



## Frequently Asked Questions 2018-2020 Program Operations Grants

### Key points about our Coordinated Funding Program Operations Grants to Date

- The Washtenaw Coordinated Funders (comprised of the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, the City of Ann Arbor, United Way of Washtenaw County, Washtenaw County, Washtenaw Urban County, and St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor) are investing \$4.3 million annually over the next two years in health and human services programs in the following priority areas:
  - Aging
  - Cradle to Career: Early Childhood & School-Aged Youth
  - Housing & Homelessness
  - Safety Net Health & Nutrition
- This year, dollars from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation's Glacier Hills Legacy Fund were invested through this process to those programs who serve seniors in our community.
- **Ninety-Four (94%) of investments were made to high-performing, currently funded programs. Six (6%) of available funding will now support programs that are either new to our community or first time recipients of Coordinated Funding support.**
- **98% of funding will support people in our community living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$12,140 annual income for individuals and \$25,100 for a family of 4).**
- **To the extent possible, during this cycle individual grant awards were made at or above 75% of an applicant's funding request.**
- **This cycle we received requests for over \$8 million (annual amount), twice as much as was available to invest (\$4.3 million).**
- These investments are the result of a rigorous nonprofit- and key stakeholder-driven process addressing immediate community needs through programs that have a proven track record of achieving desired outcomes.
- **An inter-organizational team of over 45 volunteers associated with Coordinated Funding partners spent over 1,000 hours reviewing Request for Information (RFI) financial and governance data from applicants, reading Request for Proposals (RFP) responses, and ultimately making funding recommendations.**
- Some very good programs did not receive funding this cycle for reasons including: misalignment between the proposed program and the priority area within which they applied; prior program performance in a previous grants cycle; lack of clarity regarding the program concept and desired outcomes; and the most common constraint being inadequate monetary resources to invest in every program requesting funding.
- Applicants were notified regarding funding recommendations in late April.
- **Information regarding funding awards will be made publicly available on or before May 30<sup>th</sup> on [www.coordinatedfunders.org](http://www.coordinatedfunders.org)**
- **All applicants, along with key staff and board leadership, were extended an invitation to meet in person with Coordinated Funding staff during the month of June to discuss volunteer review feedback on their proposal.**

## **Additional Background and Details**

### ***How many programs applied for a grant?***

The Washtenaw Coordinated Funders received 93 applications from 50 agencies in this grants cycle. A complete list of funded programs will be available on the Washtenaw Coordinated Funder's web site ([www.coordinatedfunders.org](http://www.coordinatedfunders.org)) in June, once all funding awards have been approved and applicants have been officially notified.

### ***What were the priority areas for funding?***

**Aging.** The goal: To help vulnerable adults with low incomes 60 years of age or older live independently and safely through crisis intervention services, increasing access to senior support systems, and decreasing social isolation.

**Early Childhood.** The goal: To ensure children with low incomes are developmentally ready to succeed when they start school through family engagement and parenting education, access to high quality early learning, and programs that strengthen parenting and home environments.

**School-Age Youth.** Two goals: (1) To increase high school graduation rates of economically disadvantaged youth through programs that foster literacy, academic success, school attendance and engagement. (2) To increase the physical and emotional safety of economically disadvantaged youth in their homes, schools, and communities through programs that provide both in- and out-of-school programming that facilitates social-emotional skills building and positive youth-adult relationships.

**Housing & Homelessness.** The goal: To decrease the number of people who experience homelessness through prevention and diversion services, emergency shelter, transitional housing and/or homelessness outreach, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing.

**Safety Net Health & Nutrition.** Two goals: (1) To increase access to health services and resources for people with low incomes through benefits advocacy and referral coordination, primary care, dental care, mental health services, and substance use disorder services. (2) To increase food security for people with low incomes through community-based food access, nutrition education and home-bound food distribution.

### ***How was the funding for priority areas determined?***

This cycle, the Coordinated Funders developed a funding strategy that focused on funding services to certain populations in our community versus funding to priority areas, specifically:

- Individuals and families residing in the zip codes of 48197 & 48198
- Individuals and families residing in census tracts with a low or very low opportunity score rating on the [Washtenaw Opportunity Index](#)
- Individuals and families with annual incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level
- Families with newborns enrolled in Medicaid and/or families with children enrolled in the MIChild program
- Homebound seniors
- Individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness

In addition, we worked to obtain a balance between Prevention Services & Programs (which focus on mitigating or reducing the likelihood of negative outcomes that affect quality of life) and Crisis Intervention Services & Programs (which treat the immediate crisis for the individual or family)

This approach allows us to integrate grant investments across our four priority areas (aging/older adults, housing & homelessness, safety-net health & nutrition, and cradle to career) and focus our finite community resources on those who are in crisis or at-risk of being in crisis.

Emergent community conditions in Washtenaw County (for example, the Community Mental Health funding crisis and opioid epidemic) also informed funding to individual programs and to priority areas. Limited monetary resources remain the single largest constraint to funding worthy programs that support the people and communities who have the most to gain.

***How much did organizations ask for?***

This cycle we received requests for over \$8 million (annual amount), twice as much as was available to invest (\$4.3 million).

