

## Human Services Innovation Grants Program

The 2016 Fairfax County human services needs assessment, *The Path Toward Tomorrow*, documents the growing human services needs in the county.

- Key areas of need include:
  - Affordable and accessible housing for families, older adults, people with disabilities, and resources for independent living
  - Financial stability, affordable child care, and early education opportunities
  - Health insurance, mental health services and domestic violence services
  - Affordable and accessible transportation, and internet access

Left unaddressed, the needs identified by the community and outlined in the report will continue to multiply and will undermine the well-being of our entire county.

The Human Services Council will continue to support efforts to increase county resources available to serve the needs of county citizens. The Human Services Council also recognizes that there are multiple, competing needs in the county.

At a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia, held on Tuesday, April 19, 2016, the Board approved the budget guidance for 2017 and 2018. The guidance anticipates a \$75 million budget shortfall for FY 2018.

Against this backdrop of growing needs and revenue shortfalls, the Human Services Council believes that innovative approaches are needed to develop, deliver and measure the effectiveness of human services programs in Fairfax County.

To this end, the Human Services Council requests that the Board of Supervisors establish the Human Services Innovation Grants Program with funds available during quarterly budget review process, and direct staff, with input from the Human Services Council, other advisory groups, and the community, to establish goals and selection criteria for the grants program.

The Human Services Council further recommends that:

- Individual grants should be limited to no more than \$50,000;
- one grant be awarded to an organization that has the stature and the resources to organize and host a day-long conference on innovation in human services;
- priority be given to grant applications that include well defined goals, strategies, tactics and success metrics;
- priority be given to grant applications that will be completed in one year or less;
- priority be given to grant applications that test new initiatives that may result in better outcomes and greater efficiency in the provision of human services in Fairfax County; and
- priority be given to grant applications that propose and demonstrate innovative ways to measure the effectiveness of human services programs currently supported by the county.

Grant applicants may include county offices, non-profit and community organizations that provide human services in Fairfax County, university-based researchers, think tanks, and for-profit business. However, no funds from the grant program may be used to support the applicants general operations or profits. All funds must be identified and used to support the proposed project.

Priority should be given to grant applicants who provide matching funds or other in-kind resources.

Finally, no grants should be awarded to support ongoing operations of Fairfax County human services programs.

For Fiscal Year 2017, the Human Services Council requests up to \$1 million dollars for the Human Services Innovation Grant Program. All program funds will be used to support grants. County staff support for the program will be provided through the current operations budget.