



**Women United
Request for Proposals:
2022 Summer Pitch Competition**

Background

Women United, a leadership giving society at the United Way of South Hampton Roads, is a local network of over 780 women that provides the opportunity to take action in our community through leadership, fundraising, and advocacy. As part of Women United, the Funding Council directs resources towards achieving self-sufficiency and long-term economic security among women and families living in South Hampton Roads. Through these investments, we strive to break the cycle of poverty by using innovative, bold strategies that allow women to flourish in every part of their lives and that unite partners, align existing resources, and target service gaps. Since 2005, Women United has invested more than \$1.6M in community programs.

Investment Strategy

This RFP is intended to spur small innovations by encouraging curiosity, problem solving, and creativity. Innovation generally begins with asking key questions that assist with surfacing challenges, new ideas or ways of working. By equipping organizations with structured space, knowledge, and tools, grantees will be able to critically examine one or more aspects of their work and experiment with transformative solutions using brain science.

Specifically, the investment strategy aims to boost the adoption of brain science informed approaches in the design and implementation of programs and/or within the practices or policies of human service organizations. Applicants need to be able to identify a specific problem or opportunity – or a question they want to explore – in the context of a program or organization, and then describe in broad terms how brain science can inform a more effective response to the issue. Example approaches can be simple and may seek to improve participant engagement, eliminate barriers to participation, or boost executive functioning.

Examples

- Low enrollment was pervasive in one Department of Labor program¹. After a group of organizations collaborated to pinpoint the problem, the communications used to recruit participants were redesigned. Simple changes in tone and approachability resulted in significant increases in enrollment. The redesigned communications guided people with specific and minimal action steps rather than overwhelming them with an extensive set of procedures. This example applies research on executive functioning and demonstrates how small adjustments in program design can yield big results.
- As a result of participating in a learning collaborative called *Change in Mind*, Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Calgary instituted “magical match,” which paired mentors and mentees based on having similar scores on an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) screening. This modification facilitated stronger relationships between mentees and mentors who were often able to relate to each other in more meaningful ways.²
- Multiple organizations participating in EMPATH’s Economic Mobility Exchange network have incorporated a tailored version of the Bridge to Self-Sufficiency into their core work with participants. The tool can be used to frame conversations and goal setting as well as for assessment. It supports executive functioning by helping participants think about the future and make decisions in context of

¹ <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/news/minds-business/behavior-and-brain-sciences-help-optimize-labor-programs.html>

² <https://www.alliance1.org/change-in-mind>



other aspects of their life. When used across multiple programs within an organization, the Bridge can serve as a constant and create a more cohesive experience for participants as they work with multiple people and programs simultaneously and as part of their journey over time.³

Resource

- “Using Brain Science to Design New Pathways out of Poverty” by Elisabeth D. Babcock:
<http://s3.amazonaws.com/empath-website/pdf/Research-UsingBrainScienceDesignPathwaysPoverty-0114.pdf>

Population Focus

Women United focuses on partnering with vulnerable populations – and specifically women and children – in the South Hampton Roads communities of Chesapeake, Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach. This includes individuals and families below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) as well as those struggling to make ends meet, who we call ALICE® (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). The ALICE population represents a growing number of households in our community who earn more than the official Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living, which generally includes families with income that is 250% of the FPL and below.

Eligibility

- Open to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that are registered with the Commonwealth of Virginia;
- Organizations must meet due diligence requirements based on current United Way certification and good standing or satisfactory review of due diligence documents;
- Applicants must serve the population focus described above and be able to demonstrate how their proposal directly supports women or has an explicit connection to an issue faced by or impacting the lives of women.

Grant Conditions & Expectations

Grant Term

This is a one-time grant award that will be dispersed the week of **August 22, 2022**. Receiving a Women United grant will not preclude an organization from applying or receiving other grants from UWSHR.

Grant Award \$25,000

Grantee Communications

The Grantee agree to acknowledge Women United and United Way of South Hampton Roads as part of any communication in which the grant award is mentioned or shared.

Grantee Engagement & Reporting

The Grantee will have the opportunity to learn from available resources from the Economic Mobility Exchange and partner agencies. Training and technical assistance opportunities will also be available to support grantees with the exploration and experimentation processes.

³ <https://www.empathways.org/approach/bridge-to-self-sufficiency>



Reporting will be based on documentation and dissemination of lessons learned from the project so that the grantee experience can be used to drive further innovation among the local nonprofit sector. The specific format of the report will be discussed with the grantee and individualized based on the project.

The grantee will be announced at the 2022 Women United Fall Luncheon, placing an additional spotlight on the agency and program. The grantee will be asked to give a brief presentation about the program and its impact during the luncheon, which is scheduled for October 27, 2022.

Application Process

Proposal Format & Submission Process

Your proposal (**maximum of 4 pages**) should be assembled as follows:

1. Organizational Information
 - a. Mission
 - b. Organization's history
 - c. Current programs and activities
2. Problem Statement
 - a. Description of the issue, or need, to be addressed by the proposed program
 - b. Supporting facts and documentation of the need for the proposed program
3. Project Description
 - a. Goal and objectives of the proposed program
 - b. Target population and number of people to be served
 - c. Referral of the reader to your completed Logic Model (See Exhibit 1.)
 - d. Contributions of brain science to the proposed program
 - e. Other organizations participating in the project, and their roles
 - f. Timetable for implementation
 - g. Total amount requested (No budget is required.)

Note: Proposals are not required to state or describe the specific solution(s) or strategy that will be used. While possibilities may be identified as part of the submission, successful applicants will be supported in exploring and experimenting with brain-science approaches as part of the grant experience.

Submission Applicants submit a brief written proposal by **Friday, July 22, 2022**.

Review & Scoring Process

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Problem Statement (20%)
2. Logic Model (20%)
3. Contribution(s) of Brain Science (30%)
4. Overall Project Description (30%)

The Women United Funding Council will review all proposals and may request a short meeting with select applicants prior to its selection of the finalist. The Women United Board will approve the finalist.

Application Submission via Jotform



Proposals should be submitted electronically using the following link: [Women United Summer Pitch Competition](#)

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance will be provided by phone, email, and by appointment, depending on the type and complexity of the assistance requested. Staff are available to provide guidance and answer questions about the application content or the Jotform submission. Please contact Carey Yates [cyates@unitedwayshr.org].

Women United RFP Important Dates	
Application Opens	July 5, 2022
Submission Deadline	July 22, 2022
Agency Interviews	August 15, 2022 (TBD)
Communication of Award	August 22, 2022
Women United Fall Luncheon	October 27, 2022



Exhibit 1: Logic Model

Title of the Proposed Program: _____

Goal of the Proposed Program: _____

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Immediate outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<i>In order to carry out our activities, we will need the following resources:</i>	<i>In order to address our need, we will carry out the following activities:</i>	<i>Once these activities are carried out, we expect to see the following as markers of service delivery:</i>	<i>We expect the activities to lead to the following immediate improvements in our target population(s):</i>	<i>We expect the activities to lead to the following long-term improvements in our target population(s):</i>

*We will use the following **data sources** to document changes in the immediate and long-term outcomes listed above:*

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