***How long is the grant period of performance?***

The initial grant period of performance is two years long. The 2018-2020 program operations grants cycle begins July 1, 2018 and continues through June 30, 2020. Contingent upon available funding and performance during the initial grant period, funding may be renewed for up to three additional years (through 2023). This renewal does not require participation in a subsequent RFI/RFP program operations grant process, but does require a reassessment of the current contract between the Grantee and Coordinated Funders, and will be based on available funding, community conditions, program performance, and funder discretion.

***Is the grant award amount for entire grant cycle?***

No, the award amount is what an agency receives for one year. The programs are anticipated to receive the same amount each year during the cycle. Level funding for Coordinated Funding programs in subsequent years is contingent in part on the outcome of annual fundraising efforts and budget processes of the partners.

***Will the amount of the grant change over the grant cycle?***

Grant awards may be adjusted during the two-year cycle and any future renewal periods based on available funds.

***Who makes the decisions about program grants?***

Over 45 community volunteers, who represent a broad cross-section of Washtenaw County and the funding partners, volunteered more than 1,000 hours to review Request for Information (RFI) financial and governance data from applicants as well as read Requests for Proposal (RFP) responses, deliberate and ultimately make funding recommendations. Volunteers were grouped into teams around specific priority areas, so that applications for each priority area were reviewed by the same group of people. Volunteer reviewers were selected by the Coordinated Funding partners and boards based on interest, lived experience, content expertise and experience with human services funding. A full list of volunteer reviewers and their professional affiliations will be published on [our website](#) after official award notifications are sent to all applicants in May 2018.

[Sector Leaders](#) worked with local nonprofit organizations from May to October of 2017, studying community needs and identifying emergent community conditions. Leading up to the grants cycle, in concert with local human service organizations, Funders and Sector Leaders reviewed current program strategies and outcomes and made adjustments based on identified trends and changes in community conditions. The program strategies and outcomes which program operations grants applicants “wrote to” in their applications were driven by the local human services sector. Local provider voice, and the content expertise of Sector Leaders, was a valuable component of the grants process and helps ensure that finite resources have the greatest impact.

Coordinated Funding staff—comprised of staff from each of the Washtenaw Coordinated Funders partner organizations—score proposals and closely support and inform the process. Having decisions made by a broad base of knowledgeable and trained volunteers following consistent guidelines preserves the integrity and objectivity of the process, aligns tax payer dollars as well as donor investments with effective programs, and ensures the best results for the whole community.

***Some agencies will receive more than they were awarded during the last grants cycle. Some will receive less. Some were not funded. Why?***

Each application is considered individually, as well as in relation to the other types of programs which meets our community's needs. Volunteers make recommendations based on: the quality of the program concept and design, alignment with identified priorities and desired outcomes, quality of measurement plans, and whether the program is the best use of limited resources for the greatest possible impact on our priority populations.

***What are the grant requirements for agencies awarded funding?***

Those organizations who have been awarded funding are required to submit an annual report providing detailed information on the program services provided, individuals served and outcomes achieved with Coordinated Funding dollars. In addition, they must provide us with agency-related documents if requested that include, but are not limited to annual audits, state of Michigan certifications, and board rosters.

***What are the factors that affect money available for program operations grants through Coordinated Funding?***

Fundraising & Designations: United Way's capacity to fundraise affects overall resources. Additionally, the amount of United Way's total campaign that is designated by donors directly to nonprofit agencies versus to its Local Community Fund affects resources available for investment through Coordinated Funding.

Federal Budgets, Regulations & Entitlement Formulas: The Urban County Executive Committee is bound by federal regulation to designate up to 20% of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to Public (Human) Services programs. Since the start of Coordinated Funding, the UCEC has committed all 20% of its available funding to this community process. The overall allocation of CDBG funding that is allocated to Washtenaw County is dependent upon both federal budgets and the formula used by the Department of Housing & Urban Development.

Local Tax Dollars: Washtenaw County is among a very small handful of communities in Michigan where a city and county devote general funds to support human services. Both the City of Ann Arbor & Washtenaw County have numerous mandated and non-mandated services to provide to its citizens. The availability of tax dollars for investment into human services is subject to many competing priorities. The City and the County have also maintained their respective investments in Coordinated Funding since its inception.

Limited Unrestricted Funds: For the past two years AAACF has directed a limited duration grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund into Coordinated Funding. This two-year grant expired as scheduled, resulting in fewer funds available for the current cycle.

***Who do we contact if we have additional questions?***

Refer questions beyond this level of detail to a Coordinated Funding staff member:

- Mercedes Brown, Human Services Manager, OCED ([brownmer@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:brownmer@ewashtenaw.org))
- Bridget Healy, Director of Community Impact, United Way of Washtenaw County ([bhealy@uwwashtenaw.org](mailto:bhealy@uwwashtenaw.org))
- Jillian Rosen, Vice President for Community Investment, Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation ([jrosen@aaacf.org](mailto:jrosen@aaacf.org))
- Elisabeth Vanderpool, Director of Community Health, St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor ([Elisabeth.vanderpool@stjoeshealth.org](mailto:Elisabeth.vanderpool@stjoeshealth.org))