



## Youth Empowerment Request for Proposals

### How to use this rubric:

United Way of Olmsted County takes a holistic approach to reviewing grant applications, which means reviewers consider how the overall application meets the criteria of eligibility (funding and community focus), impact, and budget as described below. We understand that these criteria are related, and you'll notice that there is not one application question for each section of the rubric.

In the lefthand column of the rubric you will see 10 specific rubric elements. Reviewers will rate application on each of those elements. In the righthand column you will see a list of examples that describe what a strong application may look like. **This is not a list of requirements!** We provide these examples to help you understand what we are looking for and know that no single program will do all the activities listed in the examples. We also know we haven't covered every possible example as there are many ways to demonstrate success in these areas.

Use this rubric to help you understand what we'd like to learn about your program. You may not be able to address each element in your written application, but successful applicants will demonstrate strengths in most rubric elements by the end of the application process (including the initial proposal and program meeting).

RUBRIC ELEMENT	MAY LOOK LIKE
1. Eligibility:	<u>Examples of exceptional eligibility alignment may look like:</u>
1a. Program meets minimum eligibility criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides youth development programming to middle and/or high school youth</li> <li>• Serves primarily Black and low-income residents of Olmsted County (generally those living at or below 185% of federal poverty level, which is also the calculation used for free/reduced priced lunch)</li> <li>• Program is operated by an eligible nonprofit agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501c3</li> <li>• Faith based organization demonstrating that there is no explicitly faith-related content included in the programming and no discriminatory restrictions on service recipients</li> <li>• Community organizations without 501c3 status that can document a relationship with a proper fiscal sponsor</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Program is operated by a Black-led agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director is Black/African American (descendants of enslaved peoples)</li> <li>• 50% of Board of Directors are Black/African American (descendants of enslaved peoples)</li> <li>• 50% of staff is Black/African American (descendants of enslaved peoples)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
1b. Program serves primarily individuals and/or families with an income (generally at or below 185% federal poverty level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collects participant income data</li> <li>• Disaggregates program outcome data by income level</li> <li>• Connects families with additional resources</li> <li>• Intentionally removes income-based barriers to youth success such as offers income-based scholarships or low to no-cost programming</li> <li>• Works with families to overcome financial obstacles</li> </ul>
2. Community focus alignment:	<u>Examples of exceptional community focus alignment may look like:</u>
2a. Program design is responsive to youth and families' needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program design is created and continuously improved with the Black/African American community lens in mind</li> <li>• Demonstrates awareness of how Black/African American youth and families lived experiences may impact interaction with services</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers reflect youth demographics</li> <li>• Disaggregates program outcomes data by relevant demographics beyond race</li> <li>• Families are involved in program design and continuous improvement</li> <li>• Curriculum and learning materials reflect youth's identities and culture</li> </ul>
2b. Program design and implementation is informed by thinking about racial, disability, and socioeconomic justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff takes responsibility for creating a culture where children and families of different identities and experiences belong</li> <li>• Program design is responsive to the demographics of program participants and prioritizes creating positive identity formation especially connected to racial and cultural identity</li> <li>• Organization understands that equity is an ongoing journey, and equity is part of continuous improvement plans</li> </ul>
<b>3. Impact:</b>	<b><u>Examples</u> of exceptional impact may look like:</b>
3a. Program responds to local conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusts programming for youth and families based on changing needs in the community</li> <li>• Uses local level data to inform programming</li> <li>• Collaborates with local partners (e.g., nonprofits, local government, community foundations, schools) to work toward population level results</li> </ul>
3b. Program demonstrates success through quantitative and/or qualitative data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program defines what program success looks like</li> <li>• Uses qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate program success</li> <li>• Program benchmarks performance against external organizations with similar missions and populations served</li> </ul>
3c. Program demonstrates commitment to continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducts internal program reviews</li> <li>• Integrates feedback from youth and families to improve programming</li> <li>• Self identifies areas of growth, and applies new learnings</li> <li>• Provides opportunities for staff and volunteers to enhance skills through continuing education and professional development</li> <li>• Seeks new practices and creative solutions to achieve program goals</li> </ul>
3d. Program demonstrates awareness and utilization of high-quality program practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses an evidence-based assessment tool to measure developmental milestones</li> <li>• Utilizes an effective, research-based program model</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shares clear examples of best practices used in programming and if applicable, shares examples of best practices listed below:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The 5 elements of a strong development relationship between adults and youth</li><li>○ Interventions that start earlier in a young person's life</li><li>○ One on one mentoring</li><li>○ Supporting positive identity formation, especially connected to racial and cultural identity</li><li>○ Supporting positive connections between youth and their caregivers</li></ul></li></ul>
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4. Program financial operations:	<u>Examples</u> of an exceptional program financial operations may look like:
4a. Request amount is appropriate to program size, program plans, and available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly presents full program budget with anticipated operating costs</li> <li>• Shows evidence that there is other funding to help sustain program</li> <li>• Program plans and goals can reasonably be achieved with available resources</li> <li>• Funding request is appropriate to program design (ex: providing transportation and meals over a 6 month period will cost more than providing school supplies once per year for the same amount of people)</li> <li>• Reflects upon previous operating costs (if available)</li> <li>• Costs may be higher for initial investment in a new program</li> <li>• Demonstrates sound fiscal management in accordance with accepted financial practices</li> </ul>