

2025-2027 Community Investment Process

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Is there a change in how United Way of Pierce County (UWPC) will fund agencies for this 3-year cycle compared to the last 3-year cycle?

Yes. There are four different investment funds for this 3-year cycle. A snapshot of the different funds is in the table below. United Way is looking at how agencies are helping to move individuals and families along the continuum from crisis, unstable, stable, self-sufficiency to thriving.



2025-27 INVESTMENT FUNDS

REQUIREMENTS	EQUITY FUND	FOOD SECURITY FUND	IMPACT FUND	TRANSFORMATION FUND
FUNDING RANGE	\$1500-\$10,000	\$5000 - \$20,000	\$20,000 - \$50,000	\$100,000
Measurable connection to the bold goal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commitment to equity and inclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓
Proximity to need/geographic focus areas	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus on whole person/household			✓	✓
Participation in Investment and Frontline Staff Cohort	encouraged	✓	✓	✓
SSM assessment and disaggregate data (Transformational - required; Impact - optional if you have an equally robust way to measure progress toward bold goal)			✓	✓
Collaborative (able to ID partners and track shared outcomes)			encouraged	✓
Innovative, human-centered approach or model			encouraged	✓
Budget <\$500,000 with a preference for organizations with a budget <\$250,000	✓			
By and/or for BIPOC organizations only	✓			

2. How will UWPC invest resources in the 2025-2027 Investment Process?

UWPC will focus all resources (human and financial) in outcomes related to moving households along a continuum from crisis, to vulnerable, to stable, to self-sufficient, and ultimately thriving. UWPC will do this by allowing for investments to a range of strategies that go beyond funding agencies (capacity building, public will building, diversity/equity and inclusion practices, collaborations, place-based initiatives, advocacy, etc.).

3. How often will programs need to report?

Reporting is dependent on investment fund requirements. Please see the RFPs for specifics.

4. Can organizations who have never been a funded partner before apply?

Yes. If the strategy is aligned with data that supports it's breaking the cycle of poverty, we'd love to see an application.

5. Can our organization be part of multiple applications? Can you be awarded funding for two different programs/projects simultaneously?

Yes. UWPC aims to fund the program or project rather than specific organizations. This allows for partnerships with multiple organizations across various projects simultaneously.

6. What is the UWPC fiscal funding year?

January 1- December 31 is the fiscal year.

7. I've heard United Way is a 'partner' over a 'funder'. What does this mean?

- a. Relationship building and trust are key if in depth, honest work is to occur. The fear of showing failure prevails with the thinking that this work is about proving instead of improving. Impactful work can be two steps forward and one step backward. Some failure will occur, but this will spur improvements.*
- b. UWPC will track unanticipated outcomes with our partners.*
- c. UWPC desires to be seen as an organization that is nimble and responsive to the community.*
- d. UWPC will lean in to "helping the work happen" versus "letting the work happen".*
- e. Multi-year and general operating funds will be encouraged for more strategic investments in **collaborations and systems change work.***

8. Is there a minimum or maximum amount we can ask for in this process?

We want agencies to ask for what they need to do the work. Reference the Investment Funds table for the minimum and maximum grants amounts allowable for in each fund.

9. We are currently a UWPC-funded organization, will we be guaranteed funding for the 2025-27 process?

No. UWPC employs a zero-based funding policy. There are no funding guarantees for currently funded organizations. Funding for the current cycle ends on December 31, 2024. UWPC seeks to invest in those who align most closely with our bold goal of lifting 15,000 households out of poverty and toward self-sufficiency and who are serving our targeted populations with specific strategies.

10. If we are selected to be in the portfolio, is it a guarantee of being a partner for three years?

No. Investments are contingent upon several factors:

- a. All investments will be contingent on the outcome of the United Way campaign and performance standards by the partnering agencies.*
- b. At any time during any given fiscal year, partners can be reduced or eliminated based on not meeting established criteria.*

11. Can you detail your definition of working with agencies who have demonstrated they are good partner?

- a. Engagement in continuous learning and continuous improvement to achieve goals/vision in partnership with United Way*
- b. Active participation in creative partnership opportunities, networking, learning and/or collaborative activities with United Way*

12. What if our agency doesn't meet projections? Are we out of the portfolio?

Great question! UWPC expects that if a partner agency isn't seeing the results they expected, that they would reach out to United Way for guidance or technical assistance to address the learning. UWPC needs to help course correct throughout the investment cycle and this can happen via honest partnerships. If there is a surprise after one year, then that is demonstrative of a lack of a partnership. The donor dollar would not have been appropriately stewarded. UWPC wants to shift how traditional UWPC work has transpired and this will be a critical change in coming years.

13. I've heard that UWPC is leaning in to "trust-based philanthropy". What does that mean for us?

Trust-based philanthropy is focused on achieving results through collaboration between nonprofits and funders with a shared vision of accountability to the communities we serve. As a United Way, we are accountable to our donors and the community for results, but by leaning into trust-based philanthropy principles, we can create stronger relationships with our investment partners. Examples of this include:

- *Unrestricted funding, where we fund program outcomes without restrictions on what percentage can be used for overhead expense;*
- *Moving away from formal mid-year written reports in favor of informal check-ins; or*
- *Problem-solving with partners if something doesn't go as planned versus being punitive if desired results are not achieved.*