

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 9/15/2021

Contact Information

Organization Name: Valley Forge Park Alliance
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Phone: 610-783-1777
Website: www.vfparkalliance.org
Year Incorporated: 1976
FEIN: 23-2036005

ED/CEO Name: Molly Duffy, Esq.
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Board Chair Name: Amy Johnson
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Molly Duffy
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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: The Valley Forge Park Alliance's mission is to inspire appreciation of and support for Valley Forge National Historic Park.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): The Alliance serves all of Chester County, in addition to visitors from throughout Pennsylvania, the nation, and the world.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: Valley Forge National Historical Park welcomed over 2.2 million visitors in 2020. An additional 1,500 visitors participate in programs and events hosted by the Valley Forge Park Alliance.

<u>Annual Budget</u> \$175,500 (FY22)	<u>1</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>63</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>11</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>7</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>80</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>30</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>1707</u>	# of Volunteer Hours
<small>100 % total</small>		

Top 3-5 funding sources: 1. Membership (\$38,860); 2. REI Foundation (\$10,000); 3. Sherrin H. and Bruce A. Baky Foundation (\$5,000); 4. Muster Roll Certificates and Product Sales (\$4,745) as of 8/31/21

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating ?

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

Mission, Vision & Strategy Governance & Leadership Partnerships & Collaborations
 Fundraising, Development & Marketing Technology Other: _____

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

Proposal Summary: Valley Forge Park Alliance requests the investment of \$5,000 from the Chester County Community Foundation to support the hiring of a short-term, part-time employee to assist the current staff in the execution of an ambitious capital campaign to raise \$970,000 by 2023.

Valley Forge Park Alliance

PART I: ORGANIZATION SUMMARY

General Washington chose the Forge in the valley for the encampment of the American Continental Army over the winter of 1777-78 during the Revolutionary War. The Valley Forge National Park commemorates more than the sacrifices of that generation; where a rigorous, systematic training regime transformed amateur troops into a confident military organization capable of defeating the British Red Coats. Valley Forge, a turning point in the war for independence, honors and represents the courage and perseverance of our citizens and leaders who pulled together to overcome adversity during an extraordinary time.

Today, Valley Forge National Historical Park welcomes over 2.4 million visitors per year and boasts 30 miles of outdoor trails for walking, running, hiking, biking and horseback riding. Its substantial native biodiversity includes a river and numerous streams, forested wetlands, an eastern deciduous forest, and tall-grass meadows. An additional 1,500 visitors participate in programs and events hosted by the Valley Forge Park Alliance.

The Valley Forge Park Alliance is the philanthropic arm of the park whose mission is to inspire appreciation of and support for Valley Forge National Historic Park. We facilitate programs for park funding, education, volunteer programs, and partnerships to preserve Valley Forge. We are committed to ensuring our park is a beautiful gathering place of inspiration, refuge, and commemoration for generations to come. Supported by the generous donations of individuals, corporations, foundations, and other public and private funders, the Alliance implements a portfolio of programs to enrich the experience of park visitors today and encourage their future engagement in the park.

Valley Forge is located in Chester County and a key destination for individuals and families living near and far throughout the year. As the only National Park in the county, Valley Forge provides access for county residents to exceptional educational opportunities and access to beautiful, safe spaces for outdoor exercise and exploration. The park is a regular, trusted destination for residents of all ages, ranging from school-aged children on field trips to retirees participating in class offerings.

Notable recent accomplishments:

- COVID provided unique challenges to which the Alliance responded with vigor. The Alliance received a Paycheck Protection Program loan for \$17,500 to stabilize payroll expenses. We also received a \$5,000 Muster Roll grant from the Descendants of Washington's Army at Valley Forge to create a **new website and database**. Our wonderful Muster Roll volunteers and web design consultants worked tirelessly to create a new website.
- The Maurice Stephens House Advisory Group, comprised of elected officials and business and community leaders, is formed to facilitate the transition of organization headquarters to the new location in 2023.
- Hosted "**Determined to Persevere**" premier in Fall of 2020 in a virtual format, featuring the film's director and producer. We also kicked off our **Virtual Speaker Series** in October and held our first ever **photo contest**, which received over 400 entries—more than we could have ever hoped for. Everpopular **Lunch and Learn** series shifted online with the help of the trefdyffrin Public Library and reached 329 viewers, inspiring the planning of a new Speaker Series.
- Our board worked with a **diversity, equity, and inclusion** consultant to create a mission statement and goals for 2021. We also partnered with Washington Memorial Heritage to celebrate 100th birthday of women's suffrage and the Justice Bell.
- Six dedicated **Muster Roll volunteers** assisted hundreds of online visitors to discover if their history leads to Valley Forge and awarded Official Certificates of Service to 121 individuals, plus added 43 new additions to the Valley Forge Muster Roll.

PART II: FUNDING REQUEST

Key Initiative

This fall, the an ambitious capital campaign to support the renovation of a new office location and the move of organization headquarters to this ideal historic building that is wonderfully suited for the Alliance to deliver on its mission for years to come.

The Maurice Stephens House is located in the heart of the park, directly across from the Washington Memorial Chapel and on the lands of the park's Grand Parade. The property itself has a deep and rich history dating back to its erection in 1816 and its role as a site of the Brigadier General Jedediah Huntington's quarters during the Valley Forge winter encampment.

The Stephens House is one of many prominent history structures the park aims to lease through an adaptive reuse program and park leadership saw it as the ideal new home for the Alliance. With the support of a \$25,000 grant from the National Park Foundation, the establishment of the Maurice Stephens Advisory Group, and a close collaboration with park leadership, the Alliance will be launching a capital campaign in the Fall of 2021 to fund the renovation of the house and subsequent move of the organization office.

