

**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

Contact Information

Organization Name: RC Clothing
 Address: 55 Knox Ave
 Phone: 484-716-8573
 Website: <https://tcnetwork.org/rc-clothing/>
 Year Incorporated: 1993
 FEIN:23-2684794

ED/CEO Name: Alice Ciocco
 ED/CEO E-mail: aliceciocco@gmail.com
 Board Chair Name: Thomas Rumpf
 Board Chair Approval (check here):
 Primary Contact Name: Nicole Flanagan
 Primary Contact: ciocconicole@gmail.com

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: Our mission is to prevent accidental vehicular deaths by providing unhoused persons with safe, discreet reflective clothing that increases their visibility in the dark. RC Clothing gives our unhoused neighbors who are struggling with homelessness, mental health issues, and addiction the clothing to be seen and safe. Our work is simple, but it means the difference between life and death for thousands of greater Philadelphia's residents each year.

The Geographic Area Served Chester county and greater Philadelphia region, serving Chester county first.

RCC serves all people experiencing homelessness in Pennsylvania's Chester County and surrounding areas of the Philadelphia region. As of January 2023, our partner, The Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness, determined that in Chester County alone there were 463 persons experiencing homelessness. Of these, 33% (or 144) individuals identify as female, 37% (or 163) were individuals in families with children, 25% (or 109) were children under age 18, 35% (or 141) were individuals in interim housing identify as veterans, 10% (or 42) individuals were identified as chronically homeless, and 49% were White, 44% were African American, and 7% were multiracial, EAPI, and other.

To date, we have distributed over 1,100 reflective hoodies, shirts, and rain ponchos to shelters and outreach organizations in Chester County and surrounding Counties that work with homeless populations.

Annual Budget \$ <u>5000.00</u>	<u>0</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>100</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>4</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>0</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>6</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>0</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>739</u> # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources:

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: \$ 5000.00

Proposal Summary: Financially, RCC has historically relied heavily on personal donations and individual funders to maintain operations. As demand for our programs have increased, RCC is interested in diversifying funding sources in order to scale our programs through philanthropic support from corporations and private foundations. As an all volunteer organization, our dedicated advisory board seeks to engage a consultant to facilitate strategic planning with an emphasis on resource development. Through this consulting engagement, RCC hopes to ensure activities like building relationships with other foundations, cultivating support from corporate sponsors and individual donors, increasing revenues from special events, and refining our annual appeal process. In addition, we are increasing efforts to apply to and win local/state government grants.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

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

RC Clothing (RCC) was established in 2022 by Alice Ciocco in honor of her son, Rob, who tragically lost his life in an accidental vehicular death in 2021 as he was traversing a road at night in dark clothing while unhoused. Our mission is to prevent accidental vehicular deaths by providing unhoused persons with safe, discreet reflective clothing that increases their visibility in the dark. RC Clothing gives our unhoused neighbors who are struggling with homelessness, mental health issues, and addiction the clothing to be seen and safe. Our work is simple, but it means the difference between life and death for thousands of greater Philadelphia's residents each year.

In 2023, RC Clothing adopted Tri-County Community Network as their fiscal sponsor as we await 501c3 nonprofit status. We operate using a small advisory committee, a growing community partnership network, dedicated volunteers, and the tireless and ambitious efforts of our founder, Alice. This clothing has collectively saved the lives of countless unhoused individuals.

RC Clothing's overarching goal is the elimination of accidental vehicular fatalities of pedestrians due to a lack of visibility for persons at risk from living and traveling unhoused. We work with local area partners that serve homeless communities to distribute clothing that prevents fatalities for the unhoused as well as increase awareness through outreach and education for drivers and community members to understand these risks.

