

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 9.15.18

Contact Information

Organization Name: Volunteer English Program in Chester County
Address: 790 E. Market Street, Suite 215
West Chester, PA 19382
Phone: 610-918-8222 ext. 5
Website: www.volunteerenglish.org
Year Incorporated: 1986
Executive Director: Terri Potrako
E-mail: terri.potrako@volunteerenglish.org
Board of Directors Chair: Valerie Rozek
Primary Contact Name: Terri Potrako
Primary Contact E-mail: same as above
Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes No Not Sure
Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes No Not Sure
 Donor Advised Fund(s) Fund for Chester County Don't know/Not sure

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities Environment/Animal Welfare Education
 Health Human Services Religion

Organization Information:

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

Volunteer English Program (VEP) serves adults who live and /or work in every community of Chester County. The highest concentration of active students live in West Chester (24%), Coatesville (15%), and Phoenixville (16%). VEP provides outreach services to meet demand in the western and northern regions by mobilizing staff for core services.

Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served:

In 2017-18 VEP served 325 adult immigrants and refugees, ages 18 to 80+ years, representing 50 countries and speaking 37 different languages, all needing to learn English and U.S. cultural understanding essential for achieving goals that include sustainable employment, financial stability, navigating health and educational systems, affordable housing for themselves and their families. Some work towards resuming education and career paths they left behind in their native countries. Others are on the path to U.S. citizenship.

Mission: The Volunteer English Program connects volunteers with English language learners to provide one-to-one tutoring and cultural enrichment that empowers immigrants to be successful.

Proposal Summary: VEP respectfully requests a Capacity Building Grant of \$5,000 to implement the last phase of a 3-year comprehensive plan to improve our IT systems for collecting and utilizing data for program evaluation and future planning. Phase 3 will increase our capacity to evaluate and analyze data, prepare reports for constituents and funders, and inform decisions for allocating and expending resources efficiently to serve the growing immigrant community in Chester County. Specifically, funding will support a part-time CiviCRM administrator, who will strengthen the 3.4FTE staff's and volunteer tutors' ability to fully integrate the use of data into all areas of our work. This proposal is based on the recommendation of pro bono IT consultants working with us for the past 6 years to create the platform for these improvements.

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is: Other: Operations and Technology

Annual Budget \$ 300,000 3.4 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
71 % of budget for program expenses 14 # of Board Volunteers
5 % of budget for administrative expenses 304 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
24 % of budget for fundraising expenses 15,175 # of Volunteer Hours
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Phoenixville Community Health Foundation - \$40,000 Requested
United Way of Chester County - \$18,000 Committed
Springbank Foundation - \$10,000 Committed
Chester County Fund for Women and Girls - \$10,000 Committed

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 5,000

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness

History: VEP evolved from a small, grassroots effort by a church group in West Chester to administer a literacy program for the homeless, and recognizing the need for new immigrants to learn English. Their passion for helping others through education led to establishing VEP as an independent, secular 501.c.3 organization in 1986. Through the successive leadership of just four female directors over the course of three decades, VEP has become the only non-profit organization in Chester County exclusively dedicated to the mission of connecting community-invested volunteers with adult English Language Learners.

Goals:

- Enrich the experiences of English Language Learners by improving the cultural competence and responsiveness of all those involved with VEP to promote student confidence.
- Optimize tutor engagement and experiences by providing ongoing adult-centered English Language learning training for tutors to improve their retention rate and increase the number of tutors.
- Position VEP as a leading advocate for immigrant literacy and cultural engagement in the region.
- Increase VEP's visibility in the community by establishing effective and consistent public relations.
- Strengthen VEP's infrastructure and financial sustainability by increasing and diversifying funding sources.

Key Achievements for 2017-18:

- In FY2018 VEP provided free, one-to-one tutoring in English and U.S. culture for 325 adult immigrants/refugees (74% women) paired with 269 volunteer tutors for 12,093 hours of instruction.
- Through 817.5 hours of pro bono support provided by 2 independent IT consultants, VEP developed a series of data reports to coordinate with key performance indicators (KPIs), moving us closer to the target of achieving outcomes-based evaluation required of all non-profit organizations.
- In July 2017 VEP was honored to receive the first Meredith Loving Connection Award from Capacity for Change, in memory of Meredith Huffman, a champion of nonprofit organizations dedicated to creating sustainable changes that impacts those most vulnerable and helps them build a better future.
- VEP was recognized by the Chester County Board of Commissioners, receiving the first-ever appropriations award in April 2018 in recognition of our service in Chester County.
- The Philadelphia Inquirer (11/20/17) highlighted a VEP student while examining the plight of today's immigrants facing the language barrier. (<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/immigrants-english-spanish-language-american-tutor-volunteer-chop-chester-20171120.html?arc404=true>)

Distinctiveness: VEP's approach to adult English language instruction is unique in several ways:

1. The flexible, individualized approach eliminates barriers posed by cost, time, or location.
2. VEP's Outreach Program mobilizes staff to conduct core services, including new student intake interviews, assessments, tutor matches, tutor training, and ongoing support within the Phoenixville and Coatesville communities.
3. Weekly, 3 hour instruction is tailored to meet each student's current level of English proficiency and to help them identify and work toward personal goals such as personal safety and empowerment, education, healthcare access, employment, financial stability, and potentially citizenship.
4. Instruction takes place year-round, at safe, public locations, close to where learners live and/or work and at times that take into account commitments to home and work.
5. Instruction, workbooks, and online subscriptions are provided cost-free for students and their volunteer tutors.
6. VEP engages and prepares civic-minded volunteers, representing all walks of life, who learn evidence-based strategies for instructing adult, English language learners with an emphasis on understanding and respecting cultural differences.
7. The availability of a customized, web-based Tutor Portal reporting system expedites communication between volunteers in-the-field with VEP staff in real time, providing a platform for immediate feedback and evaluation, resulting in improved support to hundreds of working pairs in all areas of Chester County.

