

I. 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.***

Date 9/9/2022

Contact Information

Organization Name: SILO

(Serving, Inspiring and Loving Others)

Address: PO Box 22 Oxford, PA 19363

Phone: 610-932-7500

Website: www.oxfordsilo.com

Year Incorporated: 2018

FEIN: 82-2595175 (SILO Works)

ED/CEO Name: Melissa Pacella

ED/CEO E-mail: melissa@oxfordsilo.com

Board Chair Name: Ed Herr

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Primary Contact Name: Melissa Pacella

Primary Contact E-mail:

melissa@oxfordsilo.com

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

Mission:

SILO is a welcoming and diverse group of friends who come together to Serve, Inspire and Love Others in our community.

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

SILO's work focuses on the southernmost part of Chester County, primarily Oxford and the surrounding area. Despite Chester County being a wealthy county, the Oxford area has an above average number of households struggling financially.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

SILO works with a variety of people, including those with mental illness, limited mobility, addictions, single parents, seniors, immigrants, veterans, people who are unemployed, homeless or formerly incarcerated. SILO serves at least 1,117 unduplicated people (including 478 children and 144 seniors) each year.

Annual Budget \$290,756

72 % of budget for program expenses

13 % of budget for administrative expenses

15 % of budget for fundraising expenses

3 Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

7 Board Volunteers

61 Active Non-Board Volunteers

1,376 Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: Fundraisers, United Way of Southern Chester County, Chester County Community Foundation, Clark Associates Charitable Foundation, Oxford Area Foundation

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$7,000

Proposal Summary:

SILO is requesting general operating funds for two essential programs- Delivering Hope and the Growing Together Community Garden. Both programs increase food security for the most vulnerable people in southern Chester County.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

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

History

SILO began twelve years ago as a small group of dedicated volunteers looking to connect to others in Oxford. As stories were shared and relationships built, it became obvious there were many unmet needs in the community. SILO reorganized as a non-profit organization four years ago and continues to support those in need by: facilitating free monthly community meals, delivering free groceries, teaching people to grow their own food, visiting friends (clients) at their home, prison or hospital, providing transportation, offering care and support to those experiencing, or on the verge of experiencing, homelessness.

Goals

Strategic goals for our two primary programs include:

Delivering Hope

- Expand the number of people served, through referrals from our friends, to ensure no one in our community experiences food insecurity.
- Ensure consistent fresh food for recipients, despite sourcing limitations.
- Continue to ask and listen to feedback as the needs of our friend evolve.
- Improve program processes (bag packing, van loading and deliveries) to increase efficiency.

Growing Together Community Garden

- Continue building infrastructure for a sustainable and welcoming community garden
- Increase garden attendance by integrating amenities like a porta-potty, benches and play items.
- Expand on success of in-ground vegetable beds to create in-ground beds for pollinator-friendly flowers, perennials and medicinal herbs.
- Employ a part-time farmer, dedicated to organic gardening practices
- Increase food output with improved pest management
- Continue engaging neighbors, SILO friends, volunteers and partner organizations to build and maintain support for the garden.
- Expand educational opportunities in the form of workshops, site visits and special projects
- Collaborate with the Oxford Library to create a seed saving library

Key Achievements

SILO serves an essential role in the community. Because of our deep friendships with the most vulnerable in Oxford, we are able to find and address the greatest and often "silent" needs in our community. By helping our friends truly stabilize, the entire community benefits.

Key achievements of our two primary programs include:

Delivering Hope

- Swift adaptations during COVID ensured our friends' nutritional needs were always met
- Since March 2020, Delivering Hope has distributed over 9,750 meals and 7,160 bags of groceries
- Up to 1,007 people (including 428 children and 134 seniors) receive food each month
- Proactive monthly calls to food recipients ensures our friends' needs are known and addressed
- Social stigma or fear of going to a traditional food bank is removed, with food delivery more like a neighbor dropping off a bag of food

Growing Together Community Garden

- Pioneered zoning precedent, creating a path for future community gardens in Oxford Borough
- Land owner donated lot to SILO, motivated by the success of the garden
- Turned a neglected place into a source of inspiration, healing and education
- Formed network of home gardeners who share resources, ideas and surplus produce.
- Hosted 14 gardening classes (English and Spanish), cooking demonstrations and site visits
- 760 Pounds of produce grown and distributed to friends in need

