



United for the Valley COVID-19 Fund

The United for the Valley COVID-19 Fund (UVCF) was established to identify and support the emerging and fast-changing needs of health and human services organizations, schools, and the individuals and families they serve due to COVID-19. This fund is designed to identify the most pressing needs in the Valley due to COVID-19 as they evolve in real time.

Grant Guidelines

- Funding priority will be given to addressing the needs of individuals as they relate to addressing the Digital Divides throughout Maricopa County with special focus on the following areas:
 - Experiential Access/Technical Assistance (example: connectivity navigators, help desk to help parents and students get online)
 - Material Access/Equipment (example: laptops, hotspots, mobile Wi-Fi)
 - Skill Access/Usage (example: helping students and parents understand how to use equipment)
- Once grant is submitted, program staff at VSUW may respond with questions or clarifications prior to funding decisions
- The maximum request is \$25,000

Program Funding Priorities

The UVCF will prioritize funding for organizations providing immediate relief to families and communities in Maricopa County related to the Digital Divides.

The Digital Divides represents an urgent concern that continues to grow in light of the current pandemic, as it reinforces existing social inequities between various socioeconomic groups. The digital divides restrict access and use of information and communications technologies necessary to successfully participate in a more remote learning and work environment.

The following key areas are funding priorities* related to the digital divides:

- Experiential Access/Technical Assistance
 - Offering individuals initial exposure to information and communications technology to help build interest, basic understanding and overcome technology related anxiety. *This area is focused on getting individuals comfortable in starting to use the technology.*
- Material Access/Equipment
 - Provide individuals with needed information and communications technology hardware such as computers, tablets and network connections
- Skill Access
 - Develop individuals' digital knowledge and skills to understand basic use of available information and communications hardware and software. *Once an individual feels comfortable with the technology, this area is focused on expanding their use of the technology.*
- Usage
 - Develop individuals' digital knowledge and skills to use available information and communications to successfully accomplish certain tasks/demands. *Assist individuals in utilizing technology for multiple ends, including but not limited to telehealth, online completion of applications, etc.*

*Please note that these funding priorities are subject to change due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Timeline

- The application will be open during a two-week period starting on January 7, 2021 and closing on January 21, 2021. This will allow us to respond quickly and review all agencies at the same time with an equitable lens.

Application Process

Due to the emergency nature of this grant, a streamlined application, review, and reporting process has been implemented to allow for rapid review and awarding of grant funds and to minimize the administrative burden placed on grant applicants. A simplified application comprised of the following questions has been established:

- Request amount.

- What urgent community and/or organizational need will you address with these funds as they relate to the Digital Divides? Please share specifics.
- Describe the activities you will implement or are currently implementing to address the urgent need. Please provide specific examples.
- What specific expenses will these funds be used for?
- Have you requested funding from other sources? If so, please list the sources and request amounts. Please note if funding is pending or secured.
- What additional support may we provide to you and your organization through this time/or to meet emerging needs?
- Number of individuals to be served with these funds.

Review Process

- Grant requests to support immediate and long-term relief efforts will be reviewed and notified of an award by February 9, 2021.

Reporting

- The Grantee shall submit a written report on the use of grant funds by June 15, 2021. Due to funding requirements, some Grantees may be asked to submit a brief bi-weekly report until all funds are exhausted. All funds should be exhausted by May 31, 2021. The Grantee shall provide VSUW with copies (if available) of any press releases, photographs and published material about the grant money and the work it made possible.