

Frequently Asked Questions

The following are common questions associated with the Capacity Building funding opportunity. Additional questions will be added throughout the application period. As a reminder, all application materials are available at www.homeforgoodla.org/grantseekers.

General Questions

1. Who is eligible to apply?

All homeless service agencies and nonprofit housing developers in Los Angeles County are eligible to apply for this RFP.

2. How do I apply?

All applications materials are available online at www.homeforgoodla.org/grantseekers. All of the Home for Good RFPs are posted at this website, so keep in mind that you may need to scroll down to view the Capacity Building RFP materials.

3. I previously received funding through this RFP. Can I re-apply?

This RFP is only open to homeless service agencies and nonprofit housing developers that have not previously received funding through this United Way-LAHSAs Capacity Building RFP.

4. I am a current grantee through this joint UWGLA-LAHSAs Capacity Building grant. Will this new RFP impact me?

No, if your organization has already received funding through this RFP, this new application does not impact you. Grantees can refer to their contracts for any details about their agreements, budgets, and requirements.

5. Why was the RFP updated?

In recent years, with the passing of local ballot measures bringing unprecedented investment to expand housing and services, the homelessness system has dramatically increased. This expansion placed a greater burden on already stretched non-profit organizations working with the community's most vulnerable neighbors. Seeing the challenge experienced by providers, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and Home For Good Funders Collaborative (Funders Collaborative) partnered in 2018 to

launch the Capacity Building Request for Proposals (RFP). The result of this public-private partnership has been long-term investments in the staff, systems, and infrastructure of homeless service providers across Los Angeles County so they can better assist people transitioning out of homelessness.

Since its launch, the RFP has gone through revisions and updates to remain current and meaningful for potential grantees. This latest version takes into account feedback from past applicants, grantees, and systems partners based on how the RFP can be strengthened to meet the capacity building needs of homeless service agencies.

6. When is the deadline?

All applications are due by 8 a.m. PDT on Monday, February 17, 2020 via email to rfp@unitedwayla.org. We no longer accept applications on a rolling basis. Materials will only be accepted electronically, so there is no need to mail any application materials. Incomplete application will not be considered.

7. What format should I use when submitting my application?

Applications can be submitted as PDF or Microsoft Word documents. Please submit the Budget Template as an Excel document. Please do not change or alter the wording or order of any of the questions.

8. Who will review submitted applications?

All qualifying and complete applications will be shared with the Home for Good Funders Collaborative and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. From there, a selection panel composed of private and public partners will review applications and make recommendations on next steps.

9. When will I be notified about my application?

Funding decisions are anticipated to be announced April. The contract process will follow with funding allocations to awardees by June 30, 2020. All grantees will contract directly with United Way of Greater Los Angeles.

10. How long will I have to complete my capacity building projects?

This RFP is meant to support one-time costs associated with capacity building projects. All awardees will be granted 18-month contracts to complete their capacity building projects. As part of the application, applicants are required to provide a budget and timeline of when projects are anticipated to begin and end. This includes work with consultants, vendors, and staff/board involvement.

11. Will there be an information session for this RFP?

An optional, informational webinar is scheduled from 2:30-3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 8, 2020. Those interested in attending the webinar can email rfp@unitedwayla.org with their contact information and organization name.

12. I've read through the application and supporting documents and still have questions. Who can I contact?

You are welcome to direct additional questions about the Capacity Building RFP to rfp@unitedwayla.org. All relevant and applicable questions will be added to this Frequently Asked Questions document for all applicants to access at www.homeforgoodla.org/grantseekers.

Funding Questions

13. What is capacity building? What types of projects are eligible for funding?

Capacity building is the process which non-profit organizations strengthen the internal tools, systems, and equipment so that they can scale and increase service delivery to the community's most vulnerable.

For this RFP, the chart below outlines examples of eligible and ineligible funding requests:

Examples of Eligible Funding Requests <i>(additional justified expenses may be considered):</i>
IT system upgrades (computers, laptops, software, databases, and licenses)
Fundraising and resource development
Design of contracts and grants management systems
Development of policies and procedures related to human resources and finance
Leadership development and specialized training for board and organization staff
Implementation of program reporting and data management systems

Funds for partial staff time essential to completion of the capacity building project may be considered. No more than 10% of the total requested budget may be allocated to staff time.

Examples of Ineligible Funding Requests

Hiring of recruiters, grant writers or consultants as temporary staff

Purchase of land or office space

General operating and administration costs

Reserve funds

14. What should I include on the Budget Template?

The Budget Template, which is required for all applicants, is meant to provide a breakdown of the line-item costs associated with the capacity building project described in the application narrative. The first section, Consulting/Vendor, is for applicants to list all the consultants they anticipate using for the capacity building project. For the Operational/Organizational Enhancements, applicants can include the equipment, tools, trainings, software/hardware, and systems upgrades needed for the capacity building project. Applicants should secure invoices, quotes, and scopes of work to include in the application.

