

# Community Investment Process FAQs

(For FY24 Investments)

## What is different this year?

- Single process for both Cumberland and York counties.
- Capacity Building and Multi-year funding grants
- Priority Strategies
- Financial requirements
- Budget template

*Note – all applications have been updated to streamline questions, please visit the workbooks for each application.*

**When will the application open and close this year?** Application opened December 7, 2022 and closes February 1, 2023.

## What support has been offered to currently funded partners and new applicants?

- **Goal specific training:** (Late August/September)
- **Individual meetings for all York County partners:** (September/November)
- **Measurement & Evaluation Training:** (November/December 19)
- **Application information session:** (December)
- **Individual technical assistance sessions:** (as scheduled by applicants)
- **Open “Office Hours” for applicants:** (January 18)

## How do I access resources?

We have provided many resources on our investment page. <https://uwsme.org/investment-process/>

## For York County Partners

---

### As a York County partner, why do I need to apply under the Thrive2027 Goals Framework?

- After a volunteer driven effort to assess needs and opportunities in York County through community conversations and thorough data evaluation, we learned that the goals of Thrive2027 match those of York County as well as Cumberland County. We are moving towards a more unified investment process through the Thrive2027 framework for Southern Maine, shifting away from the parallel York County and Cumberland County process of last year.

### What are York County Partner Funding Commitments

- York County funded partners will receive at least 70% of this year’s funding amount in year one (FY24 investments), and at least 50% of the FY24 funding amount in year two (FY25 investments). NOTE: All funding levels are contingent upon UWSM’s fundraising success from year to year.
- The 70% funding commitment will follow your organization, not individual programs, so you do have the opportunity to consolidate your application(s) if you so choose as you determine where your work most closely aligns with the Thrive2027 goals and strategies.

## For All Partners

---

### What Are Current & New Program Eligibility requirements?

- Currently funded York County partners will have the opportunity to apply for the same body of work that is currently funded, or to apply for a different program if they believe there is a better fit or greater need. These partners may apply under any Thrive2027 strategy (it does not have to be a priority strategy\*).
- New York County applicants may apply under any Thrive2027 strategy (we will work with you to align with a priority strategy if possible, but this is not required).
- Currently funded Cumberland County partners will be able to apply under the strategies in place with currently funded programming.
- New Cumberland County applicants must apply under a priority strategy\*.

\*See below for a description of priority strategies.

### What is the minimum amount for each application?

The minimum requested amount for the goal-specific, cross-goal, and multi-year funding applications is \$10,000. This does not guarantee a minimum award of \$10,000. (The maximum request for the capacity building grant application is \$10,000.)

## Choosing A Strategy for your Application

---

The questions below will help you understand the strategies and how they drive to a particular result area...It's all about the recipients of the service, not the mission of the organization.

**What if we can't measure any of the outcomes under the strategy we've selected?** You should choose a different strategy. Resource: Shared Outcomes Worksheet - [Shared Outcomes Worksheet.docx](#)

**If I choose two strategies, can I use the same shared outcome?** No, while some shared outcomes are listed under multiple strategies, if you choose more than one strategy, do not choose the same shared outcome for both strategies.

### What are Priority Strategies?

Each fall, our goal cabinets consider the strategies within their goal area and identify certain strategies as priority strategies for that year. These decisions are made in response to current community needs – either in response to emerging or persisting needs, or to elevate a strategy that is currently underrepresented in the community. Any new organizations applying will need to apply under a priority strategy. [Here is a link to our current priority strategy list.](#)

### Is there a benefit to choosing multiple strategies or outcomes?

A program must select a minimum of one strategy and a matching shared outcome listed in the [Shared Outcome Measures](#) document. A program can select up to two strategies and up to two outcomes under each strategy. However, choosing multiple strategies and outcomes does not equate to extra points in the review process. Emphasis is placed on your program's ability to create change through the strategy/ies and measure/s selected, not the volume of strategies and measures selected.

