

2027 BASIC NEEDS APPLICANT GUIDE



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MISSION AND GOALS

The Mission of Great Rivers United Way

Is to unite people and resources to improve lives and strengthen our communities.

Our Goal

Is to improve community mental wellbeing.

The Basic Needs Grant Goal

Is to support people's basic needs of food, shelter, and safety as a foundation of mental wellbeing.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

The Community Investment Program at Great Rivers United Way is funded by generous gifts given by individuals and businesses throughout the community. Great Rivers United Way invests those gifts in local human services programs. Our over-arching goal is to improve community mental wellbeing. We committed \$1.5 million over three years toward that goal. Additionally we fund programs and projects designed to meet people's basic needs of food, shelter, and safety as a foundation of mental wellbeing.

In 2027, Great Rivers United Way is investing up to \$250,000 in programs and projects that support the Basic Needs of food, shelter, and safety.

VOLUNTEERS

Great Rivers United Way involves community volunteers throughout the granting process as grant reviewers and dedicated committee members who make award recommendations to our volunteer

Board of Directors. All volunteers receive training on grant evaluation, unconscious bias, and Great Rivers United Way priorities.

GRANTMAKING VALUES

Great Rivers United Way aspires to be inclusive, transparent, and impactful in our grantmaking.

We encourage applications from organizations that have not been grantees in the past as well as organizations with whom we have long-standing relationships. We will be looking at community investments holistically and through an equity lens. This means as we consider our investments, we will look at which populations are being served, the impact of programming for those served, how organizations engage partners and the community, and the geographic service area.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Great Rivers United Way's Basic Needs Grants mobilize funds to programs and projects that reach people in need of food, shelter, and safety. These critical services are the foundation upon which people can build stability for themselves and their families.

Priority will be given to the following types of programs and projects:

- Proven practices – programs and projects with a demonstrated history of success.
- Promising innovations – programs and projects that approach problems in a new way.
- Regional reach – programs and projects that are located in, or effectively reach rural communities in our community investment area: Buffalo, Houston, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.

GRANT AWARDS

Grant awards for 2027 will be no more than \$25,000 per organization. Organization's may apply for multiple programs either on one application or through multiple applications, however the total amount awarded will not be more than \$25,000.

Great Rivers United Way makes an attempt to award meaningful amounts to as many programs as possible. Our practice is to provide partial awards when we do not have enough funds to fulfill all eligible requests with strong scores and strong alignment with the focus areas.

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

Applicants will be screened for basic eligibility criteria prior to gaining access to the grant application. The criteria are as follows:

- Currently maintain tax-exempt organization status under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code
- Registered as a charitable organization with the state in which they do business unless exempt from such requirement
- Provide human services within the Great Rivers United Way community investment region: Buffalo, Houston, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties
- Can demonstrate board oversight and financial responsibility through board minutes, independent audit or financial review, and IRS Form 990 (if required to file)
- Provides human services aligned with meeting basic needs of food, shelter, and safety

OR

- Has a fiscal sponsor that meets all the above requirements

USE OF GRANT FUNDS

Basic Needs Grant Funds should be used to support programs or projects aimed at meeting people's needs for food, shelter, and safety. Funds may be used for program-related staffing, supplies, technology, direct client assistance, etc. Up to 10% of awarded funds may be used for general administration/overhead. Grantees will be expected to provide data regarding how funds were spent, numbers of people served, and impact of the programming or project.

PROPOSALS

The deadline for submission is Monday, October 5, 2026 at 5:00 pm.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications will only be accepted on the [CommunityForce](https://gruw.communityforce.com/) grant management platform at <https://gruw.communityforce.com/>

The grant application contains four sections: General Information, Program Narrative, Program Budget and Funding, Operations, Oversight & Grant Management. Each section should be filled out completely.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Fill out all the requested information. If the person filling out the application is not the Executive Director/CEO, an Application Understanding and Authorization from the Executive Director/CEO will be required via electronic signature. You will be prompted to fill out a signature request that will email the understanding and authorization signature link to the Executive Director/CEO.

SIGNATURE REQUEST TIP

Email the person needing to sign a heads up that an electronic request for signature will be emailed to them from CommunityForce. They may need to check their Junk/Spam folder.

Board Chair information is requested for ease of awarding. Contact information is not shared with volunteer reviewers. If your organization has less than three staff with grant oversight roles, the Application Understanding and Authorization will also be required from your Board Chair. You will be prompted to fill out a signature request that will email the understanding and authorization signature link to the Board Chair.

The application understanding and authorization reads as below:

By signing below, I agree this application for the program listed above fulfills the requirements for Great Rivers United Way funding:

- ~ The applicant organization maintains its 501(c)3 status
- ~ The applicant organization registers as a non-profit annually with the state unless exempt
- ~ The program or project requesting grant funds provides human services
- ~ The program or project supports the basic needs of food, shelter, and/or safety

I affirm that I understand the following conditions:

- ~ The required application materials must be submitted through the online application system (CommunityForce)
- ~ This information will be used to determine program/project eligibility and award amounts
- ~ Application information may be used in Great Rivers United Way marketing.

The **Organization Summary** should give reviewers an overall understanding of your organization and how the specific program in the application fits into the scope of services offered.

Please keep the **Program or Project Name** short.

The **One to Two Sentence Description** should give the reviewers an idea of what the program's goal is, who it serves, and how it aligns with meeting people's basic needs of food, shelter, and/or safety.

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Provide concise yet descriptive narrative so that reviewers get a good idea of the problem being addressed by your program, what your program does, who your program serves, and why your program is needed in the community. Reviewers are volunteers from the community and may not be familiar with your organization or programs.

Program Types refers to the status of the program within your organization. NOT whether or not it is currently receiving a Basic Needs Grant from Great Rivers United Way:

- ~ New Programming – your agency is not yet providing or has recently starting providing.
- ~ Ongoing Programming – established programming in your organization
- ~ Project with specific start and end – Like a series of classes, construction, equipment purchase and installation.
- ~ Expanded Programming – established programming that will be grown in some way. Examples include services being offered in a different location, to an additional population, or to more people.

