

2012-13 Advocacy Application Instructions



United Way of Asheville
and Buncombe County

Overview

These instructions provide guidance for completing a funding application for “system advocacy” to United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County. If you wish to submit an application for a program currently not funded by United Way, you must first complete a Letter of Intent and be approved.

Application Requirements and Review Timeframe

Application Deadline: Thursday, March 1, 2012

- Per organization – each organization must complete four attachments and submit online by the deadline listed above. Only submit these attachments once, regardless of how many program applications you submit.
- Per program – complete and submit your application(s) online. Ron Katz, Focus Area Manager, and Lance Edwards, Community Investment Director, are available to address questions you have about the application or review the application online with you until Monday, February 27th.

Funding Notification Date: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, via email by 6:30 p.m.

Instructions for Completing Forms

Application as a Whole

- All forms must be submitted online.
- Any question that has an asterisk (*) requires an answer.
- Be concise with your answers. For many questions, the number of characters you have to complete your response is noted.
- Google Chrome is the internet browser we recommend (it has spell check built-in). A link to a free download of Google Chrome can be found on our website by clicking the “Community Partners” tab at the very bottom of our home page, then clicking “General Information for Prospective Community Partners”

Organizational Information:

The requested information here should be self-explanatory. If you have questions, contact Community Fund staff.

Results:

Proposed Results and Verification – You may have 1 – 3 results. Quality is preferred over quantity.

Result [1,2,3]a) Client result. From the drop-down boxes, pick the appropriate community-level and program-level result.

Result [1,2,3]a-1) Describe the program-level result: Provide specific details and description of the program-level result selected above.

Result [1,2,3]b) Describe clients served. Be specific about the clients this result will impact. Include pertinent information such as age, condition, etc.

Result [1,2,3]c) Clients served. Provide the number of clients you will serve in Buncombe County.

Result [1,2,3]d) Successful clients. Of the total number of clients served, provide the number (not percentage) that will successfully experience the desired result.

Result [1,2,3]e) Indicator. Be specific about what you will observe to know your program-level result has been achieved.

Result [1,2,3]f) Measurement tool. What measurement tool will be used to verify or track success? Discuss its validity and at what intervals it will be used.

Section 1: Guidance & Examples

The examples are intended to provide direction to your responses. The length of actual answers is decided by the applicant.

Program Narrative – Complete each question. Your response is limited to the equivalent of about 1/3 of a page for each question.

Question A. Provide a **brief project/program summary.**

Guidance:

In no more than 100 words, describe your project or program. Begin with, “ABC organization requests \$___ to do

Example:

Buncombe County Organization requests \$20,000 to work with our State delegation to repeal the disincentives that make it difficult for employers to hire new employees....

Question B. What **challenges** are you addressing and approximately **how many individuals, households or organizations** are impacted within your geographic area?

Guidance:

Describe the system, condition, or issue that you want to influence through your policy or advocacy efforts. Be specific about what the improved system would look like and what specific changes are needed.

Example:

Currently, the unemployment rate in Buncombe County and the state of North Carolina is 10%. Many people cannot find work because of disincentives that make it difficult for employers to hire new employees. Our goal is to advocate for a repeal of those disincentives....

Question C. What **key steps** will you take to achieve your results?

Guidance:

Describe the core elements of your implementation plan and why it is the best way to achieve success.

Example:

The “Equality in Voting” project is aimed at lowering the age for voting to 18. Many noted authorities agree that those who are asked to defend this country should also be able to vote. With other programs throughout the state that have a similar goal, we will first meet with members of the appropriate House of Representatives committee from North Carolina to gauge their position. Based on these meetings, we will assist in drafting legislation that will achieve our goals. We will work with both the Senate and the House to identify elected congress members to co-sponsor the legislation....

Question D. Is your approach backed by **evidence of success**? If so, what is it?

Guidance:

Few approaches are completely original and you have more likelihood of success if you can build upon proven models. State any research or model – and its results – you are using for the basis of your program design. Note: Your program’s past accomplishments should be discussed in Question H.

Example:

The model for this program comes from a similar project in Georgia. The organization leading the effort there has already gotten 5 of 10 House members and both Senators to agree to co-sponsor this legislation over the last two years...

Question E. What **groups are most similar to you** in your geographic area, and **what differentiates you** from them?

Guidance:

Particularly in an era of scarce resources, it is important to know who else is doing similar work so that you can partner where appropriate and not unnecessarily duplicate or dilute efforts.

Example:

There are other groups that share our interest in this issue, but our board is committed to lead the effort in Buncombe County. None of those other organizations have the staff or budget to take a leadership role....

Question F. Who are the **key people who deliver the service** and what factors suggest they can help participants achieve the intended results?

Guidance:

The people behind a project are often the most critical element in predicting project success. Describe why these are the right people to achieve the results you propose. Go beyond resume details to the qualities that ensure their effectiveness.

Example:

We have two staff that will lead this effort.