## Choosing an Application:

---

There are four types of applications available:

- 1) Thrive2027 Goal-Specific Application:** This is our traditional community investment process that has been in place since the launch of Thrive2027. Applicants demonstrate how they are working to advance at least one Thrive2027 strategy within the broader Thrive2027 Goals Framework. Applicants must also select at least one shared outcome measure to demonstrate their impact in the community. New applicants to this work must apply under an open strategy. Applications are evaluated based on their specific impact on Thrive2027 Goals, tracking and evaluation of program implementation, dedication to advancing racial equity, commitment to collaboration, and solid management and fiscal soundness.
- 2) Cross-Goal Application:** This investment opportunity is very similar to the goal-specific opportunity, however, applicants identify their work across two or more goal areas. Strategies and their corresponding shared outcome measures are selected from the Thrive2027 Goals Framework under each of the selected goals.
- 3) Multi-Year Funding Application (NEW):** This investment opportunity specifically invites community collaborations to apply for work that advances one identified Thrive2027 strategy within the Thrive2027 Goals Framework. [\[See yellow highlighted strategies in the Goals Framework document.\]](#) This investment opportunity is designed to catalyze collaboration in support of achieving Thrive2027 goals. Because we continue to see disparities both in outcomes and in those who are given the resources to bring solutions to their community; we prioritize racial equity in this work – both in how the group will bring action to a strategy in the Thrive2027 Goals Framework, and in bringing organizations and community leaders to the table who have historically been excluded.

The eligibility for multi-year funding applicants is open broadly for collaborations working to advance specific Thrive2027 strategies in Southern Maine. One strategy (per goal) is available for multi-year funding this year. There is scoring preference for collaborations reflecting one or more of the following attributes:

- The work of the collaboration is serving people of color.
- At least one collaborating partner is an organization led by and serving people of color.
- At least one collaborating partner has an annual budget under \$750,000.

If an application is not selected for multi-year funding, it will be considered for single-year funding. Multi-year funding will continue for a second year if *first year progress is demonstrated in an interim report/application*. *All UWSM community investments are dependent upon year-to-year fundraising levels.*

- 4) Capacity Building Investments (NEW):** This funding opportunity is designed to enable smaller organizations or coalitions to develop their internal capacity to advance Thrive2027 through two specific areas of work:
  - developing program measurement and evaluation tools and plans; and/or,
  - advancing racial equity initiatives

Applicants will demonstrate how their proposed work will support an identified Thrive2027 strategy. Organizations are not asked to achieve shared outcomes during this funding period. This funding is designed to support applicants in working towards demonstrating shared outcomes in future years. Similar to multi-year funding, applicants will receive scoring preference for organizations or coalitions led by and serving people of color, though not a requirement. Applicants must apply under a priority strategy and have an annual budget in the preceding year of under \$750,000.

**Why are there so many options to apply?** UWSM funding opportunities are each designed to achieve Thrive2027 Goals across our Southern Maine communities, with equitable outcomes for all populations. Each opportunity approaches this aim from a different perspective.

### **When should we explore submitting a cross-goal application?**

Cross-goal applications are relevant when one program specifically advances strategies in two different goals (i.e. a youth-development program that serves children 5-18 years of age, and collectively advances strategies across both goal 1 and goal 2). NOTE: We highly encourage partners to meet one-on-one with us to discuss the details of a possible cross-goal application. There is no advantage given to cross-goal applications (more goals, strategies, and outcome measures do not equate to elevated consideration).

### **I would like to apply for more than one program. Is this ok?**

Yes, this is possible. However, we will want to talk through your individual programs' alignment with Thrive2027 strategies and your organizational priorities (applications within one goal area will compete against one another... e.g. two applications that are submitted for Goal 2 consideration will both be considered by G2 investment review volunteers and with the same pool of available funds).

### **I have a program that crosses both counties. Do I need to submit one combined application, or two separate applications (one for each county)?**

If your programs are the same in each county, then you can combine them into one application. If your programs are similar but different, then you would complete two applications. One way of thinking about this is if you are choosing one strategy for both areas of work, or different strategies for each.

For example, you are an organization with two childcare programs – one in each county:

- If the focus of your funding application for each program is centered on helping children reach their developmental milestones, you would complete one combined application.
- If your funding application for Cumberland County focuses on helping children to achieve their developmental milestones, but your York County application focuses on providing access to nutritious foods; then you would complete two applications.

### **If I complete one application for programming in both counties (as explained above), how will this impact my York County funding commitment.**

During this transition year, York County partners will receive at least 70% of their FY23 award (July 2022-June 2023) in FY24. When combining programs in a cross-county application, the 70% commitment to the York County portion of the application will be maintained. The remainder of the funding request is at the full discretion of the volunteer investment reviewers. NOTE: For York County partners, the 70% funding commitment will follow your organization, not individual programs, so you do have the opportunity to consolidate your application(s) if you so choose as you determine where your work most closely aligns with the Thrive2027 goals and strategies.