

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 9/13)

- ◇ 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 grants is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the region**, see page 4 for more details on the areas including:
 - Mission, Vision & Strategy
 - Governance & Leadership
 - Partnerships & Collaborations
 - Operations & Technology
 - Fundraising, Development & Marketing
- ◇ Proposals submitted between **July 1 - Sept. 13** are 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 09/13/2023

Contact Information

Organization Name: RSVP Volunteers

Address: 901 E. 8th Ave, Suite 200, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Phone: 610-834-1040 ext. 132

Website: www.rsvpmc.org

Year Incorporated: 1972

FEIN: 23-2121691

ED/CEO Name: Michele Moll

ED/CEO E-mail: micheles@rsvpmc.org

Board Chair Name: Ron Gawel

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Primary Contact Name: Geren Weaver

Primary Contact E-mail: gerenw@rsvpmc.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

Mission:

RSVP improves the lives of vulnerable populations in the local community by focusing on education and wellness and by supporting nonprofits through skill-based volunteer programs.

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

RSVP Volunteers serves Chester, Philadelphia, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

RSVP serves thousands of underserved families, children, parents, adults, seniors, and veterans in the Greater Philadelphia area.

Annual Budget \$ 1,126,916 4 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

80 % of budget for program expenses 24 # of Board Volunteers

10 % of budget for administrative expenses 1200 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

10 % of budget for fundraising expenses 83,152 (2022) # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Janssen (J&J)

Peoples Security Bank & Trust

SEI

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: \$ 8,000

Proposal Summary:

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

RSVP was established in 1973 as a program of Montgomery County Family Services under the Older Americans Act to place senior volunteers in nonprofit agencies, enhancing their own well-being and that of the community at large. In 1978 RSVP became incorporated and in 1986 received 501(c)(3) status, which enabled us to develop our own direct service impact programs addressing evolving community needs. During the past two decades RSVP has been using adult volunteers of all ages to facilitate our programs and has expanded our footprint to include Delaware and Chester Counties and implement programming in the City of Philadelphia. In 2020, RSVP adapted to address the effects of Covid-19 on vulnerable populations by helping with food security and transitioning to virtual learning, which is now a hybrid of virtual and in-person as appropriate and upon request. Our newest initiative, Digital Technology Training, shows tremendous potential to help combat the gap in *digital equity* that was made apparent at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our goals and activities are to continue addressing these needs by sustaining, enhancing, and expanding the following programs for which we are requesting support:

2. Funding Request

a. Description of RSVP Programs (Initiatives) / Needs addressed.

RSVP's Family Literacy Program (FLP), now incorporating STEM was developed in 1992 with a grant from the Knight Foundation in response to the proven effectiveness of Family Literacy throughout the nation. Initially working with teen parents and their young children at Norristown High School's teen parent program, in 1995 FLP began our successful 28-year collaboration with Montco. Head Start (now operated by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit) by providing volunteer readers in classrooms either in-person or virtually as appropriate; by conducting workshops in English and Spanish for parents about the importance of reading and STEM to their children's futures; by distributing gift books six times a year to each Head Start student with accompanying reading tips for parents; and by helping to implement a home and school reading incentive program called the Lucky Readers Club. In 2020 after learning of the effectiveness of early STEM awareness on preschoolers, particularly those who are disadvantaged, we incorporated age-appropriate STEM into all aspects of our Family Literacy Program. During the 2022-23 school year, FLP has served 378 students and their families.

RSVP's Elementary School Reading Coaching, matches volunteers with individual elementary school students struggling with reading to help them read on grade level by fourth grade. Volunteers meet with their students in person or virtually by using a leveled reading website through which students read books to their volunteers and take comprehension quizzes to assess their progress. During the 2022-2023 school year 439 students have been benefiting to date. In the summer we will run a six-week program virtually where parents can enroll their children. The program also includes a science component through which interested students can choose science-related books from the Science A-Z site to read to their coaches.

RSVP's My Free Tutor (MFT), developed in 2013, provides virtual, individualized math tutoring to elementary through post high school students having difficulty.

We recently upgraded the program for students in elementary school through college to better help students who lost ground during COVID, by incorporating the IXL math program, which includes a diagnostic tool for students that pinpoint the skills the tutors need to work on each session. We plan to serve 50+ students during the school year.

STEM Career Presentations: Our goal is to extend the awareness of and access to STEM related careers and jobs among disadvantaged, underserved youth that's on par with their more advantaged peers. Formerly, presenters made their talks in classrooms. Since the pandemic, we have created a Career Video Library which can be accessed on our website and through which students can learn about 50 different STEM-related careers,

publicized to schools and organizations & individuals. Our goal is to increase the number of trades present during the coming year, and to facilitate the connection between presenters and students interested in learning more about specific careers. We can still provide our services in-person when requested.

