



**United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut
Impact Philanthropy FY 25-26 Grant Process FAQs**

1. What is changing about UWCWC’s Impact Philanthropy grant process for FY 26?

FY 26 will be a transition year with minimal changes. We will continue to focus funding on the key Impact Areas of Health, Education, and Financial Security. However, one important shift is a preference for funding grassroots organizations, as well as those focused on community building, advocacy, and organizing efforts within these Impact Areas.

2. What does this mean for FY 27 funding?

In FY 27, we will prioritize funding for grassroots organizations and those dedicated to community building, advocacy, and organizing. More details about the FY 27 grant process will be provided as we approach the application period.

3. Can you give examples of Community Building, Advocacy, and Organizing type work?

Here are examples of the type of work that falls under Community Building, Advocacy, and Organizing:

- **Nonpartisan voter registration and engagement** efforts.
- **Campaigns that elevate marginalized voices** at the neighborhood level or across the UWCWC service area.
- **Community-building activities**, such as conversations or celebrations that foster stronger connections among people.
- **Community organizing and leadership training** to support emerging resident leaders in achieving their goals.
- **Educational campaigns** that encourage increased engagement in local systems and decision-making processes.
- **Coalition building**: Bringing together diverse stakeholders (nonprofits, community groups, businesses, etc.) to collectively address issues like housing, food insecurity, or healthcare access.
- **Advocacy for policy change**: Organizing efforts aimed at influencing local or state legislation to improve conditions for underserved communities (e.g., affordable housing, healthcare reform).
- **Civic education and engagement**: Programs designed to educate the public on their rights, how government works, and ways they can influence policies or participate in decision-making.
- **Restorative justice initiatives**: Community-led efforts that focus on repairing harm caused by conflict or crime through reconciliation, dialogue, and community support, rather than punitive measures.
- **Peer support networks**: Groups where individuals come together to share experiences and resources, such as in mental health, addiction recovery, or caregiving.

4. What is the proposed timeline for the FY 25-26 Impact Philanthropy Grant Process?

Activity	Date and Time
Planning Period for FY 26 IP Grants	September 2024 to February 2025
FY 26 Impact Philanthropy Grant Process Opens	March 17-April 25
Grant review period	May 2-June 6
Board vote	June 17
Decisions announced	June 24



5. What is the expected range of funding?

Organizations can request up to a maximum of \$20,000 for the FY 26 Impact Philanthropy grant process.

6. How can my organization use these funds?

Similar to the FY 25 grants, all FY 26 awards will be unrestricted, meaning your organization can use the funds in any way that best supports your mission and operations.

7. What will be the reporting process?

The reporting process will be similar to FY 24. There will be two reports required:

- Mid-Year Check-In: This can be done virtually or in-person and serves as an update on how your organization is progressing toward its mission.
- Final Report: A written report to be submitted at the end of the grant period.

8. Who is eligible to apply for these grants?

Nonprofit organizations serving the 27-town UWCWC service area of the cities of Bridgeport, Danbury, Norwalk, and Stamford, and the Towns of Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Darien, Easton, Fairfield, Kent, Monroe, New Canaan, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Sherman, Stratford, Trumbull, Warren, Washington, Westport, Wilton, and Weston, Connecticut.

9. How does the application process work?

The application process involves submitting an online application through our e-Clmact grant portal during the open application period. Detailed instructions, including required documentation and guidelines, will be available on our website when the grant process opens.

10. Can funds be used for capacity-building initiatives?

Yes, because the grants are unrestricted, funds can be used for capacity-building initiatives, including staff training, infrastructure improvements, and strategic planning, as long as it aligns with your organization's mission and long-term impact.

11. How will grant applications be evaluated and recipients selected?

Grant applications will be evaluated by a team of volunteers and UWCWC staff, with a strong focus on equity. Applications will be assessed based on alignment with our Impact Areas, potential for measurable impact, financial health, and preference for grassroots efforts in community building, advocacy, and organizing. We are committed to ensuring equitable access to resources, and our review process will prioritize organizations that serve marginalized communities and address systemic inequalities. The final funding decisions will be made by the UWCWC Board. We will share the evaluation rubric with applicants during the application process.

12. Who should we contact with questions and/or feedback?

- *Questions about organizational changes or high-level priorities?*
Contact: Ashley Gaudiano, SVP of Community Impact
Email: Ashley.gaudiano@unitedwaycwc.org | Phone: 203-297-6726
- *Questions or feedback about the Impact Philanthropy process?*
Contact: Victoria Scofield, Impact Philanthropy Senior Coordinator
Email: victoria.scofield@unitedwaycwc.org | Phone: 203-883-6704
- *General questions about UWCWC's Impact Pillars?*
Contact: Community Impact Team
Email: communityimpact@unitedwaycwc.org

Useful Definitions

<i>Advocacy</i>	Any action that speaks in favor of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others.
<i>Capacity Building</i>	The process of developing and strengthening the skills, resources, and abilities of organizations and individuals so that they can effectively meet their goals and sustain impact over time.
<i>Community Building</i>	Approaches to improve the well-being of people in a particular community or other geographically defined area.
<i>Community Engagement</i>	Includes strategies to organize individuals for collective action, as well as strategies to ensure that all voices in a community are heard as part of inclusive decision-making.
<i>Community Organizing</i>	One of the core tools to rally mass momentum for social transformation. Can include tactics such as changing policy, challenging how public resources are allocated, and transforming realities on the ground
<i>Coalition Building</i>	The practice of bringing together diverse groups or organizations to collaborate on common goals, often around social, political, or economic issues. Coalitions amplify collective voices and strengthen efforts toward systemic change.
<i>Civic Engagement</i>	Active participation in the political and civic life of one's community, which can include voting, volunteering, participating in public meetings, or advocating for local or national issues.
<i>Education</i>	Ensuring that children and youth are ready for kindergarten, have success in school, and graduate high school ready for college and/or career. Pursuit and development of skills and information at all ages and stages of life.
<i>Equity</i>	The fair and just treatment of all individuals by recognizing and addressing imbalances in resources, opportunities, and systemic barriers. Equity ensures that everyone has the support they need to succeed and thrive, particularly marginalized or disadvantaged groups.
<i>Financial Stability</i>	Helping individuals achieve financial stability and access opportunities to improve their economic well-being. Realization of personal potential through available resources that allow individuals and groups to prosper in an economic system.
<i>Grassroots Organizations</i>	Groups of people working together to advocate for a cause in order to create change or a positive impact.
<i>Health</i>	Helping individuals and their families to live healthy lives. Mental, physical, emotional, and social well-being for all in our community.