2. Funding request

Description of key initiatives

Three years ago, VEP embarked on a major overhaul of the IT infrastructure to improve processes and create efficiencies for the staff to collect data, generate reports, communicate with and manage the growing numbers of tutor-student pairs meeting autonomously throughout Chester County seven days a week, morning through evening, and all year long. Working with BackOffice Thinking and an IT consultant who provided pro bono support, VEP successfully launched the Tutor Portal system in 2017. This past year work continued on this project to define key data reports, standardize operating procedures, and continue training new and existing tutors in the effective use of the Tutor Portal app that is available on all electronic devices, including smart phones. Phase 3 involves sustaining these improvements by having a dedicated data administrator to prepare reports for evaluation and analysis, to work with existing staff to integrate the use of data in all aspects of the program, and to assist the executive director and Board in strategic planning to allocate and expend resources to meet the growing demand for services by the immigrant community.

Specific needs and issues to be addressed for capacity building grant

The specific need to be addressed is replacing pro bono IT support and increasing the organization's capacity for this vital team role through a dedicated data administrator. Presently, the Executive Director has taken on the tasks previously performed by a pro bono IT consultant, limiting valuable time needed for conducting essential leadership functions.

How will this capacity building initiative impact your organization?

A data administrator will impact the organization's capacity to:

a) create key performance indicator (KPI) reports for the executive director, Board of Directors, Advisory Council, funders, and the public; b) provide training for staff and volunteer tutors to utilize and act upon data findings; c) provide feedback to tutors; d) improve efficiencies with regard to expenditures related to instructional books and resources and the mobilization of program staff to serve areas with growing demand.

How will this impact be measured?

Impact will be measured through the KPI reports generated for use by the director and shared with constituents, including funders, thereby increasing time available for other essential functions of the organization, and allocation of funding and resources to anticipate and address emerging immigration and community trends.

Description of the expected activities: Attachment - CiviCRM Consultant Job Description

Timeline and costs to implement the initiative

Timeline	Activity	Total Costs	CCCF Grant
January 2019-2020	Hire Data Administrator 3 hrs./50 wks/yr, @ \$30/hr (median salary \$39.29 US Labor Statistics)	\$6000	\$5,000
In Progress 2018-2019	BackOffice Thinking Retainer as needed @\$105-\$110/hr @ 10hrs/12mos	\$13,200	Private and foundation support

If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs and expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.

Attachment - BackOffice Thinking Retainer

Why it is important to fund this now

VEP is a mature organization capable of longitudinal results-oriented measurement. To optimize program impact, VEP needs to maximize what we're learning from the data. In this phase of a multi-year IT overhaul process, VEP is poised to analyze data for the purposes of evaluating program effectiveness and facilitating improvements. This function requires a part-time staff person working as a liaison between VEP and BackOffice Thinking to prepare data reports that correspond to KPIs for all aspects of the organizational operations, relieving the E.D. who assumed the responsibility upon the departure of an IT consultant after providing 36 months of pro bono support. VEP is responding to the call for outcome-based evaluation to demonstrate results and impacts on the population and communities we serve by ensuring we are allocating the right resources within the areas of greatest need.

3. How impact and results will be demonstrated

1. Timely review of KPI reports to guide strategic and annual operations planning
Measurement tool: VEP KPI Report – Achieve 12 month reporting cycle
2. Increase time dedicated to oversight of public relations and outreach for program development
Measurement tool: Functional Expense Report – Move from 71% to 75% Program Expense target
3. Increase time dedicated to prospecting, cultivating, and meeting constituents by the E.D., Board of Directors, and Development Associate - Reach Development Plan Goals to meet annual budget and increase cash reserves to 9 months of expenses by 6.30.19
Measurement tool: Cultivation and Appreciation Report; Contributions Report
4. Identify opportunities to focus mobilization and support within key trending regions where student need is the greatest
Measurement tool: Constituent Trend Data Mapping Reports – Reach service targets (25%) in both Phoenixville and Coatesville areas.

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III. ATTACHMENTS

Please refer to the following documents in support of this proposal:

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report and financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year and current fiscal year to date
5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
6. Current strategic plan
7. Job Description: VEP CiviCRM Consultant
8. Back Office Thinking Retainer

E-mail completed proposals to grants@chescof.org

Please contact Kevin Baffa or Beth Harper Briglia at (610) 696-8211 or grants@chescof.org if you have any questions. Thank you.

Chester County
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
*Connecting people who care with causes that matter,
so their legacies make a difference.*