The **Need Statement** for your program should include data. Do not overlook the program's own historical service data as a source.

The **Program Description** is the meat of your proposal. Be clear and concise in conveying the goal of the program and how the organization works to meet that goal.

NARRATIVE TIPS

- ~ Read all questions first
- ~ Do not repeat answers
- ~ Review the volunteer scoring rubric (Appendix 3)
- ~ Use the formatting tools available in CommunityForce. Paragraphs and bullet points make your narrative easier to read.
- ~ If copy/pasting, still review formatting before submitting.
- ~ Avoid jargon and acronyms! Most community volunteers will not know the specific terms used in your field of work.

The **Measurement** section of the proposal will be different depending on the program type. The most successful proposals will measure both outputs (volume of work) and impact (change in condition):

If the program is ongoing or expanding, you will be asked to provide data on current program performance as well as goals for 2027. This **does not** only apply to programs currently receiving Basic Needs grant funds.

If the program or project is new, you will be asked to provide the data that will be collected that shows the volume or outputs of work projected in 2027 and how the program or project will impact those served.

In the **Equity and Inclusion** question describe how your organization works toward equitable outcomes and includes people from differing backgrounds. Also include how the program incorporates equity and inclusion into service delivery. Consider including discussion on organizational equity goals and strategies; steps taken to work toward equitable outcomes in the community; how your organization in general and how the program specifically are culturally responsive to those being served; how it reaches and includes people from different backgrounds particularly those at risk for disparate outcomes; and how it works against structures of oppression.

No one organization can solve large, complex problems alone. In the **Partnerships and Collaborations** section, describe how the

MEASUREMENT EXAMPLES

Outputs

- ~ Individuals or households served
- ~ meals provided
- ~ pounds of food distributed
- ~ nights of shelter
- ~ hours of mentoring

Impact

- ~ percent who increased disposable income by accessing community resources
- ~ percent whose food needs were met for the month
- ~ percent who increased their knowledge of how to stay safe

organization with respect to delivering this program, works with other organizations or programs to enhance your work.

For the **Participant Experience** section describe how a person would move through the program. How would they initially access the program and what do they experience as they continue to interact with the program?

All application questions and the scoring rubric are provided in Appendix 3.

PROGRAM BUDGET & FUNDING

This section covers the organization's and the program's actual and anticipated revenue and expenses. We want to see how the program financially fits within the organization and the proportion you are requesting Great Rivers United Way to cover. If your organization solely exists to provide the program you are requesting, the organization and program revenue and expense numbers will be the same.

For the **Organization & Program Budget**, you will download a template to complete. The template requests revenue and expenses for both the program and the organization. For past year and current revenue and expenses, please use your organization's fiscal year. However, for the 2027 program budget and organization budget please use the 2027 calendar year. If your organization uses a different fiscal year, please prorate your revenue and expenses to align with the calendar year. Once the template is completed, save it and then upload it into the application. Please include your organization name within the name of the spreadsheet file. There is a column for notes within the template.

The **Budget Narrative** describes how grant funds will be used to support the program.

For **Funding Sources** list the planned sources of revenue for the program. If your program is funded through general organizational revenue, list how the organization generates the revenue. You must click on the **SAVE or Add Another** button for each funding source including the last one on the list.

The **Gift Impact** section helps Great Rivers United Way development staff communicate to prospective donors the impact of giving \$1, \$2, \$5, or \$10 a week. Please be creative and provide different examples. The best gift impact statements have strong alignment to program goals.

OPERATIONS, OVERSIGHT & GRANT MANAGEMENT

This section helps reviewers and Great Rivers United Way steward gifts to fiscally sound organizations with active and responsible boards that have the capacity to manage grant awards.

The **Oversight** section describes how your Board of Directors meets their responsibilities of financial oversight, executive management, and mission advancement. Describe the committees, regular agenda items, periodic agenda items, and frequency of meetings.

Please upload the last two sets of **Board Agendas and Minutes** to the application. These provide additional evidence of oversight as described in the oversight section. Please only provide meetings of the whole board, not minutes of committee meetings in place of board minutes. You are only able to upload one Word document or pdf to each question.

Upload your most recently completed **Audit** or independent financial review. CommunityForce limits uploads to less than 10mb. If your file is too large, please email it to Liz Evans levans@gruw.org and upload a note stating the audit was emailed. Same with your **IRS Form 990**. If your organization is exempt from filing an IRS Form 990, please upload an exemption statement.

The **Comparative Financial Statement** is a document that compares what the organization budgeted for revenue and expenses in the past completed fiscal year to what the organization actually earned and spent. This helps reviewers determine if the organization is reasonably able to budget and spend according to the budget. Within the same document you may include notes to explain large discrepancies between the budget and actual. These do not have to be audited actuals.

For technical assistance in filling out the application, visit this [CommunityForce help page](#). (See Appendix 2)

PROPOSAL REVIEW

Proposals will be first screened by Great Rivers United Way Staff and volunteers of the Fund Distribution Steering Committee to ensure eligibility requirements are met. Ineligible applications and incomplete applications will not be considered for a grant award and will not be reviewed by Community Investment Volunteers.

SCORING

Proposals that meet eligibility requirements will be reviewed by volunteers organized into teams. Each team will be comprised of at least one member of the Great Rivers United Way's Fund Distribution Steering Committee and Community Investment Volunteers who are members of the general public. All volunteers receive training from Great Rivers United Way on community needs, unconscious bias, and grant evaluation. Proposals are scored online using a standard evaluation form. The scoring rubric is provided in Appendix 3. Proposals will be scored based on the merits of the program, healthy organization financials, appropriate board oversight, grant management, and funding priorities. Proposals can receive up to 100 points.

FUND RATING

Reviewers are also asked to make a recommendation of whether or not to fund the program ranging from 5 - "Yes! Fully fund this program!" to 1 - "No, do not fund this program." The score is multiplied by the Fund Rating

PAST PERFORMANCE

The Fund Distribution Steering Committee will take into consideration an organization's adherence to 2025 and 2026 Grantee Agreements. This includes timeliness of reporting, attending required meetings, and past program performance.

