CCCF COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grants
Per IRS Regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c) (3) certification & cannot be individuals.

Background/Eligibility
The Community Foundation’s COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund provides flexible resources to Chester County nonprofits that are disproportionately impacted by coronavirus and the economic consequences of this outbreak. This is designed as a flexible short-term response fund to provide relief for a variety of unexpected costs. We envision three funding priority levels:

- **Front Line Grants** fund community-based nonprofits that have increased demand for services due to COVID-19. These nonprofits have deep roots in community and a strong track-record serving people who are immediately and disproportionately suffering from this crisis. This includes services to financially vulnerable people who work in industries without sick leave &/or health care; homeless people; and health-challenged vulnerable people. Grants are intended to complement the work of public health officials and expand local capacity to address acute needs of the outbreak as efficiently as possible. These grants are NOT of the scale to support larger public institutions that are strained by increased demand for services. Examples of the types of nonprofits in most need of Front Line Grant Support, as service numbers rise: community-based health clinics; food bank & food pantries; meal delivery programs; homelessness programs.

- **Service-Challenged Grants** fund nonprofits that are modifying their in-person service delivery modes extremely rapidly due to COVID-19, and need assistance to do so. These nonprofits likely need additional assistance to upgrade sanitation protocols and obtain cleaning supplies & service personnel. This includes: youth centers, recreation centers, child care, senior services, adult day care, community-based education programs.

- **Collateral Damage Grants** fund nonprofits facing extreme difficulty because of lost revenue due to closures and cancellations, as well as other challenges.
In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:

1. **What geographic area is served?** We serve the West Chester zip coded

2. **What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**

   We serve the un- and under-employed who are in need of service that they do not qualify for elsewhere or whose needs lie beyond the scope of the existing social services in our area. This population was vulnerable pre-virus and now the pandemic crisis has further compromised their already precarious lives.

   We provide “gap” services that remove the barriers that are preventing people from stabilizing their households and becoming self-sustainable. Services such eviction and utility shut off prevention, financial assistance for car repairs and other transportation expenses, cell phone minutes, child care, medical expenses, work clothing, photo IDs, birth certificates, and security deposits. We provide bus tokens, personal care and household items, clothing, and dry food goods to supplement what they receive via their income, SNAP, or another local food cupboard.

   The financial impact hit immediately when our major, annual fundraiser (scheduled for March 19) has to be canceled. This funding raised at this event every year represents almost one quarter of our income. This year the event was budgeted for $36,000 and only $12,000 had been raised pre-event. In addition, we have since learned that several of our corporate sponsors are no longer in a position to fund our mission this year. An additional $4,000 loss. It is fair to anticipate that the longer this goes on, the more potential there is for the support from individual donors to decrease as well. As a minimum, we are facing a $28,000 deficit but that number stands to increase significantly as the economy continues to suffer. The deficit created by this crisis has the potential to be debilitating for our organization if we do not find the resources to compensate for these funding deficits.

   In order to continue to serve and protect the safety of our service recipients, volunteers, and staff, we have implemented new procedures and protocols. We no longer conduct financial request intake appointments in-person. These are all conducted via phone and necessary paperwork is emailed, mailed, or dropped off in the building’s mail slot. We are located in a church that is now closed due to the virus so we were able to move our entire Community Cupboard upstairs to a wide open space which allows for more than ample social distancing and a “walk thru” grocery distribution. Shoppers enter via door 1, is needed, sit ample spaced is a waiting area, and when shopping they stand behind a safe-distance line, staff and volunteers where rubber gloves as they walk down the row of grocery tables and load the shoppers bag with the items the shopper chooses. Shoppers exit via door 2. We typically have 15 volunteer and 3 staff, we are down to 3 volunteer and 3 staff to run the day-to-day operations.

3. **How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

   We are seeking $5,000 to help fill the immediate $28,000 deficit that the crisis has created. The request represents 3% of our annual budget and 18% of the deficit. These funds will be used to keep our Cupboard stocked with personal care, household, food items and help us continue to assist people financially. The needs of this population will only increase as this unfolds. Weekly we see new faces of people newly unemployed, people experiencing delays in unemployment and other benefits, and people with minimal mobility who cannot find the goods they need because their local stores are depleted. We have never refused groceries to someone even if they live outside of West Chester. In the last 3 weeks we have seen people from areas that lack/don’t qualify for a cupboard but find themselves suddenly in need. Evictions and utility shut-offs have been staved off for the time being but our community’s most vulnerable will not simply be able to bounce-back immediately once life begins to return to normal. We anticipate that curve of needs will not flatten for many months. These funds will help ensure we remain operational and have the resources to assist when needed in the months to come.
Please email grants@chesco cf.org

- This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
- Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
- 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation's website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.

Grants will be processed a few times monthly.
We estimate mini-grants will range from $500 to $5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chesco cf.org.
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.