiences and school performance of children and adolescents. Students who are competent readers, as measured by their performance on reading tests, are more likely to perform well in other subjects, such as math and science. Reading achievement also predicts one’s likelihood of graduating from high school and attending college. In South Hampton Roads, 16 to 33 percent of students are not reading on grade level by third grade depending on the school district.<sup>3</sup> That means that in our highest need areas, one in every three students could use extra support with reading.

The need to invest in advancing high-quality Out-of-School Time (OST) programming that is accessible to under-resourced or income-constrained families is grounded in research.<sup>4</sup> Engaging

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>

<sup>2</sup> Evidence Base for How Learning Happens

<sup>3</sup> GHR Connects, 2018

<sup>4</sup> The Value of Out-of-School Time Programs

students in OST hours can result in closing gaps in academic achievement, avoiding risky behaviors or youth safety issues, and providing essential access to social-emotional learning and enrichment activities. Intentionally incorporating elements of OST program quality is associated with better youth outcomes. Examples of program quality include staff stability, a positive climate, quality adult-youth relationships, intentional program design, regular attendance, quality instruction and professional development.

Focusing on social-emotional learning as a preventative mechanism can contribute to achieving more equitable outcomes for children from at-risk backgrounds and reducing negative trends in our community. While social-emotional learning benefits people of all ages and backgrounds, youth exposed to chronic stress and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – defined as experiences or life events that are potentially traumatic – are more susceptible to challenges with social and emotional development. Examples of results linked to social-emotional skill development in children include reduced bullying, truancy rates, school and neighborhood violence, and improved mental health. Further, social-emotional learning interventions often carry forward with impact later in life such as reduced incidence of substance abuse, domestic violence, and suicide as youth transition from childhood through adolescence to adulthood.

Knowing that 20% of children in Virginia have experienced two or more ACEs<sup>5</sup>, and that in South Hampton Roads one in five teens report being bullied on school property<sup>6</sup> and 21% of middle school<sup>7</sup> and 15% of high school students<sup>8</sup> have seriously considered suicide, investing in social-emotional learning could lead to changing the life course for youth in our community.

### **Program Investments Strategies**

This funding opportunity aims to invest in programs that support the success of school-aged youth by:

1. Improving the quality of and access to out-of-school time programs (OST Programs).
2. Furthering the development of positive social and emotional learning (Social-Emotional Learning).

Embedded within these, we aim to address systems issues that prevent or limit youth success.

Depending on the fit for your organization’s programs, applicants may choose to apply under a single strategy or multiple strategies. Please see Appendix F for a description of approaches to social-emotional learning strategies.

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/ACEs/state/VA?edition-year=2018>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ghrconnects.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=6019&localeTypeId=2>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ghrconnects.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=5995&localeTypeId=22>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ghrconnects.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=5997&localeTypeId=22>

## **Eligibility**

- ✓ Open to United Way certified agencies.
- ✓ Applicants must serve the population focus described above, including both geographic service area and income.

## **Grantee Expectations**

### *Youth Success Grantee Engagement*

Grantees agree to participate in convenings and activities that explore best practices, facilitate learning, collectively define OST quality, explore access issues, solve problems, and establish shared measures. This could also include professional development for direct service staff and supervisors provided through United Way on relevant youth success topics such as understanding, modeling and teaching SEL skills and behaviors.

### *Unite Us Option*

To make measurable progress across the investments in Early Childhood Success, Youth Success, and Thriving Families RFPs, every organization will have to play their part. Families typically have multiple pillars of the Bridge to Self-Sufficiency on which they need to focus, often requiring support from multiple organizations. Organizations applying for funding through United Way have the opportunity to opt-in to using the Unite Us software (see the “Our Tools” section from the Introduction, p. 4). The cost of user licenses and training will be covered by United Way during the grant period if the organization elects to become a Unite Us partner. Organizations that are interested in opting-in are encouraged to reach out for technical assistance so that the United Way staff can help determine organizational fit. The opportunity to use Unite Us will be ongoing.

### *Performance Accountability*

United Way will be using the Results-based Accountability (RBA) approach to measure the contributions of our work across all investments. Grantees will be responsible for bi-annual (twice per year) quantitative and qualitative reporting.

