

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: 2/01/23

Contact Information

Organization Name: Green Valleys Association of Southeast Pennsylvania, Inc.

(abbreviated as GVWA for Green Valleys Watershed Asso.)

Address: 1368 Prizer Rd, Pottstown, PA 19465

Phone: 610-469-4900

Website: Greenvalleys.org

Year Incorporated: 1969 as "French Creek Watershed Associates"; official name change in 2001.

FEIN: 23-7025192

ED/CEO Name: Victoria Laubach

ED/CEO E-mail: victoria@greenvalleys.org

Board Chair Name: Chris Orzechowski

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Primary Contact Name: Alex Runde

Primary Contact E-mail:

alexr@greenvalleys.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

Green Valleys primarily serves northern Chester County in the townships of North, East, and South Coventry, East and West Vincent, East and West Pikeland, Schuylkill, Tredyffrin, East Whiteland, Charlestown, Upper Uwchlan, East and West Nantmeal, and Warwick; and the boroughs of Elverson, Spring City, and Phoenixville.

Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served: We have approximately 1,000 members and serve the roughly 143,000-person population of northern Chester County; 5,000 individuals are engaged in our education programs annually. We work with students & teachers in the Owen J. Roberts, Phoenixville and Downingtown School Districts, local government officials, and community volunteers.

Mission Statement: To protect, preserve, and restore the natural waterways of northern Chester County. We inspire, educate, and involve our community to make a difference for this generation and for generations to come.

Organization Description: Green Valleys Watershed Association (GVWA) is a non-profit environmental education and watershed protection organization founded in 1964 to protect the five watersheds of northern Chester County: French, Pickering, Pigeon, and Valley Creeks and Stony Run.

Annual Budget \$708, 535

90 % of budget for program expenses

9 % of budget for administrative expenses

1 % of budget for fundraising expenses

100 % total

4 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

11 # of Board Volunteers

60# of Active Non-Board Volunteers

avg. 750/yr # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Grants, corporations, membership, Rodebaugh Trust Fund, fee for services

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building of 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: \$3,000.00

Proposal Summary:

The following are descriptions of our school-based, watershed-focused programs that Green Valleys Watershed Association currently runs for Phoenixville Area School District, Downingtown Area School District, Owen J Roberts School District, and Pottstown School District.

WaterWorks

The purpose of WaterWorks is to give students multiple cross-disciplinary, hands-on experiences in watershed science and history. The program begins with an all-grade assembly, where GVWA’s Watershed Educator (Alex Runde) details the history of water quality in southeast Pennsylvania rivers and streams. This transitions to a series of 15-minute watershed education stations, where a different concept in watershed science is demonstrated at each.

The primary audience is the entire 4th grade of the school; 4th grade teachers report that this event is a great way to solidify relatively complex concepts in water science ahead of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA’s). This program emphasizes how the water cycle works, the benefits of wetlands, and watersheds as a complex system.

AP Environmental Science high school students teach each station. The students are trained ahead of time by the Watershed Educator on how to teach their assigned station. Environmental science teachers report that students’ essay writing improves after teaching WaterWorks. Presenting at these stations requires volunteers to “think on their feet”, and provide adequate explanations for the questions they receive. The training itself also helps solidify important concepts and environmentally-related critical thinking skills assessed on AP Environmental exams.

This program typically runs 4 to 4.5 hours, with the first 2 hours dedicated to training the high school students, the later 2 hours for the program itself, and typically a 30-minute lunch in between.

WATER Club (Watershed Awareness To Environmental Responsibility)

WATER Club is an after-school club dedicated to instilling an appreciation for southeast Pennsylvania’s high quality water resources, provide students with environmental knowledge to help them in future classes, and teaching them skills that are useful for students’ enjoyment and stewardship of water resources. Each of the seven 3-hour club meetings begin in a 7th grade classroom, then transition to a field site.

Highlights of this club include teaching students how to fish to control invasive species, snorkeling in the French Creek, and a service project. At Phoenixville Area Middle School, this club is steadily growing in size, as the club’s reputation for fun and meaningful trips spread at PAMS. So far, 32 students have signed up for the 2023 club, after having 20 and 15 students the last two years. With this many students signing up, the four field trips will become eight field trips, due to the necessary splitting of the club into two sessions; outside funding would be very helpful in having this come to fruition.

Pond & Stream Studies

Pond & stream studies are GVWA's most requested program. GVWA's Watershed Educator can come to a school's campus for this, but more commonly, this program is conducted at Welkinweir. Pond & stream studies can be catered to any grade. This program begins with a brief history of water quality issues in the area, and transitions to a tutorial on using dip nets and other materials to capture macroinvertebrates. Students learn that these aquatic insects are indicator species in both pond and stream ecosystems; however, different species are found in each, allowing students to compare and contrast what they catch over the course of this program. Versions of this program for more advanced students allow for the calculation of biotic indices (a quantitative measurement on stream health from macroinvertebrate counts) and chemical testing of Welkinweir's pond or stream.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

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

Green Valleys Watershed Association (GVWA) was founded in 1964 to protect the five major tributaries to the Schuylkill River in northern Chester County: French, Pickering, Pigeon, Valley Creeks, and Stony Run. GVWA has a nearly 60-year history of working with residents, government, and community groups to protect the local environment through education, advocacy, and restoration. Our focus has adapted over the years to address changing threats to our streams: from the closure of point source polluters like Knickerbocker Sanitary Landfill, to addressing non-point source pollution by working with municipalities to improve ordinances, with school and universities to improve stormwater capture with nature-based infrastructure, and installing agricultural best management practices on farms.

