I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 9/13/19

Contact Information
Organization Name: ACT in Faith of Greater West Chester
Address: 212 S. High St. West Chester
Phone: 484-324-8492
Website: www.actinfaithgwc.org

Executive Director/CEO Name: Hallie Romanowski
Executive Director/email: hallieromanowski@me.com
Board of Directors Chair Name: Denise Antonelli
Primary Contact Name: Hallie Romanowski
Primary Contact E-mail: hallieromanowski@me.com

Year Incorporated: 2010
FEIN: 27-4033006

Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes X No__ Not Sure__
Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? YesX No__ Not Sure__
Donor Advised Fund(s) X 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):
West Chester zip code

Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served:
We serve the un- and under-employed residents of West Chester, including those who are homeless. In 2017
we served 419 different individuals/households.

Mission:
To build a community that empowers the un- and under-employed to stabilize their households and build
toward self-sustainability.

Proposal Summary:
We are asking for $4,000. Of that $2,700 for communication material. These funds will allow us to expand
our communication to donors, volunteers and service recipients and have direct impact on both fundraising
and programs. $500 will be used for our “Thanks To You” ACT in Faith community appreciation event and
$800 will be used to cover expenses related to the new Development Director positions which we are
currently interviewing to hire.

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:
Mission, Vision & Strategy X Governance & Leadership ___Strategic Relationships
Fundraising & Development ___ Technology Other: ______________________________

Annual Budget $169,000 ___2__ # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
72% of budget for program expenses 8 # of Board Volunteers
12% of budget for administrative expenses 37 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
16% of budget for fundraising expenses 3115 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:
Fundraisers
Individual Donations
Faith Communities

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: $4,000
1. **Nonprofit’s history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness**

ACT in Faith was created in 2010 by members of the Religious Council of Greater West Chester in response to the growing needs of the community. They found that many of those in need: 1) did not meet the criteria to qualify for support through other social services, 2) were facing a crisis that was not addressed by any other organization, or 3) had no idea what resources were available or where to go for support. As an interfaith collaborative organization, we believe that by working together we build a stronger community.

We provide support in 3 basic program areas: Basic Need, Employment Support, and Housing Stabilization. The services through which these programs provide support are: Client Emergency Fund - emergency financial assistance, Community Cupboard - grocery cupboard that focuses on personal care and household items (not covered by SNAP/FoodStamps) and supplemental dry food goods, & the ACT Now Network - an email network of those willing to be informed when there is an urgent need (e.g. clothing, home goods, ride to doctor) for the population described.

In 2018 we embarked on our newest initiative, in partnership with a new 501(c)(3) non-profit, Parish Hall Kitchen (PHK). Their Trinity Restaurant Training culinary training is a program with which we are uniquely integrated. We identify the training candidates from the population we serve, provide culinary tools and uniforms, pay food safety certification exam fees, and provide any other support needed to remove barriers to sustainability (cell phone minutes, eviction and utility shut-off prevention, transportation support and any other support that a trainee may need that falls within our scope of support.) We also assist with job placement and connect to trainee to any other life-skill resources that would be beneficial. PHK provides the actual 8 week, paid, culinary training and supplies the groceries needed for the program. To date, we have had 3 trainees graduate and trainee 4 starts in 2 weeks.

Year over year we cannot predict the types of requests we will receive but the number of people served has increased every year. In 2018 we provided assistance for 419 different individuals/households. Since our inception in 2010, we provided financial assistance to aid with almost 700 requests for housing stabilization support. Our housing support program includes eviction prevention, security deposits, utility shut-off prevention, fuel, emergency shelter, as well as other costs that impact household stability. Of these, the most prevalent request is that of rental assistance to prevent eviction. Over the last 9 years we have prevented close to 500 people from becoming or remaining homeless and close to half of those were children. In 2018, our Community Cupboard served as a much needed grocery resource for 326 individuals/households.

In 2018, 67% of the 178 financial requests we filled were to assist people with things that are necessary to obtaining/maintaining employment. i.e. cell phone minutes, photo IDs, car expenses, childcare, job search and resume assistance. Another 169 requests for bus tokens/passes were filled…the vast majority fo which were for transportation to work or a job interview. In 2018, 66 people received resume and/or job search assistance from our staff in conjunction with the financial support we provided. This said, Housing Stabilization may no longer be our most frequently requested type of support but it remains to represent the majority of our program dollars.

In 2017, the Board and Staff spent considerable time reflecting on the organization — our past, present, and future. As a result of our discussions and discernment we revised our Strategic Plan and implemented a few changes. These changes helped us improve our level of service and build stronger relationships across the entire community. We made a conscious commitment to “doing with,” not “doing for or to”. If we are to best serve the community, our operations need to include the voices of those who come to us for services. Therefore, from that point forward service recipients have be included in program enhancement & design,
and the Board. In addition to reworking our mission statement to better reflect the work we do, a new Strategic Plan was created and has been attached for your review.

Over our 9 years we have developed relationships and often formal referral processes with a wide variety of Chester County social services, such as but not limited to; Safe Harbor, Salvation Army, Friends Association, North Star, Gaudenzia, St. Agnes Outreach Services, Human Services, Open Hearth, Domestic Violence Center, CVIM, and Home of the Sparrow. Many people in their programs and some who merely reach out to them for support are in need of services that fall beyond the scope of these programs. We have become a significant resource for these organizations and as a result, we receive client referrals from these organizations on a daily basis. A recent review of our referral sources revealed that 65% of our client referral come to us from another social service organization.

