

## GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- We **connect people who care with causes that matter, so their philanthropy makes a difference now & forever.**
- We are a **collection of Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds** with **@\$3.5M granted annually** to nonprofits in Chester County & beyond.
- **99%** of our grants are made by our generous Fund Advisors, who make grant decisions all year.

**Proposals submitted by nonprofits are considered for 2 types of grants:**

### Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds (No Deadline)

- ◇ Grants **focus on Chester County** causes & issues, but are not limited to Chester County.
- ◇ Charitable nonprofits working **in all fields of interest** are considered for grant awards. (I.e. arts, culture, & humanities; education; community improvement; environment; religion; health; & human services)
- ◇ **General operating** grants are encouraged. Nonprofits should be specific about their mission, goals, & measurable outcomes.
- ◇ Proposals can be submitted **anytime all year.**
- ◇ Grant decisions are made **intermittently** all year, as Fund Advisors desire.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$7,500.**

### Fund for Chester County Capacity Building Grants (Due 9/15)

- ◇ For eligibility in this grant program, nonprofits must be **located in & serve Chester County.** NPO's with budgets of \$500,000 or less are given preference.
- ◇ The goal of capacity building grantmaking is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the Chester County region,** in areas including:
  - Mission, Vision & Strategy
  - Governance & Leadership
  - Partnerships & Collaborations
  - Operations & Technology
  - Fundraising, Development & Marketing
- ◇ Proposals must be submitted by **September 15** to be eligible for consideration.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$5,000,** with monies distributed by **February.**

- Use this form @ [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)**
- Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments.**
- Proposals are shared electronically and online with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.
- Per IRS Regulations, applicants **must be** charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification & **cannot** be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator **Kevin Baffa** at **(610)-698-8211** or [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org) with any questions.

# I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

*One page only. This page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors.*

*Note: If Philanthropy Network's Common Grant Application is used, CCCF's Summary Sheet MUST accompany application.*

*To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)*

**Date 3/1/2022**

## **Contact Information**

Organization Name: Trellis for Tomorrow  
Address: 35 Hall Street, Suite 302  
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Phone: 610-886-4900

Website: [trellis4tomorrow.org](http://trellis4tomorrow.org)

Year Incorporated: 2003

FEIN: 27-0268541

ED/CEO Name: Jennifer Anderson

ED/CEO E-mail:

[janderson@trellis4tomorrow.org](mailto:janderson@trellis4tomorrow.org)

Board Chair Name: Robert Prachar

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Primary Contact Name: Jennifer Salvo

Primary Contact E-mail:

[jsalvo@trellis4tomorrow.org](mailto:jsalvo@trellis4tomorrow.org)

## **Organization Information:**

### **Field/s of Interest:**

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

### **Mission:**

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

Trellis for Tomorrow is located in Phoenixville, Chester County. Our youth programs are centered in Phoenixville and Spring City, and serve parts of Pottstown in Montgomery County. Our Food for All program has sites in West Chester, Malvern, and Newtown Square, and also has sites in Montgomery, Delaware, and Philadelphia counties.

### **Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:**

The end recipients of Trellis's Food for All (FFA) program are food insecure individuals via network of 45+ area food banks and pantries connected through Trellis to our FFA garden partner sites. The program also serves corporations, municipalities, and faith-based organizations interested in impacting regional food insecurity. In 2021, over 100,000 meals were positively impacted.

Trellis YouthCREWs benefit historically underrepresented youth ages 13-24, with paid work experiences and leadership opportunities that improve work readiness, social emotional capacities, and personal agency, as well as households facing food insecurity. In 2021, YouthCREWs had about 65 participants, with over 100 households receiving produce subscriptions.

**Annual Budget** \$ 720,610

86 % of budget for program expenses

12 % of budget for administrative expenses

3 % of budget for fundraising expenses

*100 % total*

4FT/4PT # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

6 # of Board Volunteers

15 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

500+ # of Volunteer Hours

### **Top 3-5 funding sources:**

Phoenixville Community Health Foundation

Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation

Bader Philanthropies

**Is this grant proposal for:** Capacity Building \_\_\_ or General Operating \_\_\_x\_\_\_?

**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:** \$ 5,000.00 \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposal Summary:**

Trellis for Tomorrow respectfully requests \$5,000.00 for general operating support as we continue our mission to foster compassion and resilience in people and inspire them to build sustainable communities.