AWARDING PROCESS

The Great Rivers United Way Fund Distribution Steering Committee will review all panel scores, fund ratings, past performance and funding priorities in making an award recommendation to the Great Rivers United Way Board of Directors. The Board of Directors votes on the recommendation.

Once awards are approved, award letters and grant agreements will be sent to awardees. Decline letters will be sent to organizations not receiving an award.

POST ACCEPTANCE EXPECTATIONS

All grant awardees will be expected to follow the Great Rivers United Way Grantee Agreement. The agreement includes requirements for data and financial reporting, annual meeting attendance, and partnership in community initiatives. Great Rivers United Way requires six-month and end-of-year reports on program progress and budget updates. Site visits may be requested for which advance notice will be given. Great Rivers United Way participates in the United Way Worldwide Impact Survey which combines data and stories to show our collective impact. Awardees are required to participate in data reporting as it relates to measures applicable to awarded programs.

Great Rivers United Way will provide opportunities for networking and education throughout the year. These opportunities are intended to be beneficial to our nonprofit community not a requirement for receiving funding. Ideas from grantees for education or networking are welcome.

IMPORTANT DATES

APPLICATION

Application Available on CommunityForce	Tuesday, August 25, 2026
Basic Needs Q&A Virtual Office Hours	Friday, August 28, 2026 at noon
These are optional to attend and are an open forum to ask questions.	Friday, September 4, 2026 at noon Thursday, September 10, 2026 at 9am Monday, September 21, 2026 at noon
Application Due Date	Monday, October 5, 2026 at 5pm
Notification of Awards	No later than Monday, December 21, 2026

AWARDED PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

Grant Start Date	January 1, 2027
Mid-Year Report Due	July 31, 2027
Grant End Date	December 31, 2027
Final Report Due	January 31, 2028

GREAT RIVERS UNITED WAY CONTACT

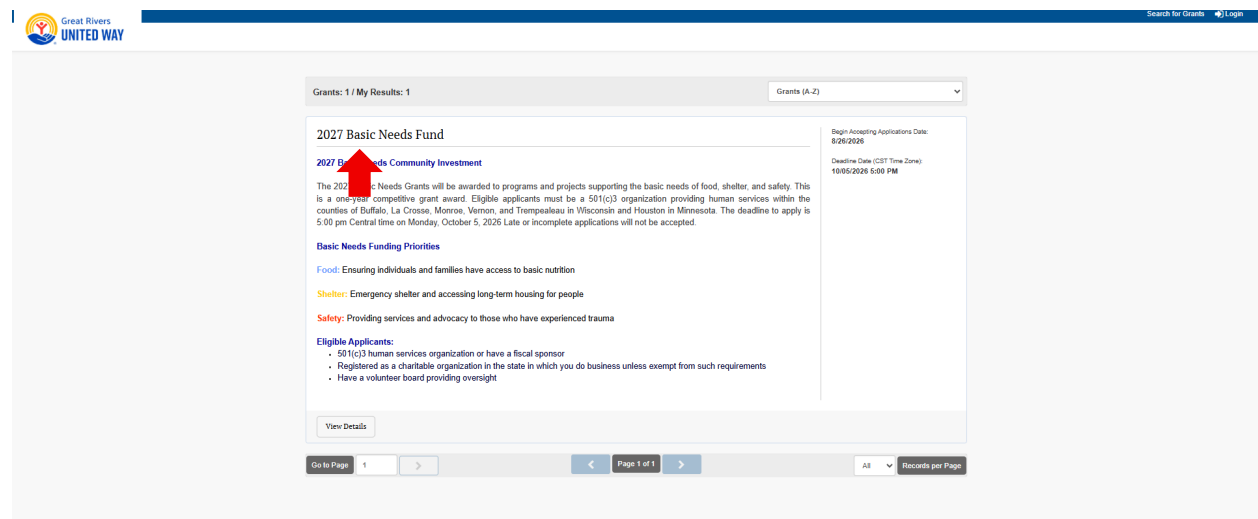
For questions regarding the Community Investment Grant application and funding process please contact Liz Evans at 608-796-1400 ext. 105 or levans@gruw.org.

APPENDIX 1: STARTING AN APPLICATION AND ACCESSING COMMUNITYFORCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For help setting up a user account and basic application technical assistance, view the video at this link: [Grants – Introduction to Grants Training for Applicants](#)

Open application opportunities can be found on Great Rivers United Way's [website](#) and on [CommunityForce](#).

To begin an application, click on 2027 Basic Needs Fund



The screenshot shows the CommunityForce Grants interface. At the top, there is a header with the Great Rivers United Way logo on the left and a search bar with a 'Log In' button on the right. Below the header, the main content area displays 'Grants: 1 / My Results: 1' and a dropdown menu for 'Grants (A-Z)'. The primary grant listing is for the '2027 Basic Needs Fund', which is highlighted with a red arrow. The description for this grant states that it is a one-year competitive grant award for 501(c)(3) organizations providing human services in specific counties of Wisconsin and Minnesota, with a deadline of 5:00 pm Central time on Monday, October 5, 2026. To the right of the main text, a sidebar provides additional details: 'Begin Accepting Applications Date: 8/26/2026' and 'Deadline Date (CST Time Zone): 10/05/2026 5:00 PM'. Below the main text, there are sections for 'Basic Needs Funding Priorities' (Food, Shelter, Safety) and 'Eligible Applicants' (501(c)(3) organization, registered as charitable, volunteer board). A 'View Details' button is located at the bottom of the grant listing. At the very bottom of the page, there is a pagination bar showing 'Page 1 of 1' and a 'Records per Page' dropdown set to 'All'.

Then click on the Apply Here button in the upper right of the page.