The current grant request is seeking **funding to employ a part-time Campaign Coordinator to support the significant increase in fundraising activity during the first year of the capital campaign.** This individual would fill a new, part-time position working directly with the Executive Director and assisting with the support of the Advisory Board and Board of Directors approximately 15 hours/week for one year. Specific areas of support for this position (detailed in the attached job description) will be: maintaining reliable prospect and donor contact information, campaign appeal letter development and fulfillment, and donor acknowledgments and stewardship support. This individual will also work with the Executive Director to ensure that campaign activity works harmoniously with the Alliance's overall annual fundraising strategy and plans.

This position is designed to support the campaign. However, the strategic growth of the organization will soon require the addition of a new staff member following the campaign to support the Alliance in similar areas of development and administration. It is our hope that a successful Campaign Coordinator would be able to transition into a newly established permanent staff position following their time with the campaign.

Needs & Issue to be Addressed

Valley Forge National Historical Park attracted 2.2 million visitors in 2020, despite the pandemic. Hundreds of millions of Americans know Washington's ragtag army endured unbearable suffering here, only to rally and go on to win independence for our fledgling country. It's part of our identity as Americans. As eager visitors return to the Park in even greater numbers, they'll want meaningful experiences that will deepen their understanding of Valley Forge. They'll need a break along the 10-mile encampment route, a place to pause, rest, and refresh themselves before exploring more of this iconic Park. Situating the Alliance's office in the Maurice Stephens House is the perfect solution.

The Alliance's current home is a failing structure far from visitor trails and historic sites. Cramped and shabby with precarious stairs, it's a dreary space for volunteers and more likely to repel visitors than to charm them. The Alliance has outgrown its current headquarters, which were far from ideal to start with. To embed the Alliance in the Park's historic core is to imbue the organization with greater ability to meet its mission to inspire appreciation and support for the Park.

The solution to the issue of the Alliance's current office concerns of structure and location is to relocate to a more appropriate, more welcoming location. Valley Forge Park is providing a remarkable opportunity to the Alliance to lease the Maurice Stephens House (1816) through the Park's adaptive re-use program. To participate, the Alliance must raise construction funds for the house to transform it into the Alliance's spacious new home. The building will also house a

café and facilities where weary visitors can rest and learn more about the Park and our important work which supports it.

To that end, the Alliance sought and won a \$25,000 grant in support of the development and implementation of a capital campaign. Valley Forge Park has committed over \$1 million and the Alliance is tasked with raising the additional \$975,000 by 2023 and detailed in the attached case statement. (Please note, this statement is still under development and in draft form.) This is a lofty goal for the Alliance and represents

Why it's important to fund this now

The Alliance has set itself an audaciously daring goal...to raise \$975,000 over the next two years, more than four times its operating budget. The Alliance's campaign will launch in the fall of 2021, securing 80% of needed funds by December of 2022. The clean-up portion of the campaign will take place in early 2023, when the Alliance will seek gifts of all sizes from direct marketing, social media, and outreach to grassroots groups.

The Alliance begins this campaign with the full endorsement and support of Valley Forge National Historical Park, which has invested in planning for, and preparation of, the Maurice Stephens House property. The National Park Foundation recognized the project's value in 2020, awarding the Alliance \$25,000 in seed funding.

In-house support for the campaign is critical to its success. The Alliance is staffed by a part-time Executive Director, Molly Duffy, who is joined by a part-time bookkeeper. The Board of Directors is engaged and active in the campaign, as are the members of the Advisory Group. However, the administrative and logistical load of launching a successful capital campaign are very real and we anticipate more than the current staff has capacity to cover effectively without derailing the delivery of core programs.

Measuring Success

The Alliance has long desired offices within the Park, suited to its needs and mission. Desire turned to determination in the Alliance's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. The Plan's four initiatives include two directly linked to the Maurice Stephens House project: (1) enhance the Alliance's ability to raise funds for both the Park and the Alliance, and (2) work with National Park Service leaders to increase Alliance sustainability by creating a reliable source of earned income.

Success of this grant will be measured by filling the role with a qualified individual who is able to perform the job description with minimal support. In addition to delivering on the job description detailed in the attachment, the grant specifically aims to have the following goals achieved during their tenure:

- Create a **prospect/donor tracking system** that incorporates activities of staff and volunteer solicitors; document system for future staff use
- Create and maintain **fundraising income dashboard** for regular Executive Director reporting purposes
- Establish and maintain an **income processing system** that incorporates timely and appropriate acknowledgment and recording of donations; document system for future staff and auditors
- Work with Executive Director to draft and fulfill **campaign appeal mailings**, as directed by solicitors

The impact of this role is twofold: immediate and long-term. The immediate impact will be the hands-on support of executing on a busy campaign with a lofty dollar goal. The Alliance and its volunteer supporters will need a dedicated staff presence to help them collate, clarify, and report on numerous types of information during the campaign such as prospect lists, goal progress, and income realization. This individual will be an immediate relief in this area.

The Alliance also has a vision of strategic growth. As mentioned, this role would be considered as a possible permanent position following the grant term. The Alliance is growing in its mission and anticipates the move to the Stephens House will escalate that growth. More staff will be needed to manage the additional administrative load, as well as support the Executive Director and Board in their roles. Outcomes associated with this position include documenting their deliverables so that future staff members can pick up these new systems with ease and continue their implementation after the capital campaign wraps.