RBA is made up of two interrelated parts:

Population Accountability is about the well-being of whole populations.  
[For neighborhoods, communities, cities, counties, states, nations]

Performance Accountability is about the well-being of client populations.  
[For programs, agencies, and service systems]

Performance accountability measures are broken down into four quadrants (although example measures for each quadrant are given below, other measures may be chosen based on the program’s activities and expected results):

	Quantity	Quality						
Effort	<p><b>How much did we do?</b></p> <p># of activities (by type)</p> <p># of people served</p>	<p><b>How well did we do it?</b></p> <p>Attendance rate</p> <p>Participant satisfaction</p>						
Effect	<p><b>Is anyone better off?</b></p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td># of youth promoted to next grade level</td> <td>% of youth promoted to next grade level</td> </tr> <tr> <td># of youth with new skills in _____</td> <td>% of youth with new skills in _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td># of parents/caregivers who remain employed due to access to OST care</td> <td>% of parents/caregivers who remain or become employed due to access to OST care</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		# of youth promoted to next grade level	% of youth promoted to next grade level	# of youth with new skills in _____	% of youth with new skills in _____	# of parents/caregivers who remain employed due to access to OST care	% of parents/caregivers who remain or become employed due to access to OST care
# of youth promoted to next grade level	% of youth promoted to next grade level							
# of youth with new skills in _____	% of youth with new skills in _____							
# of parents/caregivers who remain employed due to access to OST care	% of parents/caregivers who remain or become employed due to access to OST care							

### *Campaign Participation*

Grantees are expected to run a United Way campaign at their organization, although there is no expectation for the amount that needs to be raised or the percent of individual participation.

### **Application and Review Process**

#### *Blackbaud Grantmaking Application Portal*

United Way has transitioned to a new grant management software, Blackbaud Grantmaking. All applications will be submitted electronically through the online application portal. Please follow instructions for logging in and completing the application, which can be referenced in the recorded training that will be available on the [Agency Resources webpage](#) by January 3, 2018.

## *Application*

In order to be considered for the Early Childhood Success funding, your organization will complete the application specific to this RFP. The application link will be available on the [Agency Resources webpage](#). To help with planning, please see a list of questions for the Youth Success Application on page 8.

### Multiple Programs

It is likely that some organizations will have multiple programs applying for United Way funding through the Early Childhood Success, Youth Success, and Thriving Families RFPs. We typically recommend that organizations complete separate applications for each program within the RFP that best fits that program. For example, if your organization has an after-school program and a summer program that have different activities, hours, and enrollment, it is recommended to submit separate applications. However, depending on how your organization's programs are defined and structured, in some instances it may be best to write a single RFP application for multiple programs. Technical assistance for support in determining the best way to apply for multiple programs is encouraged; see technical assistance options below.

### Collaborative Applications

Collaboration between multiple organizations when responding to United Way RFPs is also likely for some projects or initiatives. Organizations submitting a collaborative application for the Youth Success RFP must choose a lead organization that is a United Way Certified Agency to submit the application and be the fiscal agent if the grant is awarded. Roles, responsibilities, and budgets of the collaborating organizations will need to be articulated clearly in the application. Other organizations collaborating with the lead agency do not need to be United Way Certified Agencies. We strongly recommend signing up for a technical assistance appointment if submitting a collaborative application.

### *Submission Deadline & Technical Assistance*

All Youth Success applications need to be submitted electronically by **March 1, 2019** (see important dates outlined below). The application will open on or before **January 14, 2019**.

Technical assistance will be provided by United Way staff through the day prior to the application deadline (**February 28**) in an effort to prevent last minute issues when United Way staff may not be available. Technical assistance will be done by email, phone, and appointment, depending on the type and complexity of the assistance requested. Please find contact information and a link for scheduling an appointment on our [Agency Resources webpage](#).