Application Fund Details

[Return to Search List](#)

2027 Basic Needs Fund

Brief Description:
2027 Basic Needs Community Investment

The 2027 Basic Needs Grants will be awarded to programs and projects supporting the basic needs of food, shelter, and safety. This is a one-year competitive grant award. Eligible applicants must be a 501(c)3 organization providing human services within the counties of Buffalo, La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon, and Trempealeau in Wisconsin and Houston in Minnesota. The deadline to apply is 5:00 pm Central time on Monday, October 5, 2026. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Basic Needs Funding Priorities

Food: Ensuring individuals and families have access to basic nutrition

Shelter: Emergency shelter and accessing long-term housing for people

Safety: Providing services and advocacy to those who have experienced trauma

Eligible Applicants:

- 501(c)3 human services organization or have a fiscal sponsor
- Registered as a charitable organization in the state in which you do business unless exempt from such requirements
- Have a volunteer board providing oversight

Description:
2027 Basic Needs Grant

The 2027 Basic Needs Grants will be awarded to programs and projects supporting the basic needs of food, shelter, and safety. This is a one-year competitive grant award. Eligible applicants must be a 501(c)3 organization providing human services within the counties of Buffalo, La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon, and Trempealeau in Wisconsin and Houston in Minnesota. The deadline to apply is 5:00 pm Central time on Monday, October 5, 2026. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. If your application is incomplete due to inability to upload a document, please email the document to Liz and upload a Word doc with a note that it was emailed to Liz.

Awards will be for one year.

Begin Accepting Applications Date:
8/25/2026

Deadline Date (CST Time Zone):
10/05/2026 5:00 PM

[APPLY HERE](#)

Answer the Prequalification Questions:

Pre-Qualification Questions

Does your organization or a fiscal sponsor currently maintain tax-exempt status under 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code?
☐ Yes ☐ No

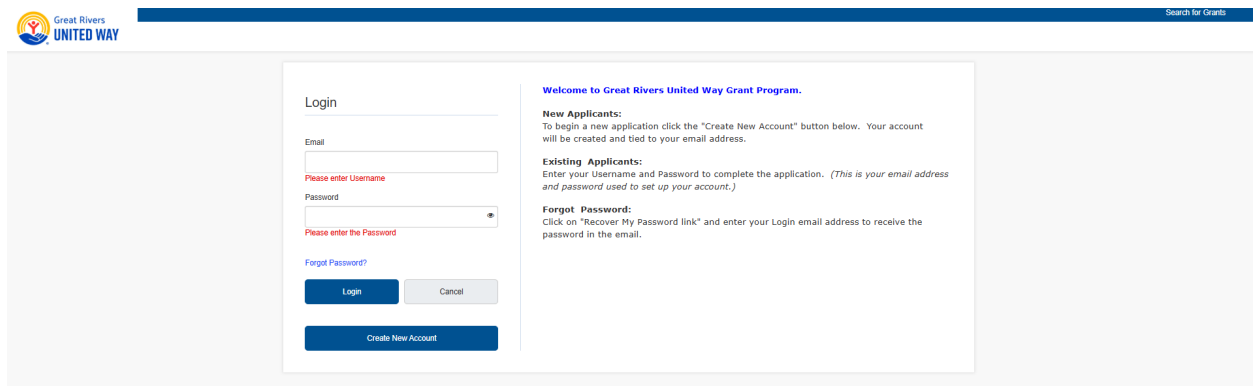
Is your organization or your fiscal sponsor registered as a charitable organization with the state in which they do business? OR Is your organization exempt from registering as a charitable organization with the state?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Does your organization provide human services involving food, shelter, or safety within the Great Rivers United Way service area of Buffalo, Crawford, Houston, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Can your organization or fiscal sponsor demonstrate board oversight and financial responsibility through board minutes, independent audit, or financial review and IRS Form 990?
☐ Yes ☐ No

[Submit](#) [Cancel](#)

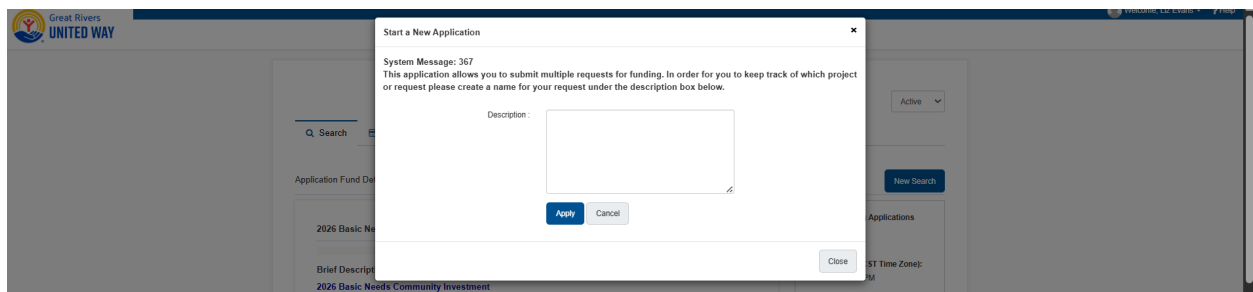
Then login or create a new account



The screenshot shows the login and account creation interface for the Great Rivers United Way Grant Program. The header includes the logo and a 'Search for Grants' link. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'Login' and 'Welcome to Great Rivers United Way Grant Program.' The 'Login' section contains fields for 'Email' (with a red prompt 'Please enter Username') and 'Password' (with a red prompt 'Please enter the Password'), a 'Forgot Password?' link, and 'Login' and 'Cancel' buttons. Below these is a 'Create New Account' button. The 'Welcome' section contains instructions for 'New Applicants' (to click 'Create New Account'), 'Existing Applicants' (to enter Username and Password), and 'Forgot Password' (to click 'Recover My Password' and enter the login email).

