

United Way New Community Impact Funding Process

Background:

United Way of Siouxland announced in May of 2022 a new approach to funding programs. The organization's move from a funded partner grant program to an open model provides critical flexibility to respond to the changing needs of Siouxland.

Revising the grant model maximizes the positive impact United Way support has on our community by allowing outcomes to be updated based on community need.

United Way has undergone an in-depth process to analyze local data, gather feedback from dozens of industry leaders from law enforcement, healthcare, education, workforce development, and more to set new goals for the future. The open Community Impact funding model allows any Siouxland nonprofit who can help solve these key issues apply for United Way support.

The new process allows for a transition period for both current programs and new programs to apply for funding. Grants will be based on a 3-year cycle, with annual reporting and evaluation.

Benefits of the Open Process

- Ensures adaptability to changing community needs
- Focuses on the root causes of major problems to create long-term results
- Involves the entire community to solve issues more collaboratively
- Encourages continual strategic planning & action for all organizations involved
- Maximizes the impact of donations

Process and Due Diligence in Setting New Outcomes

- Thousands of datapoints were reviewed prior to drafting potential goals including vetted data from Source for Siouxland, the Siouxland District Health Department, and government bodies.
- In-depth consensus from local experts from Law Enforcement, Health Care, Mental Health, Workforce Development, Education, Housing, and Child Care from the tri-state area.
- Feedback was collected from local nonprofits on possible metrics to ensure measurability of drafted outcomes.
- 725 United Way of Siouxland donor survey responses were evaluated
- The concept was shared with key donors with unanimous support of the move to the open funding model

Timeline

- **May 2022** | Open process announced to the community
- **February 2023** | Drafted goals shared with Siouxland nonprofits
- **October 2023** | New goals & priorities announced to community
- **June 2024** | All applications for new funding model due
- **June-August 2024** | Application scoring, funding recommendations & approval
- **September 2024** | Awards announced for new Funding to begin July 2025
- *Current programs will continue to receive funding through June 2025.
- **July 2025** | New grants awards begin
- **Annually** | Reporting due for all grant recipients

United Way of Siouxland Goals & Priorities

Statement of Intention: United Way of Siouxland is committed to investing time, expertise, and resources into programs, services, and partnerships focused on **Education** and **Healthy Behaviors**.

Entities who partner with United Way of Siouxland will be expected to measure how their work leads to one or more of the following goals:

GOAL: Individuals access mental health and addiction resources.

Priorities

- Improve access to affordable treatment and recovery resources through expanded hours and/or delivery methods, thereby increasing participation.
- Increase access and participation in prevention programming.

GOAL: Adult learners become more employable and independent in the community.

Priorities

- Increase adult literacy instruction and participation.
- Increase household income through career development opportunities and job training.

GOAL: Individuals engage in behaviors that improve their health or safety.

Priorities

- Promote healthy habits for adults and children to reduce obesity.
- Increase access to violence and trauma treatment and support services.

GOAL: Families access quality childcare and early learning opportunities.

Priorities

- Children are assessed ready for kindergarten.
- Increase safe, affordable, quality childcare slots. (Priority given to infant care and extended hours)

GOAL: Youth demonstrate grade-appropriate school readiness academically, socially, and emotionally.

Priorities

- Help students maintain or improve grade level reading and math skill
- Decrease barriers for children to participate in before and after school activities.
- Increase school attendance rates.



“Feedback gathered throughout the goal-setting process clearly identified that Siouxland is supportive of outcomes geared toward prevention and empowerment to provide the best potential long-term impact for our community.”

Nick Hegarty

**President, Primebank-Sioux City & United Way of Siouxland
Community Impact Chair**

Community Impact Team Evaluation of Applications & Recommendation Process

Forty-four eligible program applications were reviewed by twenty-seven trained Community Impact Volunteers. The reviewers scored applications using a Scoring Tool, which was provided to all applicants during the online application process.

The scoring tool weighted specific criteria to ensure:

- **Results & Impact (40%)**
 - Clear picture of program effectiveness and success rate based on indicator results.
 - Logical connection between the indicators and goal alignment.
 - Organization has a tool in place to measure the impact of the program and explains how it will be utilized to assess progress and impact.
 - Past or comparable data was provided to demonstrate the positive impact of the program.
- **Good Investment (25%)**
 - Organization has clearly explained how it will make a positive impact in its chosen goal(s)/priorities(s).
 - The need is supported by recent and localized data taking it beyond anecdotal documentation.
 - Clear and concise information on what activities/services will be provided and how they connect to the goal(s)/priorities aligned with.
 - Explanation on how United Way funds will be used to increase success of the program, not just sustain the program. Clear justification for how the United Way dollars will be spent.
 - Program budget is appropriate and requested United Way funding does not exceed the recommended 30%.
 - Provided list of other programs in the community that offer similar service.
 - Clear explanation on partnerships that are key to the success of their program.
- **Quality Programming (20%)**
 - Program is evidence based with a clear explanation of how the organization will ensure the fidelity of the program/curriculum.
 - Clear description of criteria and/or eligibility guidelines for individuals to participate in program.
- **Financial Utilization (15%)**
 - Appropriate use of funds – the organizations' financial records demonstrate financial responsibility.
 - Acceptable level of reserves – the organization's operating reserve ratio level is appropriate and gives assurance of financial stability.
 - Sound financial management – the audit/financial statement convey sound financial management with no concerns that might compromise the agency's ability to responsibly administer the program funded by United Way of Siouxland.

After thorough evaluation of scoring results, Community Impact volunteers developed funding recommendations for review, finalization, and approval of the Board of Directors.

The open process will ensure adaptability to changing community needs. Organizations that are not funded will have the opportunity to reapply during the next funding cycle. United Way will offer feedback to each applicant, which may be used to enhance future program applications.

"I am completely impressed with this process. It is one of the most fair and pragmatic approaches I've seen to decision-making."

Community Impact Volunteer & United Way Donor