

What are Community Impact grants?

The UWCNM Community Impact grants combine the gifts of more than 17,000 individuals. These funds are used to provide program grants to health and human services nonprofits in central New Mexico that support services aligned with the priorities of Mission: Graduate, Mission: Families, and Basic Needs for thousands of individuals, children, seniors, and families. Approximately 100-150 central New Mexican health and human service nonprofit agencies apply for Community Impact grants every year.

Who makes grant determinations?

UWCNM Community Impact grantmaking is community-driven. Every year more than 150 donors, volunteers, and community members spend hundreds of hours to help determine where Community Impact dollars are invested. This process starts with a Financial Standards Review done by a group of volunteer financial professionals that assess the financial health of the applicant agencies. If an agency meets those standards, they are invited to submit an application for funding. Once applications are in, volunteers are assigned to Grant Review Panels that evaluate agency proposals for funding.

How are grant determinations made?

Grant Review Panels of volunteers review all proposals related to an assigned Result which aligns with the work of Mission: Families and Mission: Graduate. Every effort is made to staff panels with at least one volunteer with significant subject matter knowledge. Panel members then score each proposal individually after having read it and attended the related presentation.

Using panel members' scores and comments for discussion, panel members agree on one **panel score** per agency. Although individual panel members do score proposals, **only the Allocation Panel combined score is used for funding consideration**. In addition to a score, Allocation Panels determine the following per agency:

- **Strengths:** Panelists are asked to report of the strengths found in the program application and presentation. This information is later used when staff share the results of allocation.
- **Weaknesses:** Panelists are also asked to provide their perceptions of weaknesses in the application and presentation so that staff may provide specific feedback to agencies following allocation.
- **Panel Statement:** A distillation of the panel's assessment of the program, meant to provide insight into their reasoning for the level of funding they recommend. The panel statement is meant to improve funding decisions, provide future panels with insight, and provide meaningful feedback to agencies.

Once panels have submitted their recommendations, the work of the Community Impact Council (CIC) begins. The CIC is a volunteer subcommittee of the UWCNM Board that is responsible for community planning and resource distribution. Based on total dollars available, the CIC determines funding award recommendations that will be brought to the Board of Directors for final approval.

Each year, the CIC determines the total amount to be allocated *per result area* within Mission: Graduate and Mission: Families by first ensuring that dollars designated by donors and affinity groups to specific result areas are honored.

The CIC uses submitted panel scores to rank agencies per Issue Area (with the highest scoring agencies at the top of the list). The CIC then takes into consideration the scores and Panel Statement received by each Allocation Panel.

Funds are then allocated beginning with the highest scoring agencies. Special consideration is given to programs that primarily serve residents of rural areas, especially if the agency is the sole provider of services in underserved rural areas. This process is repeated until funds are depleted.