Trellis uses community-based gardens as living classrooms where we deliver experiential programs for organizations and historically underrepresented youth in organic gardening, personal development, and career readiness. Our programs help people to become positive agents of change in their own lives and in their communities.

Trellis had an incredible impact in 2021, working with youth and communities to grow, harvest, and donate 33,649 pounds of fresh, organic produce to neighbors in need. With your support, we can continue our impact and help people grow in new ways in 2022.

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

### 1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

Trellis began in 2003 as a handful of youth programs under the umbrella of the Triskeles Foundation, an Exton-based nonprofit providing philanthropic services and donor-advised funds. By 2009, our youth and community-based programs expanded and evolved so significantly, we established a separate non-profit, Triskeles Inc.

After many years of delivering highly effective youth development and food justice programs, our focus became clearer. In 2018 we became Trellis for Tomorrow, the new name reflecting our mission to support the sustainable upward growth of our youth, our communities, and our planet. At the end of 2019, Trellis moved to Phoenixville to be close to our primary community partners along the Schuylkill River in Phoenixville, Spring City, and Pottstown.

Today, our land-centered programs and services help youth and adults to cultivate new skills and qualities while also creating sustainable sources of local, organic produce for neighbors in need and enhancing green spaces, particularly in urban areas. Through these partnerships, we help people become agents of change in their own lives and in their neighborhoods as they work together towards creating more sustainable communities.

We are small, but mighty! With 4 full-time and 4 part-time staff members, Trellis made an incredible impact in 2021, working with youth and communities to grow, harvest, and donate 33,649 pounds of fresh, organic produce to neighbors in need in the greater Philadelphia area. We are proud of our ability to sustain our organization and to continue to make an impact for 18 years. This is especially so over the last two years where, despite the challenges presented by Covid 19, we not only continued to provide services, but grew our impact. In 2020, Trellis was recognized for the impact of its programs by being one of only 5 Philadelphia area nonprofits to receive a prominent innovation award from Comcast NBC Universal.

We are also proud of our work on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The board and staff are committed to change from within and will settle for nothing less than to become an anti-racist organization. This opportunity is at the doorstep of all, but we feel it particularly critical for an organization like ours that works daily for greater social, environmental, and economic justice. Throughout 2020 and 2021, we worked hard to educate ourselves as a staff. In 2022, we are focusing on educating our board and then developing a strategy to actively diversify both our board and staff. The work is also extending to the ways in which we partner and connect with the communities we serve. This work will continue as long as is necessary for us to reflect internally our external commitment.

### 2. Funding request

- **Description of key initiatives**

#### **Food for All**

Trellis for Tomorrow's Food for All (FFA) is a collaborative impact gardening program that provides life-giving, meaningful community engagement opportunities for organizations such as universities, faith-based institutions, non-profits, and corporations. Trellis staff work together with partner organizations to design and install raised-bed gardens on site and then provide all the necessary supplies, as well as resources, education, and community building activities for all participants.

Growing partners in the Food for All program commit to donating at least half of their harvest to local pantries and other food assistance programs, resulting in an immediate and significant impact on access to nutritionally dense, organic food. In 2021, the total 21 Food for All partner sites generated over 25,000 lbs of nutrient dense food for food insecure individuals.

## **YouthCREWs**

Trellis for Tomorrow's YouthCREW programs develop skills, leadership, and career pathways for historically underrepresented youth.

**SEED Skills** provides paid work experiences and growth opportunities for youth aged 13-18. Youth work in their own neighborhoods to manage organic gardens, complete sustainable landscaping projects, and create their own enterprises. They produce tangible results that beautify the environment, improve quality of life for community members, and generate a sense of pride and inspiration. Participants benefit from mentorship, a formal leadership track, increased local social capital, and a powerful curriculum focused on systems change. Outcomes include improved work readiness, social emotional learning capacities, and personal agency.

**GROW Careers** matches and places youth ages 16 to 24 in internships with nonprofits or social impact businesses. GROW can serve as a transition for teens completing SEED Crew or be an entry point for area youth who are new to Trellis. Trellis pays the interns, provides one-on-one mentorship, and delivers group professional development workshops on areas such as resume building, networking, and LinkedIn. Post internship, Trellis continues to be available as a resource to help interns advance their career goals.