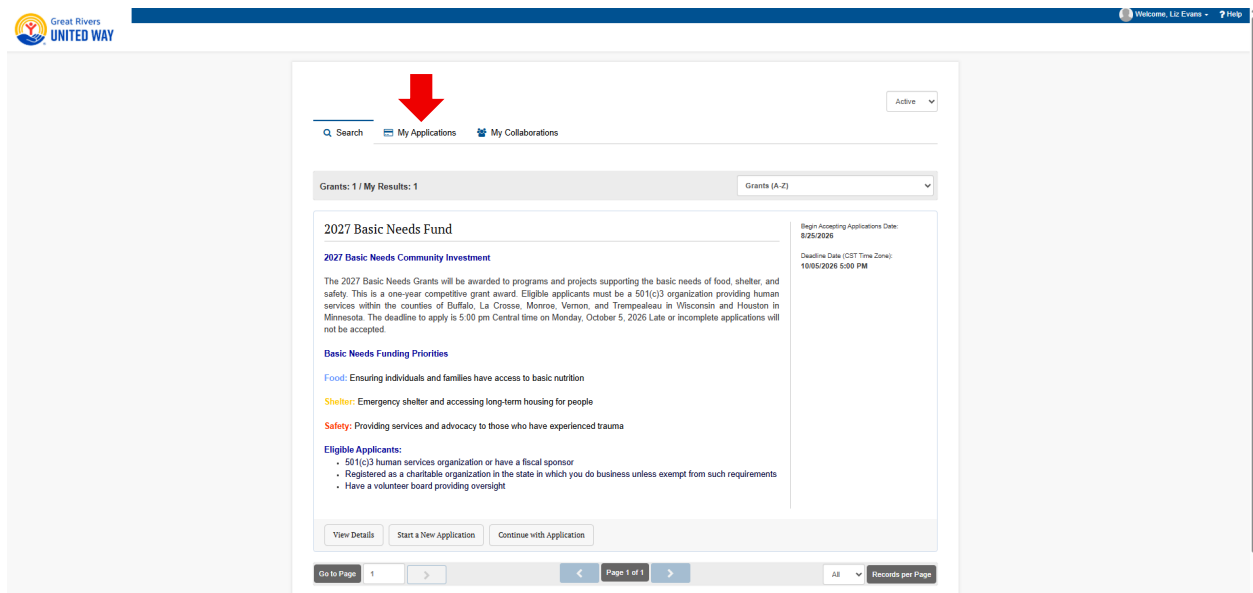
Enter a Program Title in the Description box that pops up. **Note! This cannot be edited once saved!**

If you have multiple applications, the description will help you distinguish one application from another. Click Apply.



The screenshot shows a 'Start a New Application' dialog box. It contains a 'System Message: 367' stating: 'This application allows you to submit multiple requests for funding. In order for you to keep track of which project or request please create a name for your request under the description box below.' Below the message is a 'Description:' label and a text input box. At the bottom are 'Apply', 'Cancel', and 'Close' buttons. The background shows a blurred view of the application management interface.

When returning to the CommunityForce site, all your past applications can be found by clicking the “My Applications” tab. You will need to scroll up on the Grants Search page to find it.



Great Rivers UNITED WAY

Welcome, Liz Evans - Help

Active

Search My Applications My Collaborations

Grants: 1 / My Results: 1 Grants (A-Z)

2027 Basic Needs Fund

2027 Basic Needs Community Investment

The 2027 Basic Needs Grants will be awarded to programs and projects supporting the basic needs of food, shelter, and safety. This is a one-year competitive grant award. Eligible applicants must be a 501(c)(3) organization providing human services within the counties of Buffalo, La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon, and Trempealeau in Wisconsin and Houston in Minnesota. The deadline to apply is 5:00 pm Central time on Monday, October 5, 2026. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Basic Needs Funding Priorities

Food: Ensuring individuals and families have access to basic nutrition

Shelter: Emergency shelter and accessing long-term housing for people

Safety: Providing services and advocacy to those who have experienced trauma

Eligible Applicants:

- 501(c)(3) human services organization or have a fiscal sponsor
- Registered as a charitable organization in the state in which you do business unless exempt from such requirements
- Have a volunteer board providing oversight

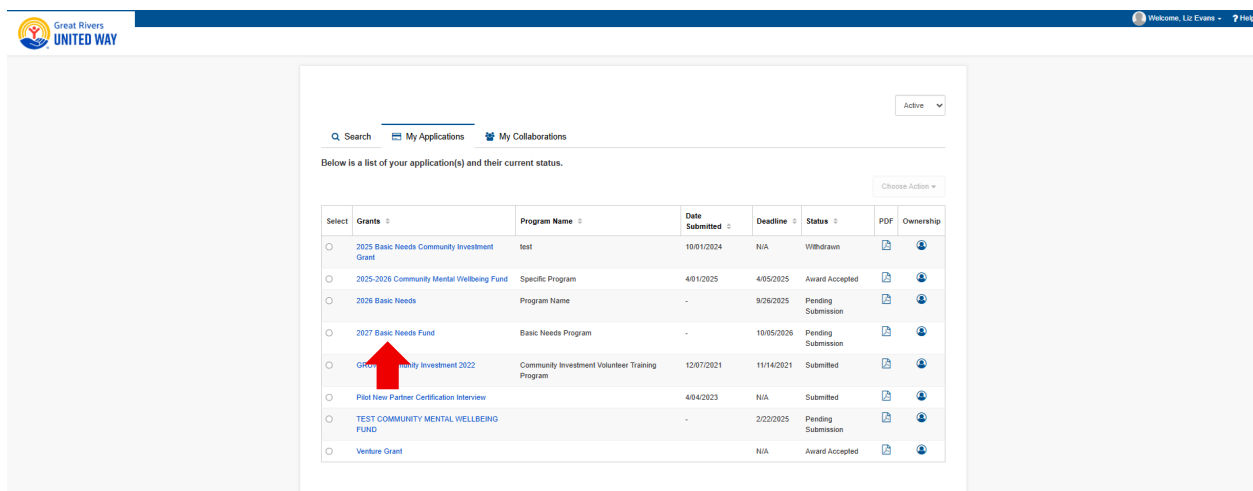
Begin Accepting Applications Date: 8/25/2026

Deadline Date (CST Time Zone): 10/05/2026 5:00 PM

View Details Start a New Application Continue with Application

Go to Page 1 Page 1 of 1 All Records per Page

To continue work on a current application, click on the name of the application in your application list.