2. Funding request

• Description of key initiatives

- RC Clothing exclusively distributes discreet, 'tone-on-tone' reflective clothing. This can help homeless individuals be more visible to motorists while still blending in with their surroundings. This is especially important when they are seeking shelter or trying to avoid attention to help them access public spaces, services, and resources without facing additional barriers.
- We currently work with Appell Enterprises, inc. Screen Printing Services to produce the clothing at wholesale cost. We then work with local area agencies currently serving homeless populations to help distribute the clothing through our volunteer network. Partners currently include:
 1. Chester County Partnership to End Homelessness
 2. Good Samaritan Services in Phoenixville
 3. Hospitality Center in Norristown
 4. Hope Rescue Mission in Reading
 5. The Grace Project in Kensington
 6. Savage Sister's Recovery in Kensington
- As an agency, we also work on ongoing advocacy, education, and raising awareness. We currently use tools such as in person education as well as social media to reach our target audience in the community.

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

- Providing homeless individuals with reflective clothing actively helps prevent accidental vehicular deaths by increasing their nighttime visibility on roads. We work to empower unhoused persons through no cost tools to take control of their safety while on the streets. It also goes beyond enhancing their safety by acknowledging their dignity and worth, sending a message that their well-being matters to the community. Our work helps meet these vulnerable individuals where they are with compassion and understanding.
- RCC's distribution of reflective clothing also helps raise community awareness about the visibility challenges faced by homeless individuals and the importance of taking steps to ensure their safety. This collective effort fosters empathy and encourages responsible driving habits. RC Clothing's efforts also help create trusting relationships between people experiencing homelessness and the outreach program we reached them through, allowing for additional services to be received as needed.

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

- Accidental vehicular deaths involving homeless individuals are a significant and distressing issue that occur with alarming frequency in every community. These tragedies underscore the vulnerability and safety concerns faced by the unhoused, an already marginalized population. These accidents are deeply tragic, highlighting the urgent need for preventive measures. Providing reflective clothing is a relatively cost-effective solution compared to other safety measures. Reflective clothing contains materials that reflect light, making individuals wearing such clothing more visible to drivers, especially during low-light conditions such as dawn, dusk, and nighttime. This increased visibility gives drivers more time to react and avoid potential collisions. It can have an immediate impact on reducing accidents and saving lives without requiring extensive infrastructure changes. Chester county has an increase in population of our homeless community as well as increase in substance use disorder and mental health crises. We want to ensure those struggling with homelessness will be as safe as possible with the barriers that are among the population.

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

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- *For capacity building grant proposals:*
 - *How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit? The capacity building initiative will impact our nonprofit by increasing our ability to manage and increase engagement and visibility within the community. We are currently seeking funds to increase production and distribution of our clothing to reach more unhoused persons in order to achieve this goal we want to incorporate an annual fundraising event in honor of Rob. We are also working to increase awareness through outreach and education efforts. In turn, this will help save countless lives. We are also requesting support for strategic plan facilitation with consultant.*
 - *How will this impact be measured? RC Clothing closely monitors several metrics as evidence of our success: number of garments we are able to manufacture and distribute; number of unhoused persons we distribute clothing to; number of area partners we work with; and number of persons we are able to educate and raise awareness for within the community through our efforts.*
 - *Fundraising event will provide education for the community as well as fun community engagement. We will hire social media marketing consultant to increase visibility within social media presence. The remainder of the funds will be allocated towards annual fundraising event, and administrative tasks to increase education within the community, as well as increasing production and distribution of clothing.*

Capacity Building Initiative

Since the launch of a small grassroots fundraising campaign, RC Clothing has realized the great need in the community and is thankful for the generous support of individual donors.

Working collaboratively with multiple partners, leadership has realized the need for a strategic plan to guide operations and plan for the future sustainability of the organization.

At this time, RCC has been in correspondence with Jason Alexander of Capacity for Change for his services to conduct Strategic Planning consultation with our advisory board.

An emphasis will be placed on resource development to support our all volunteer organization's programming expenditures and expand our outreach to raise awareness about the needs of our unhoused neighbors.

Estimated total cost expected to be \$5,000.