



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

2023 INNOVATION FUND PILOT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Will this presentation or recording be available after this meeting?

Yes. Both the presentation slides and recording can be found at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/innovationfund>.

2. What is the phone number and email address for us to use, after this meeting, to follow up with you?

Questions can be directed to NCSResourceDevelopment@FairfaxCounty.gov or Patricia E. Arriaza at Patricia.Arriaza@FairfaxCounty.gov or 703.324.8241.

3. What is the period of time to use the funds?

Funds will need to be used in FY2024 by June 30, 2024.

4. How many awards will be offered and for how much?

Six (6) awards will be offered: Two (2) \$50,000 awards and four (4) \$25,000 awards.

5. You stated cross sector partnerships between nonprofits and small businesses are prioritized. What about between two nonprofits?

Two non-profits can submit a joint application.

6. Can this be for a one-year project only or do you prefer projects that will continue after the grant period?

We want to see projects continue beyond the funding period. The application asks that a sustainability plan be included in the funding request.

7. To clarify, we do not need a financial audit in order to be eligible, correct?

A financial audit is not required.

8. What qualifies as a financial statement?

For the financial statements, please submit an Income Statement (also known as a Statement of Activities or Profit & Loss Statement) and a Balance Sheet (also known as a Statement of Financial Position) for fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022) and for fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023).

9. Just to be clear, you stated that expansions to programs currently funded by Fairfax County would be permissible, correct?

Yes, expansions to programs/projects currently funded by Fairfax County are allowed; however, the proposal would have to clearly describe how the expansion adds to the program and its impact on the economic mobility of community residents.

10. Would acceptable expansion include equipment for a new and innovative activity at an existing program?

Yes, equipment can be included in the proposal.

11. Would working with places of worship count as a cross-sector partnership?

Places of worship are typically non-profits; a business partnering with a place of worship would be a cross-sector partnership.

12. Is this fund open to religious organizations?

The fund is open to organizations that meet the requirements for a 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service.

13. We are a non-profit Community Arts Center, can we apply?

The fund is open to organizations that meet the requirements for a 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service.

14. Can the non-profit partner be a PTA?

If the PTA meets the requirements for a 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service, then yes, they could be a non-profit partner.

15. On the application, there is a possibility to include more data than the physical space allows; a scrollbar appears on the pdf to scroll further down. Will applications require that the text content fit exactly into the box provided? Or, is it possible to fill the entire space that is provided, including the scrollbar space?

No, you are not limited to the size of the content boxes. Applications can include as much information as you deem necessary to adequately describe the scope of the project/program.

16. Is there a word limit to the narratives?

There is no word limit to the narratives.

17. Can we have attachments in the application?

Yes, attachments are acceptable. Please make sure to reference them in the application so that it is clear what constitutes a complete application.

18. Is it possible to submit more than one proposal if the programs are not related in any way?

Yes.

19. If a proposal believes that it can provide services to the entire county, is that type of platform preferred or is it more desired to have a program address the highest risk communities specifically?

Applications that address the highest risk communities may be scored higher; however, perhaps due to economies of scale or the organization's structure, a countywide project may be more feasible to implement. Programs/projects could do focused outreach to vulnerable communities. Each proposal will be reviewed on the strengths of the proposed project and impact to the economic mobility of the county's most vulnerable residents.

20. Are proposals that serve only Fairfax County preferred or are possible national initiatives given higher priority?

National initiatives will not be given a higher priority. We want to see how a business or non-profit is connected to their community. If there is a national initiative that can drill down to the local level and the proposal can clearly describe how local information was used to identify a challenge and develop a solution, then use of a national initiative is acceptable.

21. We have a company that is Fairfax County based but the facility where we do trainings is in Arlington. Is that permissible?

The Innovation Fund Pilot requires that clients served reside in Fairfax County. Services can be provided in a non-Fairfax County location; however, the proposal should clearly explain how the program will ensure that the clients served reside in Fairfax County.

22. What if the program award is not completely spent during the award year? Is there any punitive action that happens to the awardee?

Any unspent funds at the end of the funding period would be returned to the County.

23. What are the program requirements for keeping funds and submitting accounting of the how the funds were applied during the course of the fiscal year?

Programs selected to receive an Innovation Fund award will have an opportunity to participate in a training that will provide information on reporting requirements.

24. Do all ideas have to be new or can they be old ideas that are simply not being offered in an underserved area?

No, the ideas proposed don't have to be new.

- 25. There is a section in the application that refer to what data applicants used to justify their proposals, however, some of this data may come from widely public sources, such as Washington post articles or using public data on the Framework for Inclusive Community Engagement. Is higher preference given to original studies or is a holistic, public approach considered equally viable?**

No, a higher preference will not be given to original studies. The data (whether its quantitative or qualitative) used needs to provide a clear understanding of the problem to be solved by the proposed program/project.

- 26. Is the Vulnerability Index by block group important? Our venue is located in a low vulnerability area but is surrounded by high and very high areas.**

While you are asked to provide an address for your business or non-profit, the Vulnerability Index information is used to understand which ZIP codes the proposed program/project is looking to serve. Proposed programs/projects planning to serve high vulnerability areas may receive a higher score.

- 27. When we provide services to the community in Fairfax County, do the services have to be in-person or can they be virtual?**

Yes, services provided to Fairfax County residents can be virtual.

- 28. Do you all have any idea how many applications you will receive?**

As this is a pilot, we do not know how many applications we will receive.