

UWKV Innovation Fund 2022 Proposal Evaluation Criteria

A panel of volunteer judges will evaluate the proposals in consideration of the following criteria, which will inform United Way of Kennebec Valley's (UWKV's) Innovation Fund investment decisions.

Innovative Approach:

- The approach is truly innovative (United Way defines an "innovative" approach as a novel solution that is more effective, efficient, collaborative, and/or sustainable than current solutions)
- The applicant is clearly thinking "big enough" by undertaking this approach
- The approach has not been taken by other organizations associated with UWKV
- The approach indicates how it may leverage volunteers to meet the project's goals

Needs Identification:

- The applicant clearly defines a "need" with supporting evidence, including any relevant statistics
- The "need" is not currently met by other program/service/project/product(s) (e.g., a gap exists in addressing the need)

Program Alignment with Innovation Fund Priority Areas:

- The entire community benefits when nonprofits can be responsive to evolving needs. Local nonprofits are encouraged to submit innovative ideas that address the following priority areas, though other requests may be considered.
 - Diversity, equity and inclusion
 - Housing
 - Human trafficking
 - Substance use disorder and overdose deaths
 - LGBTQ+ population
 - Food insecurity
 - Systems improvement
 - Collaboration amongst nonprofits
 - Cross-sector partnerships

Impact:

- The project, if successful, will have a lasting impact on Kennebec County residents, particularly those who are low or moderate income
- The applicant clearly defines outcomes and how they plan to measure progress toward those outcomes
- The applicant clearly defines what "success" looks like for the project; the success promises to be significant social return

Risk Assessment:

- The applicant identified most, if not all, of the conceivable threats to the project
- The applicants clearly spells out plans for mitigating those threats

- If funded, the applicant would be taking on reasonable risk with the project (e.g., the application is big and bold enough)
- The benefits (potential impact) of this project outweigh any risks
- If applicable, the applicant clearly and adequately cites research, data, best practices, and/or regional and national models to justify the project

Expertise & Track Record:

- The organization(s) involved in the work appears to have the expertise to carry out the project
- Appropriate staffing levels will be designated to the project
- The organization appears financially stable enough to take on this project

Timeline:

- The applicant clearly specifies a timeline and deliverables
- The specified deliverables are "reasonable" given the funded amount
- The project's timeline is achievable

Project Sustainability:

- The applicant articulates clear and feasible plans for how to sustain their project beyond the grant period, if funded
- The applicant has identified a way to possibly sustain the project without grant funding

Budget Narrative:

- The applicant clearly describes how funding will be utilized over the course of the project
- United Way funding will be used appropriately to achieve the project's objectives
- Optional: The applicant has matched funding or offered in-kind contributions, putting some "skin in the game"