Great Rivers UNITED WAY

Welcome, Liz Evans - Help

Active

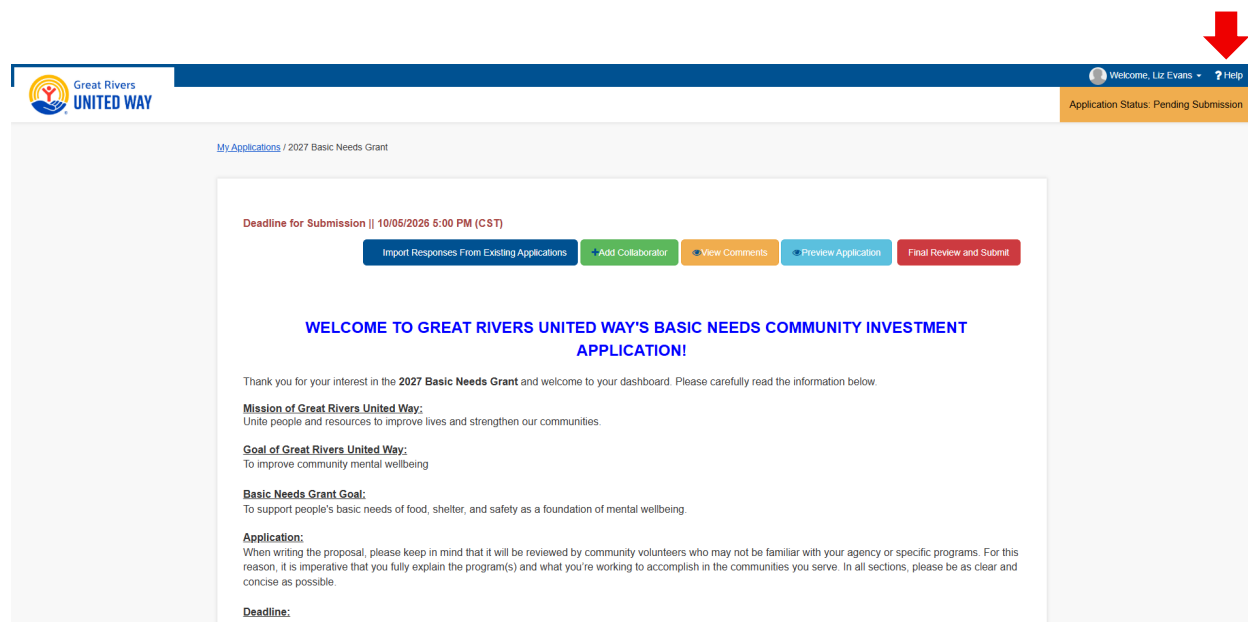
Search My Applications My Collaborations

Below is a list of your application(s) and their current status.

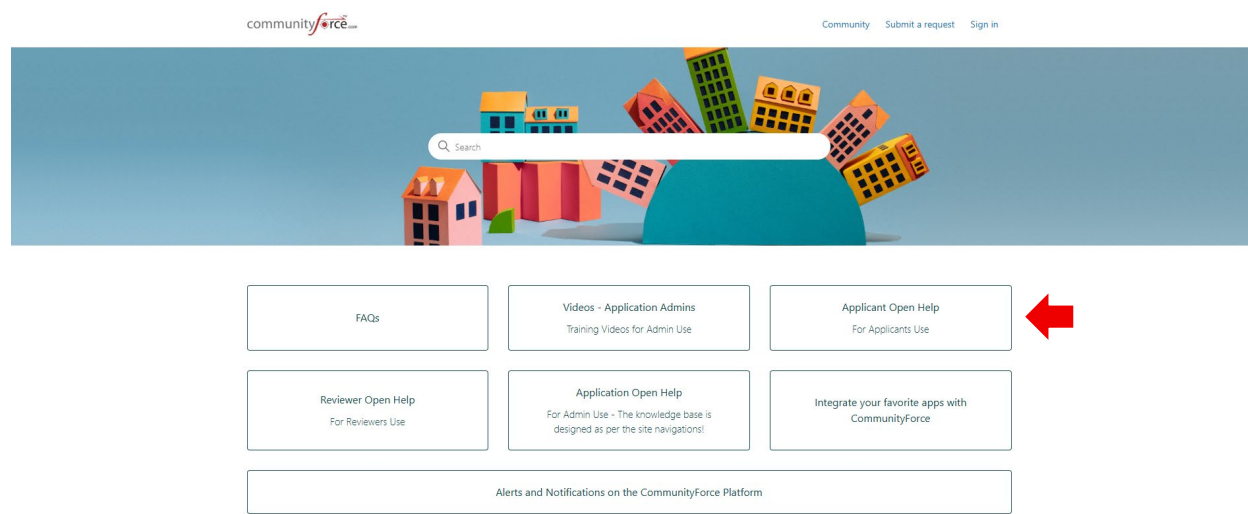
Choose Action

Select	Grants	Program Name	Date Submitted	Deadline	Status	PDF	Ownership
☐	2025 Basic Needs Community Investment Grant	test	10/01/2024	N/A	Withdrawn		
☐	2025-2026 Community Mental Wellbeing Fund	Specific Program	4/01/2025	4/05/2025	Award Accepted		
☐	2026 Basic Needs	Program Name	-	9/26/2025	Pending Submission		
☐	2027 Basic Needs Fund	Basic Needs Program	-	10/05/2026	Pending Submission		
☐	Great Community Investment 2022	Community Investment Volunteer Training Program	12/07/2021	11/14/2021	Submitted		
☐	Pilot New Partner Certification Interview		4/04/2023	N/A	Submitted		
☐	TEST COMMUNITY MENTAL WELLBEING FUND		-	2/22/2025	Pending Submission		
☐	Venture Grant			N/A	Award Accepted		

Once an account is created and a user is logged in, the Help guide can be accessed by the Help button in the upper right corner of the grant dashboard screen.



The Help button takes users to the home page for the CommunityForce Zen Desk. Click on “Applicant Open Help For Applicants Use”



APPENDIX 2: APPLICATION QUESTIONS

The following pages contain a copy of the 2027 Basic Needs Grant application. Some questions contain skip logic and will or will not appear on your live application depending on your answers.