15. What is the difference between an assessment and implementation?

A critical first step is hiring an outside expert who can go through an assessment process to make recommendations on an organization's capacity building needs. If your organization has not completed a formal needs assessment in the last three years, you can use part of your award to hire a consultant to work with your organization to complete one. Keep in mind that you can also request funding for anticipated capacity building projects. We understand that your capacity building project may shift based on what is identified in your formal capacity needs assessment.

Organizations that have completed a formal capacity needs assessment in the last three years can apply for implementation projects, which are one-time projects that address needs identified in your formal assessment. Examples of projects can include implementing a grants management system; engaging the board and executive staff in leadership training; developing a formal HR policies and procedures manual. Organizations will be required to submit their formal capacity needs assessment with their applications.

16. How much funding is available through this grant?

Awarded agencies qualify for up to \$100,000 in Measure H public funding and private funding to invest in capacity building projects. Through the Project Narrative section, applicants are encouraged to provide a complete snapshot of their capacity building efforts and how their requests factor into the overall goals and the implementation timeline. Reviewers will take into account the size and age of the organization, however, requests that are more than \$100,000 may not be fully funded.

All applications may be shared and reviewed by select partners through the Home for Good Funders Collaborative. Awarded agencies may receive additional private funding through the Home for Good Funders Collaborative to offset the cost of their capacity building projects.

17. What are the sources of funding for this award?

Awardees will receive funding through Measure H public funding (County of Los Angeles Homeless Initiative Strategy E7) and private funding from the Home for Good Funders Collaborative. United Way of Greater Los Angeles also coordinates with aligned funders through the Funders Collaborative to potentially provide additional capacity building funding to applicants on a case-by-case basis.

18. Can I use my grant to cover salaries and staffing costs?

Funding cannot be used to pay for operating costs, general staff salaries or temporary recruiters/staff. However, applicants can request funds to cover a portion of staff time that is essential to the completion of the capacity building project. If you request funding for partial staff time, you must include it in on the Budget Template and explain the role of the staff member, as well as the number of hours they will dedicate to project. Please keep in mind that no more than 10% of the total requested budget may be allocated to staff time.

19. I've already completed a capacity building project. Can this grant cover the costs of a finished project?

Funding through this RFP cannot be used to reimburse organizations for money already spent on capacity building.

Consultants and Vendors Questions

20. What is the purpose of LAHSA's Pre-Approved Vendor List?

As part of this RFP, LAHSA has put together a list of pre-approved consultants that can be hired for capacity building projects. All six consultants are well-versed with this RFP process and have worked with many of our past grantees to guide their capacity building projects to completion.

Applicants are encouraged to contact consultants to discuss their capacity building goals prior to submitting an application. This will help inform the scope of work and the costs associated with their services.

21. What if I want to hire a vendor or consultant who is not on the pre-approved list?

If your organization prefers to contract with a consulting firm or vendor not on the pre-approved list, you will be required to complete the Vendor Request Form and describe how you selected the consultant/vendor through a competitive procurement or other justified selection process. You will also be required to submit a W-9 for any consultants/vendors not on the pre-approved list.

Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT) Questions

22. What is the CCAT?

All awarded agencies will be required to complete the CCAT (Core Capacity Assessment Tool), an online, comprehensive assessment tool for evaluating a nonprofit's strengths and opportunities for growth. All grantees will take the survey before starting their project and after completion of the project. The survey will be used to set a baseline and measure progress for the capacity building project and serve as a valuable planning tool. If your organization has taken the CCAT within the past 6 months, you will be able to submit a copy of your results to satisfy your baseline requirement. To become familiar with the CCAT, grantees will participate in an orientation session. The orientation session will be an opportunity to ask questions about the CCAT and obtain a link to complete the survey.

23. Is the CCAT required for the application?

Applicants are not required to complete a CCAT before submitting an application.

24. What if my organization has already completed a CCAT?

If you have completed a CCAT in the last 6 months, please email a copy of the report with your application. This may satisfy the initial baseline requirement. However, your organization will still need to complete the second CCAT at the conclusion of the grant.

25. When do I take the CCAT?

If awarded, grantees will take the CCAT twice over the 18-month contract. The baseline CCAT will be taken at the beginning of the grant before any capacity building projects have taken place. The second comparison CCAT will be taken at the conclusion of the grant. Additional instructions will be provided to awarded agencies.