We provide education to our community – individuals, school and scout groups, and municipal officials – about the importance of protecting and preserving our streams and natural resources to enable them to be better stewards of our local environment and empower them to act to protect those resources. We collaborate with other nonprofit organizations – from local, to regional, state and national, to strengthen our effectiveness, most notably through the Delaware River Watershed Initiative, which brings organizations across the basin together to reduce pollution, protect headwaters, and promote water-smart practices and policies.

GVWA is based at Welkinweir, located in East Nantmeal Township, and the former home of our founding members Everett and Grace Rodebaugh. Welkinweir has 224-acres of permanently protected land, with Exceptional Value streams, contiguous forests that support neo-tropical birds, ponds, meadows, and an arboretum, with an additional 700+ acres of preserved land nearby. We are committed to stewarding Welkinweir in a manner that supports and embodies our mission, provides an example to residents, and offers a tranquil retreat for visitors.

With this goal of stewardship, GVWA uses Welkinweir for environmental education for all ages. The property has such a great diversity of habitats and species that it provides many topics that can be addressed during public nature walks, children's summer camps, scout programs, and school field trips.

To advance our public awareness and provide needed watershed education in local schools, GVWA has run in-school programs like WaterWorks and WATER Club since the 1970's. Administrators and teachers have been highly complementary of our in-school programs, remarking how they align well with Pennsylvania Environment and Ecology standards. Volunteers and interns at GVWA also report that they learn a great deal from helping with education programs, and are more prepared for college or a career in environmental science.

2. Funding request

- A. (Description of key initiatives)** In addition to the programs outlined in the *Proposal Summary*, other initiatives include GVWA Summer Nature Day Camp, Schuylkill Water Stewards, and our hosting of Pennsylvania Master Naturalist classes. While these programs are longer in duration than those in the *Proposal Summary*, they are related to this request in that GVWA can utilize some of the same models, maps, props, and resources built-in to the programs for older

students. Naturally, it takes careful planning to utilize similar lesson plans and materials for elementary and middle school grades as adult and high school programs, but the resulting learning outcomes are unique and comprehensive.

- B. (Specific needs & issues to be addressed)** Covid-19 created a backlog of program and field trip opportunities for the school districts local to GVWA. Therefore, if WaterWorks, WATER Club, and many pond & stream studies are to take place in the Owen J. Roberts, Phoenixville Area, and Pottstown School Districts in 2023, outside funding is necessary.

Administrators and teachers at these districts are committed to offering these program, as they provide valuable reinforcement for concepts tested on in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Namely, they teach how the water cycle works, the benefits of wetlands, and watersheds as a complex system, among many others.

- C. (Why it is important to fund this now)** Covid-19 led to a lack of hands-on educational experiences for roughly two years. Many studies over the past two years have found that students and teachers tend to have negative attitudes towards the virtual, or Zoom-based, replacements for hands-on learning, such as the programs GVWA provides. Dorn et al. of McKinsey & Company educational consulting found that learning loss is typical when in-person instruction is replaced with virtual instruction (2020). This learning loss tends to be exacerbated when schools do not switch back to hands-on instructional approaches when in-person schooling resumes, and may have a life-long effect on those who were at crucial points of schooling when the pandemic began. Learning loss also tends to be greater among low-income students. The programs in the *Proposal Summary* would be able to reach some of these low-income students in local districts, and could help mitigate for the lack of hands-on experiences from early 2020 to mid-2022.

- D. (How impact and results will be demonstrated)** Beyond anecdotal evidence that these programs help students' test scores, programs such as WaterWorks, WATER Club, and our pond & stream studies distribute brief surveys to teachers and chaperones regarding the program's impact. These surveys tend to be 5-point Likert scale questionnaires seeking to assess whether students' perception of the natural world positively changed due to the program. Surveys are distributed to teachers and other adults who witness programs as well; these ask whether the adults learned anything (they often do) and whether they think the material presented correlates well with their curriculum.

Further, when time allows, such as with our summer camps, we utilize *Hello Insight* surveys to take a deeper look at students' improvements in social and emotional learning and environmental affect. For example, in our 2022 specialty science camp, 80% of campers showed improvement in at least one aspect of environmental affect; 96% of campers showed improvement in at least one aspect of social and emotional learning. *Hello Insight* surveys are rather lengthy (6-8 pages), but thorough. GVWA plans to continue to distribute these surveys at camps, and will distribute similar, briefer, surveys at more short-term programs like WaterWorks. Surveys and *Hello Insight* reports can be made available to grant funders and the public upon request. GVWA's use of *Hello Insight* is supported through the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation; more information can be found at helloinsight.org.

- *For capacity building grant proposals:*
 - *How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?*
 - *How will this impact be measured?*

- *Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.*

III. ATTACHMENTS

E-mail or mail this support information

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
 2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
 3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available
 4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
 5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
 6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.
- Use this form @ www.chescof.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
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WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

Capacity building helps bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, in order to more effectively & efficiently fulfill its mission.

Capacity building may include (but is not limited to) projects which address:

- **MISSION, VISION & STRATEGY**
Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning - Financial Planning
- **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**
Board Development - Executive Transition/Succession Planning - Leadership Development - Staff Training & Professional Development
- **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS**
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions - Strategic Restructuring
- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING**
Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development - Marketing, Branding & Communications
- **TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS**
Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements