

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

This assessment tool is used as part of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta Impact Fund investment process as a method of evaluating programs that have submitted applications for funding. The Impact Fund Assessment tool includes criteria from four main categories identified by the UWMA board and Community Engagement Council. Each category has specific criteria used for the assessment.

AGENCY LEVEL CATEGORY

1. Organizational Strategic Direction and Leadership (16 points)

Highly competitive organizations will be able to demonstrate that they have a clear and actively used strategic plan that is supported by the organization's leaders. Criteria in this category focus on providing volunteers with a clear context for the program for which funds are sought.

PROGRAM LEVEL CATEGORIES

2. Results and Capacity to Measure (50 points)

Highly competitive programs will have a demonstrated track record and the internal capacity to achieve meaningful results, clear methods to measure results, and internal processes where data is used to make program improvements.

3. Program Design and Program Quality (24 points)

Highly competitive programs will be able to demonstrate that the program design and quality of the services are based on research about effective programs. Criteria in this category emphasize delivery of high quality services, adaptability based on participant needs and demographics, and an overall ability to create and leverage partnerships that get results.

4. Program Operations and Budget (6 points)

Highly competitive programs will be able to demonstrate that the overall budget and the United Way portion address the barriers to achieving and are able to ensure that UWMA dollars will influence other to co-invest in effective programs.

OVERALL INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

5. Local and Regional Impact (4 points)

Highly competitive programs can demonstrate that the progress towards the outcomes represents a meaningful contribution to results locally or regionally. Additionally, after individual reviews and site visits are complete. Volunteers will engage in two rounds of deliberation to ensure that across the overall investment portfolio there are investments in high quality, high performing programs distributed across the region. Investment recommendations may be adjusted based on ability to meaningful to achieving both local and regional goals.

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

	LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE	LEVEL FOUR	Weight	Total Possible Points
AGENCY LEVEL CATEGORY						
Organizational Strategic Planning	Limited ability and tendency to develop strategic plan, either internally or via external assistance; if strategic plan exists, it is rarely or never referenced	Some ability and tendency to develop high-level strategic plan either internally or via external assistance; strategic plan sometimes directs management decisions	Ability and tendency to develop and refine concrete, realistic strategic plan; some internal expertise in strategic planning or access to relevant external assistance; strategic planning carried out on a near-regular basis; strategic plan used to guide management decisions	Ability to develop and refine concrete, realistic, and detailed strategic plan; critical mass of internal expertise in strategic planning, or efficient use of external, sustainable, highly qualified resources; strategic planning exercise carried out regularly; strategic plan used extensively to guide management decisions	2	8
Board Involvement & Support	Provide little direction, support, and accountability to leadership; not fully informed about material and other major organizational matters; largely “feel-good” support	Provide occasional direction, support, and accountability to leadership; generally informed about all material matters in a timely manner; input and responses often solicited	Provide regular direction, support, and accountability to leadership; fully informed about all material matters; input and responses actively sought and valued; full participant in major decisions	Provide strong direction, support, and accountability to leadership and engaged as a strategic resource; communication between board and leadership reflects mutual respect, appreciation for roles and responsibilities, shared commitment, and valuing of collective wisdom	1	4
Staff Experience, Knowledge of the Field	Drawn from a narrow range of backgrounds and experiences; interest and abilities limited to present job; little ability to solve problems as they arise	Drawn from somewhat diverse backgrounds and experiences; good capabilities, including some ability to solve problems as they arise; many are interested in work beyond their current jobs and in the success of organization’s mission	Drawn from diverse backgrounds and experiences and bring a broad range of skills; most are highly capable and committed to mission and strategy; eager to learn and develop, and assume increased responsibility	Drawn from extraordinarily diverse backgrounds and experiences, and bring broad range of skills; most are highly capable in multiple roles and committed to both mission, strategy, and continuous learning; eager and able to take on special projects and collaborate across divisional lines; frequent source of ideas and momentum for improvement and innovation	1	4
Organizational - Sub total of Possible Points					16	