Distinctiveness

- SILO's primary distinctiveness is the **relational** way we connect with the people we help. SILO is a grassroots organization, spending a significant amount of time on the streets of Oxford, getting to know people and their needs. Rather than expecting people to come to us, we go to them.
- SILO is uniquely able to convert **volunteer** interest into collaborative work toward organizational goals. One of the greatest strengths of SILO continues to be our talented, diverse, hard-working and resourceful volunteers. They amplify and improve the services we offer the community.
- SILO **collaborates** with a variety of non-profit organization to achieve our goal to help those most in need. SILO's services rely on a web of partnerships. Our office is in the Oxford Neighborhood Services Center building where we also store donated food and pack bags for food distributions. Many of our gardening classes are in partnership with the Chester County Food Bank, who also donate fresh and canned foods for weekly distribution. Cub Scouts, the Lighthouse Youth Center and local school groups plant seeds for and help harvest food at the community garden.

2. Funding request

Description of key initiatives

Delivering Hope is a food delivery service providing free groceries for up to 1,007 people (in 320 households) each month. On average, SILO delivers 102 meals and 77 bags of groceries per week. When COVID began, SILO quickly adapted and began delivering bags of groceries and meals to those needing a little extra support. Now, with rising food costs, shortages and decreased food donations, we are looking to supplement our inventory with purchased meat, produce and dairy. Additionally, many friends request toiletry and household items they could not otherwise afford that we would like to provide.



Growing Together Community Garden is a place for people to grow food for themselves and others.



After delivering thousands of meals and bags of groceries, the garden was formed to allow friends to further stabilize their source of food. A donated lot has been cultivated to grow vegetables to distribute to friends in need. The majority of the produce from the garden is distributed through Delivering Hope, with surplus produce given to neighbors and volunteers. The community garden educates guests through gardening workshops (in English and Spanish), healthy cooking demonstrations, a free mini library with garden-themed books for children and adults, and site visits for youth organizations. After COVID, many people are excited to work alongside

others. To foster this sense of community, we plan to add elements to the garden that encourages guests to visit, linger and engage with each other- rebuilding lost community connections.

Specific needs & issues to be addressed

More than half of Oxford residents fall below the ALICE Threshold (Allocation Limited, Income Constrained, Employed- the working poor), and struggle with **food insecurity**. Our friends, who were struggling financially before recent inflation, are having an even harder time meeting their basic needs, especially nutritionally. Delivering Hope and the Growing Together Community Garden are two approaches to addressing food insecurity in our community. Delivering Hope provides for those in immediate need, while the community garden empowers and teaches friends to grow their own food, freeing them from financial constraints of rising food costs long-term. Both programs ensure SILO friends have access to fresh **healthy food**, promoting a nutritious balanced diet.

For many, connections across the **community** were lost during COVID, fostering debilitating **isolation** and division. Monthly phone calls, texts and chats when dropping off groceries gave SILO the opportunity to rebuild relationships with our friends who might otherwise feel isolated, depressed or overwhelmed. This relational connection is one of the most hopeful things we provide to our friends who are struggling.

When people visit the community garden- to help plant, harvest or pick up produce- they connect with garden guests who think, believe, eat, dress, talk, or look differently than they do. These casual interactions further reconstruct a community-wide web of relationships that are rich in **diversity**. The garden is a safe space for all people to reconnect, relax and work together.

Why it is important to fund this now

Delivering Hope

Inflation continues to drive up all living expenses for our friends, most who live paycheck to paycheck and could barely afford daily expenses before inflation. People are urgently struggling now. Many feel trapped, choosing between paying bills or buying groceries. In order to pay rent, many friends are severely limiting their grocery budget and purchasing less than they need.

Growing Together Community Garden

Rising food costs are also motivating people to grow food for themselves. More SILO friends are open to learning how to garden than ever before. Additionally, the warm weather continues to draw people out to the garden. Now is the perfect time to continue building infrastructure at the garden to capitalize on growing interest in the project.

How impact & results will be demonstrated

Delivering Hope

- Number of meals and bags of groceries delivered
- Number of toiletry items delivered
- Number of people and households helped

Growing Together Community Garden

- Average number of people in the garden each month
- Number of volunteers and estimated volunteer-hours
- Quantity of educational workshops, cooking demonstrations and site visits
- Number of presentations to civic or educational groups about the garden
- Pounds of produce given away