2. Funding request
   * Description of key initiatives
   
   Our request encompasses growing capacity in the areas of communication, both programatic and developmental, as well as general development support. Most items included in this request are communication tools vital to the work we do and our potential programatic and organizational growth. We are currently interviewing for a PT Development Director. As a fairly young organization, development and programs have always been the responsibility of the Executive Director. We are blessed to be positioned for a growth and this new role will assume much of the development responsibilities thus allowing more Executive Director focus on programatic enhancements that will allow us to better serve the community. In addition, this request allows for funds for our “Thanks to You” event which is held every other year.

   * Specific needs and issues to be addressed

   **Communication Tools:**
   1) We are in dire need of a new organizational brochure. The combination of our mission statement revision and programatic changes over the last 2 years our current educational material, crucial to informing people of our mission and the work we do, has become inaccurate and outdated.
   2) The “rack card” is in short supply and needs to be reordered in both English and Spanish. We provide this card to our social service partners (for distribution to the clients they refer to us) and other potential service recipients. This card conveys our services and hours of operation and has become a valuable tool to get people connected to our services.
   3) The same applies to the appointment cards that we provide to clients and the staff business cards, used primarily for networking.
   4) In response to a client survey we created an interfaith prayer/quiet room and a computer station for use in job and housing searches and benefit enrollments. These new resources need proper signage.
   5) In 2019, we started a new newsletter specifically for service recipients. It provides them with news and resource information (from ACT in Faith and other service organizations) that may benefit them. e.g. When to sign up for local holiday or school supply programs and where to get free flu shots, recipes, and other tips. Because the vast majority of those we serve don’t have email or regular computer access, there are print and postage costs.
   6) Since a vast number of our supporters are faith communities and the people that attend these communities, we have designed “pew bookmarks”, “how you can help” wallet cards, and a small poster display that will be paced in each faith community to thank them for their support, inform them of ways their support has impacted the community, and how they can continue to do so.

   **Stewardship:** is a huge focus for all non-profits. Our “Thanks to You” event bring people from all walks of the organization together so the Board and Staff can appreciate them for the unique relationship they each bring to our mission. Volunteers, service recipients, donors and social service partners enjoy time getting to know each other.

   **Development Director:** This new position, as mentioned above, will require a laptop and business cards.
• Why it is important to fund this now
  Several of the items we hope to fund via this request are existing vital communication tools that require reorder in the near future. Others are new tools that, when implemented, have the potential to add a whole new dimension to our communication with donors and service recipients. We are on the cusp of growth and these tools will help us move our mission forward. Both the appreciation event and Development hire are core to stewardship. Stewardship and donor cultivation are imperative if we are to be sustainable for the long-term and have potential to grow our services as needed.

• How impact and results will be demonstrated
  Service recipients, volunteers, donors, and social service partners will be informed and we will continue to cultivate their’s and new relationships across our community. Our financial stability will be maintained and allow us to grow our programs and embark in new relationships like that of the integration we experience with Parish Hall Kitchen. We will always have the resources needed to assist clients that turn to us for support and the social service partners that rely on us to fill the gaps that lie beyond their scope. The overall well being of our organization will thrive because our relationships across all walks of the organization are healthy.

For capacity building grant proposals:
  o How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?
    Communication is one of the most important initiatives with which an organization is challenged. The items that this grant would fund will allow us to communicate across the entire community, in a variety of way, impacting programs, fundraising, and our overall mission. These initiatives will touch our service recipients, donors, community partners as well as the community at large allowing us to spread the word of our mission, increase fundraising, and keep our service recipients better informed.

Stewardship of donors, service recipient, volunteer, and social service partner relationships is the lifeline of this organization. Taking a moment to celebrate everyone in the ACT in Faith community via “Thanks to You” is becoming an event that exemplifies what we are as an organization. It levels the playing field by being an evening where no one is identified as a giver or receiver…we are all just members of one community. Donor and volunteers aren't asked for anything. Service recipients are not expected to thank donors or share their personal journeys. Everyone is gathered to celebrate our commonality as members of this community.

The addition of a Development Director will elevate the organization and set us up for a solidly sustainable future. By assuming the lead role for fundraising initiatives and grants this addition to staff will expand the Executive Director’s ability to focus on programmatic growth and relationship building. A dedicated laptop and business cards are key tools which will allow he/she to be more effective.

  o How will this impact be measured?
    By receiving these funds we will have the ability to make these purchases and investment in our future without compromising other integral parts of our budget. Being able to provide our donors, service partners, and service recipients with the most current information regarding our mission and programs in an effective, timely manner will be one measure.
    The impact of the Development Director will be clearly measurable by a growth in the financial stability of the organization as well as by programatic growth and enhancements for which the Executive Director’s time does not currently allow.

  o Include a description of the expected activities; timeline and costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs and expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.

The details and costs are outlined on the Fund Request Budget document attached in the submission email.
# 2019 CCCF Fund Request

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Projected Costs</th>
<th>Area of Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rack card for potential service recipients</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochure- overall mission, program service overview</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>Overall mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication- office signage for new services, new service recipient newsletter, “pew” bookmarks, and “how you can help” wallet cards for donors</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>Program/overall Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note and greeting cards- designed in house for personal, hand-written donor, volunteer, service recipient life event acknowledgments and thank you</td>
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<td>Donor/Volunteer Stewardship &amp; Program</td>
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<td>Client Appointment cards</td>
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<td>Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Business Cards</td>
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<td>Overall mission</td>
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<td>Thanks To You Appreciation event</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Donor Stewardship</td>
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<td>Development Director-laptop, business cards</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
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