<b>Youth Success RFP</b>	
<b>Application Opens</b>	January 14
<b>Technical Assistance Ends</b>	February 28
<b>Submission Deadline</b>	March 1
<b>Agency Interviews</b>	March 29

*Review Process*

Each year, community volunteers play a leadership role in the review process for United Way certification and funding. This year, funding review panels of approximately 9-12 volunteers each will be split according to the RFPs in order to keep similar applications together. A portion of the panel volunteers will have subject matter expertise in the strategies of the RFP they are reviewing.

Panel volunteers will read all applications assigned to their panel in full, so there is no need to repeat responses in the application; you may refer to an answer on another question if applicable. Agency representatives for programs applying under the Youth Success RFP will then meet the Funding Review Panel during the in-person Agency Interviews at United Way on **March 29, 2019**. These short interviews will be discussion-based and will allow for the Panelists to ask specific questions to the agency representatives based on their proposals. Each applicant will be assigned an interview time shortly after the submission deadline.

Panel volunteers will score both the applications and interviews based on selection criteria outlined below. Panelists will then deliberate and make recommendations to United Way’s Community Investments Committee, which make final recommendations to the United Way Board of Directors for approval.

Awards will be made no later than May 31, 2019, with the grant period starting July 1, 2019.

*Selection Criteria*

Both the application and interviews will be evaluated based on strength across the selection criteria.

1. Clarity and Completion: All questions on the program application are answered adequately and accurately. The content and presentation of information in the application and interview is easily understood and provides a level of depth that is sufficient for the reviewer to understand the program’s purpose, goals, approaches, and results.

2. Program Purpose & Implementation: Clear program goals that align with organizational mission. Thoroughly describes strategic alignment to chosen United Way strategy. Core activities are detailed and appropriate based on program goals and results, and other evidence that indicates program is implemented with attention to detail, results, and participant experience.
3. Program Budget: Budget is complete, accurate, and clearly depicts the income supporting the program and the expenses required to operate it. Expenses are realistic and reasonable to sufficiently perform the activities described in the application and there are no unexplained concerns based on the information provided. The budget and funding strategy have enough diversity and/or security to assure the organization has the financial means to continue sustaining the program.
4. Collaboration: A commitment to authentic collaboration is visible within organizational values, existing plans and activities, and through successful relationships with other nonprofits, educational and health institutions, businesses, and government. Results of collaborative efforts are demonstrable. Depending on the depth and intensity, they will vary from coordination of referrals and information sharing to systems change.
5. Culture of Learning: A strong commitment to continuous learning and improvement as evidenced through the ability to adapt based on issues identified through data monitoring and feedback loops, and the promotion of a culture that shares information openly, tests new ideas, and learns from mistakes in order improve results and participant experience.
6. Capacity to Track & Use Data: Utilization of effective measurement tools, ability to collect, organize, and use both formal and informal sources of data, and the existence of effective technology infrastructure and management systems that are systematically used to track, analyze, and report on robust program and participant data.
7. Informed by Evidence: Relevant, recent research from multiple sources inform the program's existence, design, and implementation practices, including best practices that are evidence-based or evidence-informed and are customized for the local context to ensure that services have the greatest impact potential.
8. Program Results: Reported results are appropriately defined and measured in the context of the program's goals and intensity. Strong evidence demonstrates that participants are better off and/or that design and implementation are high-quality and effective.
9. Participant Voice, Choice, & Dignity: Participants are directly involved in feedback and decision making. Program design elements are strength-based, inclusive, individualized, and informed by participants. High levels of trust exist between participants and staff/volunteers.
10. Targeting Program Resources: Agency demonstrates the ability and willingness to effectively target existing program resources to neighborhoods and/or populations with high levels of risk or vulnerability, and/or to focus program's resources on a specific demographic to maximize impact potential. Directing resources requires disciplined attention to addressing barriers that prevent participation and other equity-related issues.

## **Youth Success Application Questions**

*The following list reflects questions for the Youth Success Application. As we build out the applications in the online portal, there may be minor adjustments to these questions.*

### *Questions for Strategies 1 & 2*

#### Program Overview

1. Program Name
2. Provide an executive summary for your program. [This may be used for promotional purposes.] (Word count = 250)
3. Define your program's target or service population using the lists below.
4. Which strategy is your program applying under as your primary strategy? [The primary strategy chosen should be the MOST aligned with this program's core activities.]
  - a. Improving the quality of and access to out-of-school time programs (OST Programs).
  - b. Furthering the development of positive social and emotional learning (Social-Emotional Learning).
5. Is there any other strategy (or strategies) that could be considered this program's secondary strategy (or strategies)? [The secondary strategies chosen should be VERY closely aligned with this program's core activities. Do not choose strategies that are aligned with other programs at your organization, only those that align with the program applying for funding.]