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

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PROGRAM LEVEL CATEGORIES						
Clear Program Purpose with Organizational Support	Program is vaguely defined and lacks clear alignment with mission and overarching goals of the organization; program purpose seems scattered and only loosely related to the overall mission and goals of the organization	Program has a clear set of guiding objectives and is solidly linked with mission and overarching organization goals; program services may be somewhat scattered and not fully integrated into clear strategy	Program has a clear set of guiding objectives; Services are well-defined and clearly aligned with mission and overarching organization goals;	program is one of a few central/core programs offered by the organization fit together well as part of clear strategy	2	8
Targeting High Priority Populations	Services are not targeted to a high priority population. Few participants are from a high priority population. Program staff do not understand the needs of the target population. Program does not respond to changing needs of population.	Staff attempt to reach high priority populations but are not successful. Few participants are from a high priority population. Program staff understand the needs of the target population but program does not respond well to changing needs of population.	Services are targeted to those most in need but more participants should be from these high priority populations. Program staff understand the needs of the target population and are able to make adjustments based on changing needs, but the program should be more responsive.	Services are targeted to those most in need. A large number of participants are from high priority populations. Program staff understand the needs of the target population. Program staff make adjustments to services based on changing participant needs.	2	8
Programmatic Measures and Performance Targets	Targets are non-existent or few, vague or confusing, or either too easy or impossible to achieve; not clearly linked to overarching goals and strategy; targets largely unknown or ignored by staff	Realistic targets exist in some key areas, and are mostly aligned with overarching goals and strategy; may lack aggressiveness, be short-term, or lack milestones; targets are known and utilized by some staff	Realistic yet demanding targets exist in most areas, and are aligned with overarching goals and strategy; primarily quantifiable and focused on outcomes; typically multi-year targets, though may lack milestones; targets are known and utilized by most staff who use them to broadly guide work	Realistic yet demanding targets exist in all areas; targets are tightly linked to overarching goals and strategy, quantifiable, outcome-focused, have annual milestones, and are long-term in nature; all staff consistently utilize targets and work diligently to achieve them	3	12

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

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Program Performance and Adaptability	Program relies on anecdotal or broad data to identify participant backgrounds and gaps in ability of current programs to meet recipient needs; program adaptations only in response to funding availability	Program relies on broad data to identify participant backgrounds and gaps in ability of current programs to meet recipient needs; Limited ability of existing program to meet changing participant needs, with little or limited action taken; some ability to modify existing programs and create new programs	Program collects data on participants' assets and barriers at program entry; some adjustments made; demonstrated ability to modify and fine-tune existing program. Program has a limited track record or inconsistent performance results. Program most effective at maintain good outcomes; limited experience demonstrating results with high need populations	Program collects data on participants' assets and barriers at program entry and at several milestones; Uses information to identify gaps and makes research driven adjustments to program to help participants achieve results. Program consistently assists participants with making meaningful and measurable improvements and/or consistently assists participants in reaching long term outcomes.	2.5	10

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

	LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE	LEVEL FOUR	Weight	Total Possible Points
Commitment and Use of Data for Learning	Performance data rarely used to improve program and organization; little experience with measuring results beyond capturing information to report to funders; information systems not in place	Performance data occasionally used by staff and board to improve organization; some staff time devoted to collecting and analyzing meaningful data, as required by funders, however staff and board do not typically see evaluation as integral to organization's work; information systems not in place	Learnings from performance data distributed to all levels of staff within the program, and is often used by staff and board to make adjustments and improvements; some staff time devoted to documenting organization's work; some information systems in place to support on-going evaluation	Systematic staff and board practices of making adjustments and improvements on basis of performance data; resources are devoted to thoroughly documenting organization's work and capturing the complete story of its impact; evaluation processes fully integrated into information systems	2	8
Data and Information Management	No systems for tracking clients, staff program activities, or results	Paper only tracking that is focused primarily on counting number of individuals served and counting number or amount of services rendered. Data is only occasionally summarized or reviewed by staff.	Electronic database and management reporting systems that captures both activities and outcomes/programmatic results. Program staff are well trained and able to consistently get reports out of the database. Data on participants, services and outcomes is summarized at regular intervals and reviewed by staff	Sophisticated, comprehensive electronic database and management reporting systems exist for tracking clients, staff, volunteers, program outcomes, and financial information; widely used and essential in increasing information sharing and efficiency	1	4
Results and Capacity to Measure - Subtotal of Possible Points					50	

