

GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- The Chester County Community Foundation **connects people who care with the causes that matter**, so their philanthropy makes a difference **now & forever**.
- We are **a collection of Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds** with **\$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**.
- ◇ Nonprofits **budgets** must be **\$500,000 or less**.
- ◇ 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 to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to 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 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

Date September 14, 2022

Contact Information

Organization Name: Home of the Sparrow
Address: 969 E. Swedesford Road., Exton, PA 19341
Phone: 610-647-4940
Website: www.homeofthesparrow.org
Year Incorporated: 1994
FEIN: 23-2775004

ED/CEO Name: Michelle E. Venema
ED/CEO E-mail: mvenema@homeofthesparrow.org
Board Chair Name: Frank McKee, Jr.
Board Chair Approval (check here): X
Primary Contact Name: Kathleen Sanger
E-mail: ksanger@homeofthesparrow.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: Home of the Sparrow's mission is to partner with women facing homelessness to secure housing, achieve long-term stability, and chart new paths for their futures.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Home of the Sparrow serves women, children and senior women throughout all of Chester County.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: 100% of the women and mothers we serve are living in Chester County and have incomes of 150% or less of the Federal Poverty Level. Approximately 50% of those who will benefit from a grant award reside in an "Opportunity Zone" qualified census tract (Coatesville); 1/3 will have children (age ranges 0 - 19); 31% (women and children) are African American, 61% Caucasian and 8% Hispanic.

Annual Budget \$1,347,000

76 % of budget for program expenses
10 % of budget for administrative expenses
14 % of budget for fundraising expenses
100 % total

11.5 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
15 # of Board Volunteers
279 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
1,941 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: Individuals (\$385,000), Grants (\$394,000), Government Contracts (\$193,000), Corporations (\$64,000)

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: Donor Advised grants of any size in support of our mission and programs are greatly appreciated.

Proposal Summary: Home of the Sparrow prevents homelessness by intervening before an eviction takes place. Prevention stops a woman and child from experiencing the trauma of homelessness and keeps her in an apartment/dwelling which is often within her budget. With virtually no stock of affordable housing available in Chester County, it is imperative that we keep a woman in her home and subsidize her rent while she works with us to increase her income, decrease her expenses, improved her credit score, and develops self-confidence and feelings of empowerment.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE FROM Home of the Sparrow

Nonprofit's History

Home of the Sparrow was founded in 1994 by members of the Paoli Presbyterian Church to help local women and mothers who were facing homelessness. Soon after receiving non-profit status in 1994, we moved our first families into a rented home in Paoli. Two years later, we purchased a building and, with the help of 400 volunteers, transformed it into our first agency-owned Transitional Housing facility. That home in West Chester plus another facility in Coatesville, are now dedicated to serving pre-senior women. In 2007, Home of the Sparrow adopted the Shared Housing Program which matches homeowners who have rooms to rent with women seeking affordable housing solutions. In 2017, Home of the Sparrow entered into an agreement with Chester County Adult Probation, Parole and Pretrial Services office to serve women re-entering the community after incarceration who need housing and other basic assistance. Today, Home of the Sparrow has six distinct programs delivered via trauma-informed case management practices.

Goals

Our mission is to partner with Chester County women facing homelessness to secure housing, achieve long-term stability, and chart new paths for their futures. Last year, our staff of 11 served 896 local women and children.

Key Achievements

- Since 1994, helping over 8,000 women and children avoid the trauma of homelessness.
- Maintaining a low administrative to fundraising costs ratio.
- Achieving a broad base of donors from individuals to corporations to businesses to grantmakers.
- Recruiting and stewarding a generous and supportive group of volunteers and in-kind donors to meet the additional needs of our program participants.
- Achieving one year of operating costs in a savings account to mitigate a catastrophe
- Returning to the office just three months after the start of COVID (on the first day permitted by the Governor) to robustly serve our women who were being disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

Distinctiveness

Home of the Sparrow is the only organization dedicated solely to assisting single women and single mothers in Chester County who are experiencing housing insecurity. We are not a shelter, which is also unique. Our goal is to **prevent** homelessness through a combination of financial assistance and counseling. Because the stock of affordable housing is so rare in Chester County, it is critical that a woman **with** housing be able to remain in place. Often, the difference between a woman being evicted and remaining housed is only a few hundred dollars and some additional programs and services. In addition to offering emergency funding to prevent evictions, we also offer up to two years of subsidized rental assistance and three years of membership in our graduate program. The result is the right number of programs, services and financial assistance to create a solution for a woman's unique housing crisis.

Description of Key Initiatives

To prevent homelessness, Home of the Sparrow has six programs:

Eviction Prevention – prevents an eviction and the trauma that accompanies homelessness while preserving an affordable housing solution via direct payments to landlords

Supportive Housing – provides twelve to 24 months of case management and rental subsidies to help women acquire the skills, resources and confidence they need to envision a future with housing and fiscal stability.

