



REQUEST FOR GRANT PROPOSALS JONAS C., MARIAN D., & ROBERT H. ERB CHARITABLE FUND

The Chester County Community Foundation accepts applications from selected nonprofit charitable causes for the **Erb Charitable Fund**, a fund of the Chester County Community Foundation.

Proposals are due by Wednesday, March 1, 2023. Upon review of the initial proposals, a site visit may be conducted of the finalists. Grants will be awarded in the fall. Grant awards typically range from \$30,000 - \$50,000.

Please use the attached Grant Proposal Format to apply for a grant.

Grant applications should be submitted electronically by Wednesday, March 1, 2023 to grants@chescofcf.org. The e-mail heading should read: Grant Proposal Submission- Erb Charitable Fund

Please note that all grant applications will be available electronically on the Chester County Community Foundation's website for additional consideration for grant funding by the Community Foundation's Donor Advised Fund Advisors.

Questions? Please contact:
Stephanie Stevens, Grants Director & Outreach Officer
Chester County Community Foundation
28 West Market Street
West Chester, PA 19382
www.chesdcocf.org
Steph@chescofcf.org
(610) 696-8211





JONAS C., MARIAN D., & ROBERT H. ERB CHARITABLE FUND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

I. SUMMARY SHEET

(One page only. This page will be shared with Grant Committee Members.)

Date: 2/24/2023

Contact Information:

Organization Name: Literacy Council of Norristown	Contact Name: Eileen Hallstrom
Address: 113 E. Airy Street	Contact Title: Executive Director
Norristown, PA 19401	Contact E-mail: executive.director@lcnlit.org
Phone: 610-292-8515	Fax:
Web Address: www.lcnlit.org	Year Incorporated: 1987

Has your nonprofit previously applied to the Community Foundation: Yes ___ No X

Field/s of Interest:

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

Organizational Information:

Geographic Area Served: Norristown, greater Montgomery County, and eastern Chester County, including Pottstown and Phoenixville areas.

Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served:

LCN serves over 400 adult learners in its adult education programs as well as distributing over 10,000 books to children and families in the Norristown community every year. LCN serves underserved and under-resourced adults and families, including immigrants and refugees.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Literacy Council of Norristown is to improve lives and strengthen families in Greater Norristown and Montgomery County by providing adult literacy and English language programs.

Organization Description:

Literacy Council of Norristown (LCN) improves lives through literacy. Founded in 1984, LCN has supported adult learners for over 38 years in Montgomery County with the reading, speaking, writing, math, English, and work skills they need to access broader social, employment, and educational opportunities. Literacy empowers not only our learners, but their families, their employers, and the broader community.

Annual Budget: \$209,100	4	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
78 % of budget for program expenses	9	# of Board Volunteers
9 % of budget for administrative expenses	60	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
13 % of budget for fundraising expenses	3,000	# of Volunteer Hours
100 % total		

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Private Family Foundation (anonymous) \$100,000
 PA Department of Education \$104,000
 Connelly Foundation \$20,000
 Douty Foundation \$20,000
 Philadelphia Foundation \$20,000

Proposal Information:

Grant Amount Requested: \$50,000

Summary Description of Grant Purpose:

The Literacy Council of Norristown (LCN) respectfully requests \$50,000 to support the growth of adult education programs for residents of Norristown, greater Montgomery County, and eastern Chester County, including Phoenixville and Pottstown. LCN's programs have grown by 60% in the past two years, reflecting the need for accessible, excellent adult education in the community.

LCN's free, accessible programs are built on a foundation of practical instruction and are based in teaching work and life skills in conjunction with relevant academic instruction. LCN's programs include: Adult Basic Education (ABE) providing adult learners with volunteer tutoring in basic reading, writing and math/financial skills; GED/High School Equivalency (GED/HSE), providing learners with instruction, learning materials, and testing in both English and Spanish; English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL), providing classroom instruction that enables students to improve their English reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills; and Community/Family Literacy Programs that bring literacy instruction and materials into the wider community.

Improving literacy outcomes reduces gender, race, nationality, and religious inequality that favors one group over another in access to education, property, employment, health care, legal, and civic participation. Effective education programs like LCN's alleviate food scarcity, homelessness, underemployment, poor health, and social isolation by providing a path to better employment and advanced educational opportunities. 75% of LCN learners stay on their education path and 80% advance at least one Educational Functioning Level (EFL) after 100 hours of instruction.