26. What do I do with the results of my CCAT?

After completion of the CCAT, the system will produce a report outlining areas to be strengthened with recommendations specific to your organization. Review the results with your organization's leadership, board and capacity building project team in addition to your project consultant/contractor/vendor. You will be required to provide a copy of your CCAT results to United Way. High-level results from the CCAT will be shared with the LA Homeless Services Authority using a unique identifier that provides anonymous information for tracking/progress purposes only. Results will be utilized to show individual and aggregate progress across the capacity building project. Unless authorized by the Grantee, detailed and identifiable CCAT results will not be shared with public funding partners.

New questions added as of 1-16-20:

27. Where can I access the webinar about the Capacity Building RFP?

The webinar is available at <http://homeforgoodla.org/grantseekers>. The hour-long webinar discussed the Capacity Building funding opportunity, the application process, and selection process.

28. If we have not completed a recent capacity building assessment, should we propose what we wish to do and also add in the \$8,000 for a consultant? Or without a recent assessment are we required to ask for \$8,000 only?

If you have not completed a formal capacity needs assessment in the last 3 years, you can request up to \$8,000 to work with a consultant to develop one. You will still be able to request additional funding for implementation projects in your application. We recommend organizations contact consultants ahead of time to develop a scope of their projects to make the budget proposal as accurate as possible.

29. What if we took the CCAT last year when this came out before? Do we need to take it again or just at the end?

If you have taken the CCAT within the last 6 months, please include a copy of your results with your application. You will only need to take the comparison CCAT at the conclusion of your grant.

30. For application word limit, it states that the section should be limited to 1,500 words, but is that for the entire narrative or for each section of the proposal?

The 1,500 word limit is for the entire narrative section. Each question does not have an individual word limit.

31. I notice that none of the pre-approved vendors specialize in IT. If an organization wanted to pursue IT capacity building, do they have to partner with a vendor? And how much of the grant is expected to be allocated to paying the vendor/consultant?

The pre-approved vendor list from LAHSA represents a group of consultants who are familiar with this RFP and funding opportunity. For agencies requesting \$8,000 for a formal capacity needs assessment, we recommend you select a consultant from the pre-approved list. If you are seeking funding to implement Capacity Building projects, you are welcome to select other consultants and vendors that may be a better fit for your capacity building needs and projects. You must complete the Vendor Request Form for each vendor and consultant not on the pre-approved list. There is no maximum amount allowed for how much you can ask for vendors and consultants in your budget.

32. We are a community health clinic. We provide care to people experiencing homelessness. Do we qualify to apply?

Yes, if your agency serves people experiencing homelessness and you are looking to increase capacity to better serve this population, you qualify to apply for this funding opportunity.

33. Are there any examples of successful capacity building projects from previous rounds that we can review in order to get a sense of how we should identify what area to focus on?

Yes, we currently have a range of partners representing organizations from all over LA County that have received funding for their capacity building assessments and implementation projects. Among the most common requests are: IT improvements (software, hardware, and other IT support), leadership development, HR and Finance policies and procedures, grants and program management and development. For more detailed information or to talk out questions about what you are seeking funding for, please email rfp@unitedwayla.org.

34. What if my agency does not have audited financial statements?

We understand that preparing audited financial statements can be costly and challenging for organizations. Since we don't want this to deter agencies from applying, please email rfp@unitedwayla.org so we can discuss what other financial statements or financial information your agency can submit. All applicants must submit financial statements in order to for their applications to be reviewed.

New questions added as of 2-6-20:

35. Is the purchase of a vehicle for my organization an allowable expense under this grant?

The purchase of a vehicle for your organization is an **ineligible** expense under this grant. This grant is meant for a one-time, long-term investment in your organization's capacity building needs. While the purchase of a vehicle is one-time, there are ongoing costs of vehicle insurance, registration, mileage, and maintenance that must be factored into the cost of a vehicle.

36. If awarded this grant, will my organization be required to pay for the administration of the CCAT?

Awarded agencies **will not** have to pay for the administration of the CCAT. You do not need to factor the cost of the CCAT in your budget proposal. Agencies that are selected to receive this grant will receive instructions from LAHSA and TCC Group on the orientation and registration process upon execution of the contract.

37. What if my organization doesn't have any subcontractors? What do I write in Part I?

If you don't have any subcontractors through your organization, then write zero in the organizational overview section of Part I. We understand this question will not apply to all applicants.

38. My organization's staff includes unpaid MSW interns. In Part I, how should I categorize their employment?

Unpaid MSW interns can be included in the Volunteer category. The full-time and part-time staff members represent paid employees of your organization.

39. Can you please clarify on what we can submit if our organization does not have audited financial statements?

You can submit alternatives if your organization does not have audited financial statements. You can submit financial summaries and/or reports prepared by internal staff. You can also submit PDF versions of your QuickBooks or other accounting software. We encourage you to email rfp@unitedwayla.org for specific questions about your organization's financial statements for this application. All applicants are required to submit some type of financial reports or summaries, even if they do not have audited financial statements.