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

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Preferred Criteria	Program does not meet any of the preferred strategy components	Program meets few preferred strategy components and demonstrates quality based on internally collected evidence	Program meets some preferred strategy components and demonstrates quality based on internally collected evidence	Program demonstrates consistent implementation of all preferred strategy components and demonstrates evidence of quality according to external assessment or evaluation (licensing, accreditation, certification, etc.)	3	12
Research Based Model	New program with no track record	Program activities are based on limited past implementation; no documented research to support the overall approach	Program activities are guided primarily by successful past implementation; some research supports the overall approach but may not be specific to the program's design. program provides reasonable rationale for why they design the program the way they do	Program activities are tested and guided by best practices, theory, or research knowledge; program provides clear and logical path (logic model or theory of change) to achieving results that aligns with the target population and takes into consideration the community context	2	8
Partnerships & Alliances	No partnerships or alliances with other for-profit, nonprofit, or public sector entities	Early stages of building relationships and collaborating with other for-profit, nonprofit, or public sector entities; if relations do exist, some may be precarious or not fully "win-win"	Some key relationships with a few types of relevant entities (e.g., for-profit, nonprofit, public sector) have been built and leveraged; action around common goals is generally short term	Strong, results focused, relationships with variety of relevant entities (local, state, and federal government as well as for-profit, other nonprofit, and community agencies) that are maintained and leveraged often to ensure greater results for program participants	0.5	2
Volunteer Management	No active recruitment of volunteers (only passive recruitment such as people who walk in the door); no defined roles for volunteers to fill; few systems in place to train and support volunteers	Some active recruitment of volunteers; volunteer roles involve a range of time commitments and skill levels; volunteer work is mostly task-oriented; basic training to volunteers provided, generally on an ad hoc basis	Active recruitment of volunteers on a regular basis; wide range of volunteer roles available; written job descriptions for most common volunteer positions; some systems exist to track and manage volunteers; volunteer orientations and trainings take place periodically, with attention paid to both skills and cultural competency; staff trained on how to manage volunteers	Volunteer recruitment systems successfully fill key roles in program, including positions of leadership direct service, participant follow up; written job descriptions for all volunteer positions; robust volunteer management systems in place; volunteer orientations and trainings take place on a regular basis, with attention paid to both skills and cultural competency; staff experienced and/or extensively trained in volunteer management	0.5	2
Program Design & Quality - Subtotal of Possible Points					24	

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

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Budget Alignment to Priorities	Lack of rationale to support program budget and dollar amounts requested from United Way	There is a need, but the rationale is unclear as to how program budget supports goals and outcomes	The portion of the program budget requested from United Way is reasonable and it's clear why United Way funds are needed and how they will be used.	Clearly demonstrates that the overall budget and the United Way portion addresses the barriers to achieving results identified within the program and for program participants (i.e. transportation needs, language barriers)	1	4
Ability to Leverage UW Funds				UW Impact Fund grant is specifically used to secure matching dollars	0.5	2
Program Operations & Budget - Subtotal of Possible Points					6	
LOCAL AND REGIONAL IMPACT						
Meaningful Progress	Program is unable to provide outcomes data by county.	Program is provides limited outcomes data by county. More information is needed to determine if results are consistent across different counties.	Data is provided on outcomes achieved by county. Data demonstrates that in each county served participants achieve long term outcomes. Anticipated results will demonstrate progress towards achieving regional and local goals.	Data is provided on outcomes achieved by county. Data demonstrates that in each county served participants achieve long term outcomes. Program results are consistent across different counties and are in alignment with the demographic distributions (i.e. if 20% of participants served are from X county, 20% of participants achieving long term outcome are	1	4
TOTAL POINTS for SCORED CRITERIA					100	

UWMA Impact Fund Assessment Tool

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LOCAL AND REGIONAL IMPACT						
Highly Competitive Portfolio	Looking at all of the potential investments, only one or two of the programs received scores in the top tier. Little confidence that the programs that have applied for funding can successfully produce results.	Looking at all of the potential investments, less than half of the programs received scores in the top tier. In addition to investing in capacity building, UWMA will need to begin process of identifying new/additional partners in order to see results.	Looking at all of the potential investments, more than half of the programs received scores in the top tier. With some capacity building level 2 and level 3 programs will be better able to implement high quality programs and produce meaningful results.	Looking at all of the potential investments, three fourths of the programs received scores in the top tier; Confident that all investments will produce meaningful results.		
Results over Touches	Looking at all of the potential investments, there are only a few high quality-high performing (level three or four) programs distributed across the region. Most investments will serve participants, but there is little confidence that programs will help participants reach long term outcomes.	Looking at all of the potential investments, there are high quality-high performing (level three or four) programs distributed across the region. Confident that all the results will be meaningful to achieving both local and regional goals.	Looking at all of the potential investments, there are high quality-high performing (level three or four) programs distributed across the region. Confident that all the results will be meaningful to achieving both local and regional goals.	Looking at all of the potential investments, there are high quality-high performing (level three or four) programs distributed across the region. Confident that all the results will be meaningful to achieving both local and regional goals.		