#### Program Narrative and Strategic Alignment

6. Describe the program for which you are seeking funding. You may choose to include your theory of change, the goals and objectives, core activities, implementation details such as how staff and/or volunteers are utilized and trained, and any other relevant details. Be sure to include how this program aligns with your chosen primary strategy, including how it fits with your work. [Use this section to cover what is not prompted in other questions.]
7. If this is a collaborative proposal, identify if this is a new partnership and discuss the reasons why you are working collaboratively. Identify your key partners and describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner. If this is not a collaborative proposal, discuss what you have learned about authentic collaboration in the context of your program or organization. Provide at least one lesson learned with an accompanying example from the past two years. [See page 5 of the RFP on collaborative proposals.]

8. Describe the program's target or service population, based on verifiable data that your organization collects. Describe unique challenges in working with this population and how your organization has addressed these challenges in the past. Include the average number of participants served by this program annually.
9. Discuss whether membership or participant fees are used for your programs or services. What fee structure is used? What specific criteria or qualifications are used to assess eligibility for your programs and services? What accommodations are made if individuals or families are unable to pay the fee?
10. What challenges does your program face in providing access to quality out-of-school time programming? If possible, provide examples such as issues of access or ability to provide quality programming. If this is a new program, what challenges do you foresee in implementing your proposed approach and how do you plan to combat those challenges?

#### Data-Driven Decision Making

11. Describe how your program (or the approach/technique(s) used in your program) is either evidence-based or evidence-informed. Examples of research and/or best practices, and how they relate to program implementation are highly encouraged. [See RFP Glossary for definition of evidence-based and evidence-informed.]
12. Describe a recent situation (within the past three years) in which data was used to inform a change in programming with the goal of improving results. The description could include: the problem that was identified, key data points that led to a decision, the change that was made, and/or comparison data from before and after the change was made.

#### Measuring Impact

13. What are your program's key results (i.e. key outcomes or performance measures)? Include specific measurements and targets for your program. Describe the successes and challenges in achieving these key results. What evidence do you have that demonstrates whether program participants are better off?
14. Discuss the types of data collection methods you use to monitor program quality and measure results. [Methods could include: surveys, assessments, interviews, observations, tracking program activities or attendance, etc.]
15. Upload important measurement tools used to track results (e.g. surveys, assessments, etc.).

#### Budget

16. Total program budget: \_\_\_\_ (number)
17. Total requested amount: \_\_\_\_ (number)
18. Upload program budget using template with line item explanations

19. Budget narrative (overall) - Provide any additional explanation or clarification about your program budget, such as any major changes projected for next fiscal year or anticipated increases or decreases in expenses or revenue for the upcoming year. If collaborating on this proposal, be sure to explain any complexities that may not be clear to the reviewers within the budget template, such as how funds would be distributed to sub-grantees.

*Questions for Unite Us Opt-in Opportunity*

1. What partners do you work with most frequently when sending or accepting referrals for services? List 3 to 5 partners.
2. Which best describes your organization?
  - a. My organization already has Unite Us licensed users and we don't need any more licenses at this time.
  - b. My organization already has Unite Us users and wants to add additional licenses.
  - c. My organization does not currently use Unite Us and we want to become a partner.
  - d. My organization does not currently use Unite Us and we are not interested at this time.
  - e. My organization does not currently use Unite Us and we are unsure about whether to become a partner at this time.
3. If selecting to add additional users or to become a Unite Us partner for the first time, who should we contact to follow up? Provide name, title, and email for one or more contacts.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:**

Please refer to the RFP Glossary & Appendices document on the [Agency Resources webpage](#) for definitions of key terms and the Appendices referenced in this document. Information for requesting technical assistance is also available on this page.