Application Summary of: Test Account Organization | Evans, Liz

Program Name:

i General Information	
Grant Introduction and Instructions	
2027 Basic Needs Grant Application Guide. Click to download.	
Organization Information	
*Organization Name:	
*Organization Executive Director/CEO Name:	
*Organization Executive Director/CEO email:	
*Board Chair/President Name:	
*Board Chair/President Email:	
*Does your Board Chair/President's term end before December 31, 2027?	
Incoming Board Chair/President Name:	
Incoming Board Chair/President Email:	
*Does your organization have additional staff assigned roles in grant management and oversight?	
*Grant Management Contact(s): List name(s), role(s), and email address(es) for your grant management team.	
Does your organization have a fiscal sponsor for this request?	
Fiscal Sponsor Organization Name:	
Fiscal Sponsor Executive Director/CEO Name:	
Fiscal Sponsor Executive Director/CEO Email:	
*Is the person filling out this application the Executive Director or CEO of the organization?	

Application Understanding and Authorization

By signing below, I agree this application for the program listed above fulfills the requirements for Great Rivers United Way funding:

- The applicant organization maintains its 501(c)3 status
- The applicant organization registers as a non-profit annually with the state unless exempt
- The program or project requesting grant funds provides human services
- The program or project supports the basic needs of food, shelter, and/or safety

I affirm that I understand the following conditions:

- The required application materials must be submitted through the online application system (CommunityForce)
- This information will be used to determine program/project funding amounts
- Application information may be used in Great Rivers United Way marketing.

Executive Director or CEO Signature:

Organization Mission and Summary

*Organization Mission Statement:

*Organization Summary: Please provide a brief summary of your organization, including how long you have been in operation, your target population and a broad scope of services provided (50 words max).

Program Information

*Program or Project Name:

*Which basic need(s) does this program or project address? *Check all that apply*

*Provide a one to two sentence description of the program (25 words or less).

*Requested amount of program/project support for 2027: *The maximum award amount for any organization is \$25,000.*

*Do you currently have a Community Mental Wellbeing grant?

Please provide the program name and a brief description.

☒ Program Narrative

Narrative

*Program or Project Name:

*What category best describe your request? *Select one*

*Approximately how long has this program been in operation?

Approximately how many individuals will be served in each county?

If the program does not serve individuals, please provide another unit of service

*Buffalo County

*Houston County

*La Crosse County

*Monroe County

*Trempealeau County

*Vernon County

If other counties will be served by this program, please provide a list including the county, how many individuals will be served, and what percentage of funds from this grant will be used to support that work.

*Need Statement: What are the specific needs within food, shelter, and safety your program is designed to improve or prevent? Provide data to support these needs. *Data Examples: Your historic service numbers and trends, census data, Compass Now Report, ALICE Report(Recommend no more than 750 words)*

*Program Description: What are the goals or outcomes of this program? How will the goals or outcomes be achieved? Include major activities or services provided. *No more than 2500 words**Tip: Use the formatting tools available on the text box to create paragraphs and bullet points where needed.

What research, best practices, and philosophies are used in program development, delivery, and evaluation? *Examples: Curriculum used, industry standards, approach to how you deliver the program*

Measurement (Ongoing or Expanded Program): Provide data you have collected thus far in your program showing the volume of work and the program impact. What progress have you made toward your 2026 goals? How will you measure progress in 2027? Please include how you measure the volume of the work AND the impact of the work. Impact measurements show changes in conditions. <i>Impact Example: Collect survey data to measure the percentage of those served who increased disposable income by accessing community resources.</i>	
Measurement (New Program, Project, or Other): What data will you collect to measure the impact of the program? Please include how you measure the volume of the work AND the impact of the work. Impact measurements show changes in conditions. <i>Impact Example: Collect survey data to measure the percentage of those served who increased disposable income by accessing community resources.</i>	
What If: What would happen if your program didn't exist?	
Equity and Inclusion: Discuss how your organization in general and the program in particular incorporate equity and inclusion into your work. <i>(recommend no more than 750 words)</i>	
Partnerships and Collaborations: Discuss key partnerships and collaborations with other programs and/or organizations. How do partnerships and collaborations enhance your work? Be specific about partnership roles and how partnerships strengthen the program. Provide at least one example. <i>(recommend no more than 500 words)</i>	
Participant Experience: Describe how a person experiences the program. If this is a new program or project, describe how you envision a person experiencing the program or project.	
Notes: Is there anything else you'd like to share about your program or project that wasn't asked above?	



Program Budget and Funding

Program or Project Budget & Funding

*Requested amount of program/project support for 2027: *The maximum award amount for any organization is \$25,000.*

*What fiscal year does this program operate on? (*Start Month-End Month*)

*Organization & Program Budget: Please download, complete, and upload the 2027_BN_Budget_Form. You will need revenue and expense information for both the program and the organization: Last fully completed year actual, current year actual, January - December 2027 budget. The last completed year and current year should be according to your organization's fiscal year. The budget should be what you anticipate for the calendar year January - December 2027 no matter what your fiscal year is. Approximation is ok. *Accepted files are Excel or pdf.*

*Budget Narrative: Describe how grant funds will be used to support the program or project. Include calculations or reasoning to support the amount of each line item.

Funding Sources

*List your planned sources of revenue, anticipated amount of support, and status of funds (requested, confirmed, future request, future event/campaign, other) over the next 12 months for this program. If other status, please provide a short explanation in the status box. Click on the SAVE or Add Another button after inputting each funding source.

NSC_Funder

NSC_AmountReq

NSC_FundStatus

Funding Source Notes: Use this space to provide any needed clarification regarding the sources of funding for your program or project.

*Budget Deficits: Describe how the organization handles or will handle program income deficits. What happens if the organization can't raise enough funds to support the whole expense budget of the program/project?

*Leverage: How will a Great Rivers United Way investment in this program or project help to leverage additional funds or support? (*300 words max*)

Gift Impact

How do these gift/donation amounts impact the program? These are used in GRUW marketing to show donors what a weekly gift of \$1, \$2, \$5, or \$10 can mean for supported programs.