RSVP's Train the Trainer Digital Literacy Program, developed in 2020 in response to the needs of seniors to be able to use technology in an increasingly remote society, expanded in 2021 and 2022 with a pilot program in Southern Chester County in collaboration with the Southern Chester County Digital Literacy Coalition serving this wide rural area with large population of immigrant farmers. The mission of the coalition is to come together as a community initiative to address the inequity around digital literacy by providing digital education at required levels for the most vulnerable, so that each and all have access to educational, social and economic opportunities leading to greater community investment. RSVP's role in this effort has been developing and delivering the program, designed to empower community-based organizations to provide basic technology training to their clients. This "Train the Trainer" program worked with the coalition to connect with area nonprofits serving this clientele. Using a bilingual training process, RSVP volunteers trained the staff or volunteers in 10 agencies how to, in turn, train their clients in mitigating the barriers of trust and language in the community. To date having fully trained 200 individuals in cyber safety, email, zoom and how to navigate the Internet to access basic services such as telehealth appointments and shopping on-line; as well as educational resources, job opportunities and job training; and to increase parents' involvement in their children's education by using email to connect with teachers. Our goal has been to scale Train the Trainer to vulnerable populations throughout our footprint. An obstacle to that expansion was realizing that our initial power point training process was cumbersome and slow, we have upgraded to a more engaging process of video modules that can be accessed on the Moodle learning and evaluation platform, which we purchased last year with the help of a funder. We also obtained funding to purchase iPad and Chrome books that clients can use for their training through a foundation partner. When they complete the training the clients can keep the devices. With the training upgrade, we have begun to scale the program which we believe will take two years. We have already begun working with SCS in Delaware County to train their members, and, with appropriate funding, will respond to a request from the Norristown Area School District to provide training to their families. Many school districts have been requesting this training for their parents/guardians who are not using the technology that the school uses to operate and communicate with parents/guardians such as powerschool, seesaw, pickupport, and more. Households who do not have the basic skills to create and check an email address cannot keep up with the technology being used by schools and are struggling to communicate/collaborate to support and assist with their child's education. We are adapting the program to be able to address these needs. One school district alone has identified 60+ households who are in need of technology training, many of which also have a language barrier which we are able to address as well. Last year, AARPA awarded RSVP the funding to expand the program to include ALL of Chester County.

Another goal is to continue to work through the Philadelphia School District's Office of Strategic Partnerships and a Memorandum of Understanding with the School District of Philadelphia to provide volunteer tutors in Philly classrooms as requested by teachers. We currently have nine volunteer tutors in classrooms.

RSVP's (PA MEDI) Medicare Counseling, PA Medicare Counseling provides counseling to seniors, helping them to navigate the complex healthcare system and make informed decisions about their health care coverage. RSVP volunteers are trained and certified to provide services, ensuring that seniors receive accurate information and support.

RSVP Volunteer Executive Counseling (VEC), Our VEC program offers free nonprofit counseling. The program provides consulting services to nonprofits to help them build capacity, improve operations, and achieve their mission more effectively. The program helps to strengthen the nonprofit sector in the greater Philadelphia area, which is essential for building strong, healthy, and vibrant communities.

Impact of Activities

Based on last year's results, we anticipate that a minimum of 77% of direct service recipients will improve their knowledge and confidence as follows:

80% of Head Start teachers will report that their students are better prepared for kindergarten because of our volunteer readers, gift book program and parent workshops.

77% of elementary school students receiving reading coaching will be reading on grade level or will have made progress toward reading on grade level as determined by classroom teachers and reading specialists.

Example of reading progress from virtual reading coach: "Lee is reading with more accuracy as she reads at a slower pace. We continue to work on her accuracy. She is always willing to learn and continues to ask focused questions as we read and discuss the story."

My Free Tutor: 100% of students said that the program helped them in math class overall, with 90% understanding subject matter and 80% feeling confident about subject matter.

STEM Career Presentations: 65% of students will want more information about the career presented.

Digital Literacy: 80% feel much more confident using technology 70% feel much more confident staying connected with family and friends 70% feel more confident shopping online 70% feel more confident banking online 70% feel more confident connecting with a doctor.

Evaluation

RSVP has a logic model for each program through which outcomes are measured according to goals by soliciting impact information from teachers, parents, and/or students, depending on the program. Results are analyzed and reviewed by staff annually. These results are used to improve the program, guide future data collection/evaluation and modify program goals and activities as warranted. Results are disseminated to potential funders and through website, annual report, e-newsletters, and social media, as appropriate.

RSVP has a diverse stream of funding, which enables us to sustain programming, including government grants, foundations, corporate sponsors, funding raising events and an annual direct mail appeal. Staff and board are continually looking to identify new sources of support to sustain programming during priority shifts or mandatory time off from current funders.

Why Fund RSVP Now?

The pandemic has seriously impacted the education and well-being of vulnerable populations in Greater Philadelphia, as it has across the nation. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, reading scores among fourth graders slid to the lowest level since 1990 and declines in 4th and eighth grade math scores were the largest ever recorded. In addition, we learned from our constituency and Pew report that at-risk seniors were suffering acute isolation because they did not have the knowledge and skills to use technology to connect them with friends, families and needed services. We also learned that this lack of digital equity was affecting vulnerable populations throughout our service area.

Thank You, For your time and consideration,
-RSVP Volunteers

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

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

2. Funding request

- Description of key initiatives
- Specific needs & issues to be addressed
- Why it is important to fund this now
- How impact & results will be demonstrated

- *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.

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so their legacies make a difference.*



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