



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) POWER PITCH 2026

AWARD OPPORTUNITY

United Way of the Greater Capital Region and Women United, an affinity group of United Way invite nonprofit organizations to apply for a competitive \$10,000 grant. This opportunity is open to organizations whose work or specific project/program centers on women—especially efforts that build power with, and for, women and promote women’s access to education, healthcare, financial opportunity, and overall well-being.

ABOUT UNITED WAY OF THE GREATER CAPITAL REGION

United Way harnesses the power of community to give, advocate, and serve so that every individual and family can thrive. As a leading nonprofit and social impact innovator, we address the region’s greatest challenges in health, youth opportunity, community resiliency, and financial security across nine counties in New York’s Capital Region.

ABOUT WOMEN UNITED

Women United is United Way’s largest special interest group—comprised of passionate, philanthropic women committed to volunteerism, advocacy, and financial support. Women United champions initiatives aligned with United Way’s mission that drive equity and excellence for women.

ABOUT POWER PITCH

Each year, Women United hosts a live event called Power Pitch, where three nonprofit finalists present their ideas in a friendly “pitch” competition. This annual celebration raises funds and awareness for organizations building power with and for women in education,

health, and financial security. One finalist is selected at the event to receive a \$10,000 unrestricted grant—meaning the funds can be used for programs, projects, staff, rent, communications, or whatever best supports your work.

KEY DATES

- Applications Open: August 31-Sept. 28, 2026
- Finalists Selected: By week of October 26, 2026
- Live Pitch Event: December 2, 2026

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

At United Way we recognize that the people who are most affected by systemic inequities are key agents in creating lasting solutions. United Way helps build and unlock power within the for-impact sector and among individuals driving social change. Power takes many forms, and building power starts with recognizing and addressing existing imbalances. By working in community with these change agents, we form coalitions, shift public discourse, influence decision-makers, and hold them accountable to change systems and advance equity.

For this application, we're asking: **How are you building and unlocking power with women, for women?** Because real change happens when women can use and grow their power to shape solutions.

Successful applicants will be those who demonstrably strengthen women's agency – whether at the individual, community, or system level. This work can happen at any point along the continuum: organizing, providing supportive services, shifting narratives, or changing systems.

Your work should be designed with and for women to advance any one or more of the following objectives:

- Help women lead, advocate, or organize
- Support women's voices in shaping solutions to the challenges they face
- Improve access to education, healthcare, or economic opportunity
- Meet women's basic needs in ways that promote dignity and choice
- Shift harmful narratives and build equity through data and storytelling

Your work may focus on individuals, communities, or systems – whether that's helping one woman access safe housing, organizing a group of women to push for change, or leading a campaign to influence public policy.

TIME COMMITMENT IF SELECTED AS A FINALIST

- 30-minute preparatory virtual meeting with United Way staff within one week of selection notification to review expectations and next steps
- One coaching session to refine your pitch, with expert guidance by members of Women United. Exact dates to be set in conjunction with the finalists
- One-hour pre-event briefing with United Way staff (November) to review the run of show
- Power Pitch event: 5–9 PM on December 2

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be 501(c)(3) nonprofits serving Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, or Schoharie counties. Once selected, organizations must be able to provide documentation of nonprofit or fiscal sponsor status, a copy of their most recent audited financials, and a list of their board of directors if requested.

AWARD INFORMATION

- \$10,000 grant awarded to the winning pitch
- \$2,500 Fan Favorite award (selected by event attendees)
- All three finalists have the option to receive ongoing support of Women United including volunteer and strategic assistance through November 2027.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted by **Monday, September 28, 2026 at 11:59 PM.**

EVALUATION PROCESS

1. Three finalists will be selected by a committee of Women United members and United Way staff **by October 26, 2026** and will be notified by October 30, 2026 by United Way Staff. Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification by November 6, 2026. We will not be able to select all worthwhile applications.
2. The written **application is worth up to 40 points; the presentation (live pitch) is worth up to 60 points, totaling 100.** Points scored on this application will be accounted for during the night of the pitch, and will be added to points awarded for the pitch. Correspondence and details on the evaluation for the day-of-event will follow. All finalists will receive customized pitch preparation and story-telling support in advance of the event.
3. Finalists will present at the December 2, 2026, Power Pitch as the final stage of this application. Finalists are expected to attend the Power Pitch event, which will take place in the evening.
4. A “Power Panel” of judges - selected for their demonstrated impact, respective roles across sectors, and leadership – will score and select the winner.
5. One awardee will receive \$10,000. One awardee will receive \$2,500. Decisions will be announced live at the event on the night of December 2, 2026.

APPLICATION

AGENCY INFORMATION

1. Agency Name
2. Contact Name and Email (Please note that this information will remain confidential and will only be shared with those distributing the Award funding)
3. Agency Address
4. Geographic location(s) of programming (drop down menu)
5. Is your Organization incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization with tax exempt status?
Yes/ No. (skip 5)
6. EIN #
7. If your organization is not a 501(c)(3) do you have a fiscal sponsor? Yes/ no. (if no, organization is not eligible.)
8. Yes: Name of fiscal sponsor
9. How long has your organization been incorporated and in operation?

PROPOSAL: THE POWER PITCH

1. I am applying for (select one):
General support of the organization
An existing project/program
A new project/program
2. **Power is the ability to achieve a purpose¹. What is your project's or program's purpose and what are you working to change?** (*max 200 words, 10 points*)

¹ Martin Luther King, Jr.

3. **How are you building power with women for women?** Please describe how you are doing this work and how efforts to build power are demonstrated. Share an example. *(max 250 words, 10 points)*
4. How are a **diversity of women** informing and guiding your work? *max 200 words, 10 points)*
5. **Wielding Power.** Building power and using that power to make positive change is a long-term effort. How do you sustain this? What people, partners, allies, and/or institutions are critical? *(max: 250 words, 10 points)*
6. How will \$10,000 help you build power? Specifically describe how the funding will be used – if the answer is operating and/or staff support, that is fine! Please be specific.

IV. DOCUMENTS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FINALISTS

Should you be selected as a finalist, you will be required to submit the following information to the United Way Communications team to be used in official communications about the event **by November 6, 2026**:

1. Title of your Pitch
2. Describe your Power Pitch in 3 sentences. For example, share your project's purpose and what you are working to change. You don't need to provide details here, that is what your Pitch is for on December 6, 2026.
3. A brief description (2 sentences max) of your organization's work and mission.
4. Headshot, name and title of the person(s) who will be making the Pitch on December 2, 2026, at Power Pitch
5. Photos we can use to promote your work.
6. Your organization's hi-res logo in PDF, PNG or JPG format.
7. Links to your website and social channels (so we can tag you.)