Please provide four unique statements. Do not simply multiply one statement by 2, 5, 10.

x	\$52 provides/covers the cost of:	
x	\$104 provides/covers the cost of:	
x	\$260 provides/covers the cost of:	

x	\$520 provides/covers the cost of:	
Notes: Is there anything else you'd like to share about the organization's or the program/project's financials and budget?		

Basic Needs Budget Template (to be downloaded and filled out and attached)

	Program Actual (Last fully completed fiscal year)	Organization Actual (Last fully completed fiscal year)	Program Actual (Current fiscal year)	Organization Actual (Current fiscal year)	Program Budget (Jan-Dec 2027)	Organization Budget (Jan-Dec 2027)	Notes
Revenue							
Government Grants/Contracts							
Foundation Grants							
United Way							
Other Grants							
Individual Donations/Gifts							
Corporate/Business Support							
Earned revenue (membership/fee for service)							
Special Events (net)							
Other Revenue							
Total Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Expenses							
Wages							
Payroll taxes & benefits							
Supplies/materials							
Client assistance							
Professional/Contracted Services							
Travel/Transportation							
Equipment							
Occupancy (rent, utilities)							
Staff Development/Training							
Printing/Promotion/Marketing							
Other Expenses							
Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	

Organization Oversight Grant Management

Operations, Oversight & Grant Management

*Oversight: Describe how your volunteer Board of Directors and/or other volunteer committees provide oversight for the organization. Include frequency of meetings, items covered at every Board Meeting (i.e. approval of minutes), items periodically reviewed and discussed at meetings, and any other pertinent information that will help reviewers understand the role of your board.

*Board Roster: Please upload a roster of your Board of Directors including names of all board members and email and phone contacts for officers.

Board Agendas & Minutes: Please upload your organization's last two sets of agendas and corresponding board minutes.

*Board Agenda 1:

*Board Minutes Set 1:

*Board Agenda 2:

*Board Minutes Set 2:

Audit: Please upload your most recently completed independent audit or independent financial review. *If your file is too large to upload, please email Liz at levans@gruw.org

*IRS Form 990: Please upload your organization's most recently filed IRS Form 990.

*Comparative Financial Statement: Please upload your most recent end of year financial report comparing budget to actual income and expenses.

*Number Grants: On average, how many grants does your organization receive and manage annually?

*Types of Grantors: What type(s) of grants has your organization received? *Check all that apply*

Other Please explain:

*Annual Grant Award Total: On average, how much does your organization receive in grant dollars every year?

Grant Management: What policies and/or procedures are in place to ensure proper management of grants? If policies and procedures are not formalized, please describe your process for managing grants. Please address fiscal management, fiscal reporting, and data management regarding people served and the impact of the grant.

Notes: Is there anything else you think is important to share with reviewers about your organization's oversight and grant management?

APPENDIX 3: VOLUNTEER REVIEWER SCORING RUBRIC

Category	Program Narrative	Point Value
Need & Program Description	Food, Shelter, or Safety Need clearly defined and supported by data. Program description clearly shows how the program addresses the need.	10
Impact	Proposed program or project incorporates research, evidence, and/or best practices. and Proposed program or project will achieve measurable outcomes in <u>helping</u> people with food, shelter, and/or safety needs or Proposed program or project will achieve measurable outcomes in <u>preventing</u> people needing food, shelter, or safety services in the future (or both)	5
Measurement	Plan for collecting data that will measure impact of the program/project. Measurements should show the volume of work done AND the anticipated change the program or project will make for those participating or in the community as a whole.	10
Equity	Organization develops and implements equity goals and strategies e.g. hiring practices, flexible benefits or holidays, inclusive environment, etc. Program or project is culturally responsive, meaning diversity is valued and the program adapts to meet the unique needs of those being served.	10

	Program or project has a plan for reaching populations at risk for disparate outcomes (people of color, people with disabilities, people living in rural areas, people who identify as LGBTQ+, etc.)	
Partnerships & Collaboration	Application is written as a collaborative project in which more than one organization is fully invested in the program: involved in program activities, decision-making, and will share in any grant award. Organization works with partners to solve problems involving food, shelter, and safety in the community. Organization works with partners to provide wrap-around care and service to people in need of help.	5
Total	Program Narrative Total Points	40

Category	Program Budget & Funding	Point Value
Complete	Requested financial information is provided and complete	5
Program Budget	The budget template is filled in and supports the program and budget narratives.	5
Funding Sources	The organization identified other sources of support for the program or project	5
Deficit Plan	The organization has a concrete plan to deal with budget deficits.	5
Leverage	An investment from Great Rivers United Way will help leverage other support	5
Gift Impact	Provided a variety of examples for gift amounts	5
Total	Program Budget & Funding	30

Category	Operations, Oversight & Grant Management	Point Value
Organization Operations	Does the organization operate in a fiscally sound manner? - Does the organization budget reasonably well according to their end-of-year comparative financial statement? - Does the organization file their IRS Form 990 within 11 months of their end of fiscal year? - Is the audit or financial review performed by an independent CPA? - Does the organization generate enough revenue to cover expenses? - Does the organization's end-of-year balance increase or decrease year over year?	10
Board Oversight	Based on the description of board oversight and supporting documents, does the board of directors have appropriate fiscal, executive, and mission oversight? - Do minutes reflect discussion and approval of financials in the minutes - Do minutes reflect Board members engaging in discussion of organizational mission and strategy	10
Grant Management	Rate the organization's ability to manage a grant award? - Experience and/or solid plans for grant management - Ensuring funds are used for the awarded program - Key staff have defined roles in managing the award - Procedures exist for data collection and filing reports	10
Total	Operations, Oversight & Grant Management Total Points	30

Review Process	
Eligibility Screen	Yes/No
Proposal Review	
Program Narrative	40
Program Budget & Funding	30
Operations, Oversight & Grant Management	30
Sub-total	100
Funding Recommendation	
Community Investment Volunteer Funding Recommendation	1–5 multiplied by score
Grantee Performance	
Complies with reporting requirements	Yes/No/NA
Attends required meetings	Yes/No/NA