- Joan Smith is our advocacy director. He has been with our organization for 5 years and is recognized in the community as a leader in public policy. He has been involved in several successful advocacy efforts around education.
- Fred Jones will provide staff support. He has a marketing degree and will work exclusively on getting the Buncombe community to contact our state delegation to support the legislation once introduced. Fred led our marketing campaign for the “Jobs Now” campaign that won an award from the NC Center for Nonprofits....

Question G. List any **partners, intermediaries or advisors** important to your success and describe their role and evidence of their commitment. Describe successful collaborations with these people or groups.

Guidance:

Many groups realize they can broaden their impact and perhaps save resources by partnering with others who share the same mission. Tell us who is working with you to help achieve results. Also tell us if you have a past track record and future commitment with whomever you include in your project.

United Way values the efforts of programs to collaborate with other programs and groups to maximize client benefits (results). Simply providing information and referral does not qualify as collaboration. Collaborative programs do one or more of the following:

- Work toward common goals and serve the same populations;
- Pool necessary resources to achieve results;
- Jointly plan, implement, and evaluate the program; and
- Share responsibility for the results of joint efforts.

Example:

There are many groups that support this effort. We currently have twenty organizations that have signed on to support lowering the voting age to 18. Each of those groups has identified a member that will sit on an advisory board. We have worked with ten of these organizations before on other issues. Organization Q has agreed to connect its active membership to contact (and lobby) elected officials on this issue....

Question H. What have you **achieved in the past three years** that is relevant to the proposed program?

Guidance:

Focus on how many people have tangibly improved their lives specifically because of your programming versus how much money you have attracted or what awards you may have received.

Example:

Our organization has been effective in advocacy in issues important to our community. Over the past three-year period,

- We worked with local leaders to address disincentives that made it challenging for local businesses to hire new employees. A report provided by the local Chamber showed that more than 1,000 jobs were added or saved because of this effort.
- We also worked with local leaders to adopt tax incentives enhancing green energy. The City has adopted those laws, and the City projects it will save over \$200,000 in energy costs this year....

Section 2

Program and Organization Budget –United Way requires a balanced budget for all proposed programs and the organization operating the program (column 3 & 7). You will need to download the Excel worksheet to enter data and then upload it (using Fax to File). The spreadsheet is set to add each column.

Enter the appropriate reporting year above the line noted “m/y – m/y” (=month/year). Some examples are: 7/11 – 6/12, 10/11 – 9/12, or 1/11 – 12/11.

- *Column 1 & 4, Prior Year:* Provide actuals for the program and organization for the most recently completed year. Complete these columns whether or not United Way funding was provided during this period.
- *Column 2 & 5, Current Year Approved:* Provide information about the program budget and organization budget as approved (or most recently amended) by your Board of Directors for your organization’s current fiscal year. Complete these columns whether or not United Way funding was provided during this period.
- *Column 3 & 7, Proposed Year:* Provide information about the program’s and organization’s proposed budget. If the organization budget has not already been established by the board, this should be the best approximation you have at the time of submission to United Way.
- *Column 6, Current Year-to-date:* Provide information on the status of the current year-to-date. If total revenues and expenditures don’t balance, explain in Section 3, Budget Narrative, question D).

Section 3

Budget Narrative – Complete each question. The narrative should provide supportive information to clarify program revenue and expenses.

- Major Differences in Revenue & Expenditures:* Identify all revenues and expenditures that are expected to increase or decrease by 10% or more OR \$10,000 or more for the program. Reference the line item and the amount and percentage change between the Proposed and the Current Year. Provide a concise explanation for the changes listed.
- Pending Funds:* List the status of all pending funds, both for the program and the organization, for the proposed year.

- C) *Assistance to Individuals*: If any amount is listed for this expense line, explain for both the program and the organization for the proposed year.
- D) *Additional Budget Information*: Use this space to clarify any issues that might occur.

Attachments

Each applicant organization should complete only **one** copy of each of these forms, even if you submit more than one application. For attachments A-C, each will need to be downloaded, filled in, and then uploaded using Fax to File. For attachment D, you will need to upload a document you create, also using Fax to File, that includes the requested information.

- **Attachment A**: Put a checkmark next to each of United Way's Standards your organization presently meets. Mark "n/a" if the Standard is not appropriate. Have the board chair or an authorized representative of the chair and the agency director sign the form.
- **Attachment B**: United Way requires all funded partners to provide an annual audit or financial review. Additionally, United Way expects each funded partner to provide financial statements at least quarterly that are reviewed and approved by the board. This attachment certifies the organization does this and will, if necessary, communicate to United Way any financial issues that might impact the achievement of results for the program(s) funded.
- **Attachment C**: This form is required by the federal government to comply with the Patriot Act.
- **Attachment D**: United Way requires each applicant organization to provide a list of its board members. For each board member, include board title, term of service, profession or community affiliation, and geographic representation, if any. Additionally, provide the dates when officers change and when this board list was most recently amended.

Final Thoughts

Should you have questions, contact Community Fund staff. Questions and requests for assistance should be made by February 27th.

If you have questions about navigating the software to complete the application, review the online tutorial at: <http://www.foundant.com/applicant-tutorial.php>