- **Specific needs & issues to be addressed**

Trellis's mission and work is deeply tied to improving racial, social, environmental, and economic justice. Our programs are focused on communities with higher-than-average percentages of historically under-resourced and marginalized individuals. Our goal is to build on the resilience that already exists within these communities and to amplify the potential of future generations to improve their quality of life and to make a positive impact on the world.

We take a systems-thinking approach in our curriculum that inspires youth to make connections between their actions and what is happening locally, to the greater impact globally. This understanding goes far beyond what is learned in school and, when coupled with meaningful work experiences, propels the diverse youth we work with to realize their innate potential and take charge of their future.

For children in many families facing food insecurity, having a daily meal at the table is not a regular occurrence, and with the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, food insecurity and hunger were exacerbated. Furthermore, the food accessible to those relying on the pantry system is often processed, contains more chemicals, and lacks nutritional value. Children and families with reduced access to nutritious food face higher risks of health conditions including anemia, high blood pressure, and heart disease. When these health risks are combined with the social and academic challenges brought on by hunger, the results can be devastating for families. These issues all point to issues with food system sustainability and a lack of food equity.

We believe that engaging people in addressing food system sustainability in their own community is the most viable pathway to ensure equitable food access and nutrition for the long term. Participants in Trellis programs become agents of change who gain knowledge and skills to create abundant sources of nutrient dense produce for their local community.

Life for adolescents in the communities we serve is already challenging due to income constraints. For this age group today, the added stress of a world immersed in social media and the near constant bombardment of information about massive challenges such as climate change and school shootings contribute to a feeling of overwhelm and lack of control in an already tumultuous time of life. According to the CDC, the rate of suicide among those aged 10 to 24 increased nearly 60% between 2007 and 2018 – a pre-pandemic statistic. Furthermore, the last two years of the pandemic have dramatically exacerbated the challenges facing youth aged 13-24. In a CDC survey on how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting mental health showed that 75% of respondents 18-24 reported at least one adverse mental or behavioral health symptom. Furthermore, 25% of respondents in the same age group seriously considered suicide in the 30 days leading up to the survey.

Trellis's programs help to give youth a locus of control over their own lives and a window into how they can positively impact the world around them. The type of social and emotional learning they realize through Trellis's programs fosters a sense of personal agency and resilience, and a continual learning and evolution mindset they will need to survive and thrive in today's world. Currently, we are doing this work with approximately 50 area youth. We would like to double that number in the next 2-3 years.

### **THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE:**

Most of the youth in our programs attend middle or high school in school districts with high rates of childhood poverty and enrollment in the free/reduced school meal program. A high percentage of youth participants come from households that fall into the ALICE designation. ALICE or Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed is a measure developed by the United Way to assess the number of households who earn above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but make less than needed to meet the rising costs living. Unable to qualify for government assistance, ALICE households suffer negative impacts on housing, childcare, food, health care, and overall quality of life. The career-readiness training and improved food access built into the program aim to address two barriers to wellbeing these populations encounter regularly.

- **Why it is important to fund this now**

As we begin 2022, Trellis is on the precipice of significant internal growth, which will inevitably lead to increased external impact. We are currently in year two of a three-year strategic plan to reach our vision of being known as the regional leader for empowering youth while addressing food insecurity. Both issues are critical to address right now.

To reach our vision, it is essential that we substantially diversify and grow our board and staff. An intensive plan is underway to add members to our board who can support and enhance our work. In 2022, we plan to hire three full-time staff members- an Agricultural Manager, a Development Director, and a Youth Development Manager, in addition to 4 part-time and seasonal support staff and at least two interns.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, 2020 & 2021 were highly successful years. Our programs not only continued, but thrived, having a significant direct impact on the communities we serve. We are focused and excited to grow in new ways in 2022.

- **How impact & results will be demonstrated**

If funded, this grant will support Trellis for Tomorrow in all aspects of our work as we grow in new ways in 2022. We measure impact through program-specific goals and measures reported qualitatively and quantitatively annually. Overall, in 2021 Trellis managed 25 garden sites that generated 33,649 pounds of organic produce and positively impacted 133,500 meals for approximately 4,600 neighbors in need. In the same period, youth programs engaged over 50 teens in hands on work that helped improve self-esteem and future potential through paid internships, career readiness programming, leadership development, entrepreneurial experience, and more. In 2022, we intend to increase that impact in all areas.