

### **Funding Philosophy & Guiding Principles FY26-28**

- HoMEUW is committed to honoring donor dollars in all aspects of our work, especially the Strategic Investment Grants Process.
- To encourage widespread participation and competitive access to HoMEUW Strategic Investment, applications will be accepted for 3 types of grant awards. This will consist of Impact Grants (\$10,001-\$50,000 per year), Fast Track Grants (\$2,500-\$10,000 per year), and a Transformative Impact Grant (\$85,000 per year). The Transformative Impact Grant is a new offering, and will fund one backbone organization leading a coalition towards long-term outcomes. Grant awards will be for 3-year period.
- Grant requests will not exceed 35% of a program's budget. There is a grant investment annual cap of \$80,000 per agency.
- Agencies may submit an application for 1-4 programs. Total requests shall not exceed the \$80,000 agency cap.
- Heart of Maine United Way Strategic Investment Grant decisions are made by a trained team of community volunteers. These funding decisions are based on:
  - Demonstrated community needs
  - Quality and strength of the application
  - Alignment with HoMEUW Opportunity 2028 Bold Goals
  - Geographic representation of clients served
  - Generating impact for marginalized populations, include ALICE, through a commitment to equity
  - Organizational capacity
  - Fiscal responsibility
  - Measurable program results
- In addition to the scope, strengths, and impact of each applicant as demonstrated in their application, volunteer reviewers will also consider the following when prioritizing applications:
  - Collaborative efforts working to meet and address community needs
  - Efforts to reduce duplication of existing programs
  - Highest potential for positive impact, including but not limited to: geographic scope; ability to strengthen relationships or build new partnerships; potential to increase donor engagement and/or giving
  - Existing community momentum around an issue or community need
  - Ability to positively affect the population indicator of the Bold Goal(s)
- This is a highly competitive process in which not all applicants will receive funding. When possible, it is the intent of HoMEUW to fully fund the requests of the highest scoring applicants with the greatest potential impact on Opportunity 2028 Bold Goals.
- Funding recommendations are based on the overall score of each application as determined by the team of volunteer reviewers. Allocation amounts are then determined by the Community Impact Committee based on individual scores, overall impact, and available dollars. Final allocation amounts will be submitted for final approval by the HoMEUW Board of Directors.
- Heart of Maine United Way believes diversity, equality and inclusion are vital to achieving our mission, living our values and advancing the common good. HoMEUW is committed to upholding these values in all of our work, including throughout our Strategic Investment Grants process.
- Programs with the greatest positive impact and strongest applications will be determined through the evaluation of our trained team of community volunteers. HoMEUW's Community Impact Committee will review the scoring and strategically recommend investment to HoMEUW's Board of Directors based on each program's impact towards each of the Opportunity 2028 Bold Goals, while also balancing geographic representation and promoting equity for marginalized populations.