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II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Please provide the following information clearly and concisely.
Proposals of 1 or 2 pages are strongly encouraged.*

1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness

The Literacy Council of Norristown (LCN) was founded in 1984 in Norristown by volunteers who wanted to improve lives through literacy. LCN supports adult learners with the reading, speaking, writing, math, English, and work skills they need to access broader social, employment, and educational opportunities. LCN's free programs are built on a foundation of practical instruction and are based in teaching work and life skills in conjunction with relevant academic instruction. LCN's programs include: Adult Basic Education (ABE) providing adult learners with volunteer tutoring in basic reading, writing and math skills; High School Equivalency (HSE), providing learners with instruction, learning materials, and testing in both English and Spanish; English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL), providing classroom instruction that enables students to improve their English reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills; and, Community/Family Literacy Programs that bring literacy instruction and materials into the wider community. In 2022-23 LCN has served over 400 adults in its programs and distributed over 10,000 books to families in the community.

2. Funding request:

LCN respectfully requests \$50,000 to support LCN's adult education programs. Coming out of the pandemic, LCN has experienced 60% growth in its programs and is seeking support to serve more learners. There are currently over 100 incoming students on waiting lists for LCN's programs. Funding would allow LCN to open a new night location at a school in West Norriton in partnership with the Norristown Area School District to serve more students in western Montgomery and eastern Chester counties.

A. Specific Chester County needs and issues addressed

LCN serves residents in Norristown, Montgomery County, and eastern Chester County, including the Phoenixville and Pottstown areas through its adult education programs. LCN students and tutors come from a broad area and are matched based on compatibility and location. Orientation, assessment, and training are facilitated in Norristown, and then student-tutor pairs meet at a convenient public location nearby. This model allows LCN to serve learners and attract volunteers from a wide area. New classes to open in Fall 2023 will be offered in west Norriton and will serve more adults from western Montgomery County and eastern Chester County.

B. Organizational impact (for general operating proposals) or project impact (for project proposals)

Improved literacy positively impacts adult learners, their families, employers and our community at large. Over 70% of LCN learners stay on their education path and over 70% advance at least one Educational Functioning Level (EFL) after 100 hours of instruction.

LCN supports and tracks adult learners to achieve these short term outcomes: get a job or a better job; improve employability skills; attain HSE (GED/HiSET) credential; enter other education and/or training; improve score on standardized tests; advance education level(s); obtain citizenship; register to vote/vote for first time; obtain a driver's license; increase involvement in community activities; increase involvement in children's educational activities; attain consumer skills; attain wellness and healthy lifestyles; and, improve access to community supports and resources.

The long term outcomes of LCN's programs are significant. These include: improved understanding and connections between different cultures and classes; personal pride and satisfaction in learning; improved access and understanding of health, financial, and digital tools; improved social networks and community engagement; improved family outcomes, including better education opportunities for children; increased wages, \$10,000/year after passing the HSE or improving math skills; access to better long-term employment opportunities; access to higher education and work training opportunities; ability to understand and interact within community; improved understanding of U.S. laws and customs; and improved opportunities for leadership in the community.

Overall strategies to implement the organization's mission (or project)

C. Why it is important to fund this now

LCN's programs have grown by over 60% since the end of the pandemic. Accessible, excellent education programs have attracted adult learners to enroll at LCN to achieve their work and education goals. LCN is partnering with Norristown Area School District to expand its services in western Montgomery and eastern Chester counties in Fall 2023. The local school classroom space and maintenance will be provided in the evenings for free and LCN will offer free, accessible adult education programs to a wider community with this support.

3. Timetable, with anticipated outcomes and their relevance to the nonprofit's mission

LCN serves learners year round and provides flexibility within academic structures to benefit adult's working and family lives. We will serve over 400 adults and at least 70% of LCN learners will stay on their education path and 70% will advance at least one Educational Functioning Level (EFL) after 100 hours of instruction. The new location in west Norriton is scheduled to open in Fall 2023.

4. How impact and results will be demonstrated

LCN administers pre-testing assessments at enrollment and success is determined by tracking progress made towards the learner's work and education goals. Standardized testing is used to determine educational progress, including the CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System) and the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) assessment systems. LCN administers interim and post-tests after 50 hour intervals of one-on-one, small group or classroom instruction. At least 70% of learners will persist in their learning programs and at least 70% will advance 1 Education Functioning Level (EFL) after 100 hours of instruction. LCN supports and tracks learners to achieve their work and education goals, including entry into work training programs and entry into Montgomery County Community College and other higher education institutions.