Pre-Senior Bridge Housing – provides up to two years of safe, affordable housing in one of our two homes while older women wait for their name to rise to the top of the subsidized housing list. During that time, they focus on eliminating debt and learning how to budget their fixed incomes. Our house in West Chester (“Winsmore”) provides communal living for up to 5 women. Each woman has her own bedroom. Our house in Coatesville (“Twomey”) provides 4 private apartments and one 2-person apartment (2 bed, 2 bath).

Shared Housing – provides access to the greatest untapped source of affordable housing in Chester County – that of room rentals in the homes owned by people who would benefit tremendously from additional income. Although shared housing can be a long-term solution, it can provide the time a woman needs to increase her savings and secure her own safe, affordable apartment.

Supportive services for women re-entering the community after incarceration for non-violent offenses – provides wrap-around services in partnership with the Chester County Parole and Probation Office. Upon exiting incarceration, most women do not have any cash, a savings account or a place to sleep. The obstacles they face are often insurmountable and without case management. HOS provides intensive support to secure safe housing and the services, skills and one-on-one counseling to pave the long road to independence.

Once a woman has achieved stable housing, she can access our **Graduate Support Services** for three years. This includes financial counseling to re-adjust budgets and access to the many in-kind donations HOS receives from the community including household goods and products, holiday gifts and meals, gift cards, and back to school supplies.

All programs are delivered via **trauma-informed case management practices**. The women we serve are facing more than just homelessness. They are vulnerable for any number and combination of reasons. Because every woman's situation is unique, our Program Coordinators take the time to build the trust that leads to in-depth conversations allowing us to learn the root causes of her housing insecurity so that a plan can be constructed leading to self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

Specific Needs and Issues to be Addressed

Although Chester County is the “wealthiest” county in the Pennsylvania, 34,200 residents live below the poverty line. Most women we serve work fulltime and earn about \$12.00/hour. This is a far cry from the county’s “living wage” of \$38.64 which is the lowest hourly pay rate needed to live a basic existence here. They most often work in industries such as such as health and childcare, food service, cleaning, and retail that do not routinely provide upward mobility, training, substantial raises, or benefits such as health care and paid days off. In fact, 56% of all jobs in Pennsylvania are paid by the hour and 59% of those pay less than \$20/hour. It is recommended that people of all income levels spend no more than 30% of their income on housing. This is nearly impossible for low-income people; with an average monthly net income of \$2,091, our women face the daunting challenge of affording \$1,200/month (the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Chester County).

More and more, women tell us they are not only struggling with paying rent, they also need help with paying for things such as gas, car repairs, childcare and car insurance. Most of our women experienced an interruption in their employment due to the pandemic. Because they live paycheck to paycheck, they have

modest savings accounts (if any). So unavoidable expenses such as childcare or unexpected expenses like car repairs occur, are often insurmountable without help from others.

More about our women: 100% are living in Chester County and have incomes of 150% or less of the Federal Poverty Level. Approximately 50% reside in an "Opportunity Zone" qualified census tract (Coatesville); 1/3 will have children; 31% (women and children) are African American, 61% Caucasian and 8% Hispanic.

Why it is Important to Fund this Now

Our services – case management and financial subsidies – help bridge the gap between income and expenses and remove eviction from the equation. What we offer women is *time* - time to develop a healthy relationship with money and achieve financial empowerment. Time enables women to set short and long-term goals. These goals can include something as simple as improving physical health by making and keeping doctor appointments to paying down debt to owning a home. Time, when combined with our trauma-informed case management, provides a woman with a personal advocate who will listen and not judge, make the connections between needs and services, motivate and encourage, and deliver tough love. It's not uncommon for women to tell their case managers that this is the first time anyone has "been in their corner." Even seemingly insurmountable obstacles can be tackled when someone is willing to help and support you.

How Impact and Results will be Demonstrated

Home of the Sparrow prevents homelessness by intervening before an eviction takes place. Prevention stops a woman and child from experiencing the trauma of homelessness and keeps her in an apartment/dwelling which is often within her budget. With virtually no stock of affordable housing available in Chester County, it is imperative that we keep a woman in her home and subsidize her rent while she works with us to increase her income, decrease her expenses, improved her credit score, and develops self-confidence and feelings of empowerment.

The impact of a grant award would be demonstrated by the number of women and children who benefit from the following programs:

Prevent Imminent Eviction: Immediate intervention with a landlord to deescalate the situation, guiding the client to multiple sources of emergency funding, providing a one-time payment of up to \$1,000 to the landlord, and enrollment in case management if needed.

Secure Affordable Housing: Swift assessment and acceptance of eligible women into the program, guiding the client to all possible sources of funding, determination of her financial contribution, writing a check to a landlord for security deposits/first-last month's rent (\$300 - \$800 on average).

Provide one Year of Services and Financial Support to Ensure Stability: For women needing more assistance, developing a 12-month plan that includes rent subsidies, financial education, job training, services for children, and enrollment in programs to increase income (\$250 - \$600/month).

Make Assessments/Referrals for Basic Needs: Many of our women/children need a connection to community/government-based programs that can help with basic needs: food, clothing, legal aid, medical/dental and behavioral health services. Mental health support is often a first step in helping our women/children overcome the trauma of homelessness, near-homelessness and most recently, the unprecedented stress and anxiety resulting from the pandemic.