

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

**I. SUMMARY SHEET**

**Date: 03/14/2025**

**Contact Information:**

Organization Name: Pearl S. Buck International  
Address: 520 Dublin Road, Perkasio, PA 18944  
Contact E-mail: [ccastro@pearlsbuck.org](mailto:ccastro@pearlsbuck.org)  
Web Address: <https://pearlsbuck.org/>

Contact Name: Cheryl Castro  
Contact Title: President & Executive Director  
Phone: 215-249-0100 x154  
Year Incorporated: 1964

**Has your nonprofit previously applied to the Community Foundation:** Yes \_\_\_ No \_x\_

**Field/s of Interest:**

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

**Organizational Information:**

**Geographic Area Served:** Bucks County and the Greater Philadelphia Region

**Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served:** In Fiscal Year 2024, Pearl S. Buck International served over 41,000 people of all ages and demographics across our various programs.

**Mission Statement:** Pearl S. Buck International provides opportunities to explore and appreciate other cultures, builds better lives for children around the globe and promotes the legacy of our founder by preserving and interpreting her National Historic Landmark home.

**Organization Description:** Pearl S. Buck International, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization located near Philadelphia in upper Bucks County, PA, carries on Pearl S. Buck's legacy of bridging cultures and changing lives through humanitarian aid, intercultural education, and historical tours of the Pearl S. Buck House, a National Historic Landmark museum. Pearl S. Buck was a writer, activist, and humanitarian. She was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Literature for her novel "The Good Earth" and the Nobel Prize in Literature for her body of work. Ms. Buck used the spotlight on her to shine a light on the plight of marginalized people everywhere and to advocate for the civil rights movement in the U.S. She founded Welcome House (the world's first international biracial adoption agency) and established The Pearl S. Buck Foundation (now Pearl S. Buck International) to provide international humanitarian aid in the countries where she spent her formative years. Our work is rooted in the legacy of Pearl S. Buck, and we believe this legacy unites nations, societies, communities and individuals with an appreciation for cultural differences and a commitment to service.

Annual Budget \$1,339,000

81% of budget for program expenses

12% of budget for administrative expenses

7% of budget for fundraising expenses

100 % total

6: # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

12: # of Board Volunteers

109: # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

3,935.45: # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: General Contributions - 40%, International Programs - 35%, Rental Revenue - 12%, Special Events - 9%, and House Tours- 4%. Largest contributors from FY24 were the Estate of Jeri C. Miele, the Estate of Joseph D. Fincher, the Pearl S. Buck Volunteer Foundation, the Frank R. Goodman Family Foundation, and the Estate of Mary Wagner.

**Proposal Information**

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$100,000

**Summary Description of Grant Purpose:** Pearl S. Buck International respectfully requests \$100,000 in general operating support for our mission work. Guided by the legacy of Pearl S. Buck's work, we aim to expand our region's appreciation of cultural differences and connection with the global community. Through our core programming pillars, Pearl S. Buck International provides educational opportunities for people of all ages to become more informed, engaged global citizens.

## II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

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

Pearl S. Buck International works to continue the legacy of author Pearl S. Buck, Pulitzer Prize winner for her novel "The Good Earth." Pearl S. Buck was born in West Virginia of missionary parents and lived the first half of her life in China before moving to Bucks County, Pennsylvania in 1935. After the success her novel, she devoted the second half of her life to advancing social justice issues on racism, poverty, women's rights, and human rights across the globe. She started The Pearl S. Buck Foundation in 1964 with the express goal of aiding in what had become her life's mission. In 1980, the Pearl S. Buck House was designated a National Historic Landmark, and since that time has drawn thousands of people each year to visit the site – from local school students to national and international dignitaries. Pearl S. Buck International has expanded our work to include supporting educational opportunities for adults and young people, bringing intercultural experiences to the Delaware Valley, and continuing the humanitarian aid work that Pearl S. Buck herself started.

### 2. Funding request

Cultural exchanges and intercultural communication are essential for creating a more harmonious, inclusive society. A 2020 research study conducted by UNESCO and the Institute for Economic & Peace showed that programs promoting intercultural connection create positive social relationships and a sense of belonging and trust, build social cohesion, and help find creative solutions to critical issues. To that end, Pearl S. Buck International aims to create opportunities for people of all ages to learn and engage with different cultures, helping our community to become more inclusive and accepting. To that end, our core program areas, namely our Historical Site, Global Leadership Program, and International Aid programs, are designed to create these opportunities for the Delaware Valley community.

#### Historical Site

Pearl S. Buck International is housed at Pearl S. Buck's Bucks County home, which operates as a museum, archive, and location of various cultural programs. Students, educational groups, and community members can engage with an immersive historic house tour that shares the story of Pearl S. Buck's forward-thinking human rights advocacy issues that remain relevant today, including civil rights, racial equality, disability rights, gender issues, and immigration. The Pearl S. Buck House sees an average of 8,000 visitors each year.

The House is also the home to two archival collections: Papers of Pearl S. Buck and Richard J. Walsh and the Pearl S. Buck International Institutional Archive. These collections contain material essential to the research and understanding of several areas in American and international history. The personal papers of Pearl Buck and her husband present a deep look into the activism they were a part of during WWII, the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Red Scare. The PSBI archival collection contains a wealth of information about Welcome House, the first adoption agency in America for mixed-race children, and the Pearl S. Buck Foundation's global work. The collections teach scholars, students, and the public about the profound impact Pearl Buck's humanitarian and literary work has had on the world and continues to have.

Additionally, Pearl S. Buck House hosts various special and cultural events with the goal of helping community members engage in practices that they might not traditionally get to engage with. Past events include Oktoberfest, an Eid al-Fitr celebration, Lunar New Year, and Diwali. We saw 3,000 attendees that these various events throughout last fiscal year.

#### Global Leadership Program

Our Global Leadership Program was launched in 2010 to engage young people in grades 9-11 in a curriculum that builds their leadership skills and cultural competency through service in their community. Since its founding, our Global Leadership Program has served 487 young people across the Delaware Valley. The program provides an engaging framework for teens and young adults to become better students, college applicants, and global citizens. Each Global Leadership cohort works with peers from different schools inclusive of diverse cultural, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The modules, discussions, and projects focus on increasing critical thinking skills and building civic awareness. It recognizes them as emerging leaders in their schools and communities while fostering their role in an increasingly intercultural global society. The program culminates in a student-led service project that benefits various local organizations and causes.

#### International Aid Programs

Our International Aid program offers humanitarian support through our Vietnam office, affiliate offices in China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea, and partner organizations in Cambodia and Kenya. Local leadership and staff provide education, healthcare, social services support, and nutrition to children and families in economically impoverished areas in Asia and Africa. The support given to these children focuses on keeping them healthy, battling food insecurity, removing economic and other barriers to attending and staying in school, and giving them the tools, with education being the primary tool, necessary to one day support themselves and their families and lift themselves out of poverty. With our connections to international organizations, we can make global issues tangible for our neighbors in the Delaware Valley. Our international aid programs support more than 33,000 young people and their communities annually.

Through these programs, Pearl S. Buck International can bridge the gap between our local and international communities. For example, participants in our international aid programs directly communicate with their sponsors in the United States and develop strong relationships. Many of our sponsors continue their support throughout a child's life and can see their growth from childhood, adolescence, and into young adulthood. This exchange has proven to be deeply valuable to all the people we serve, including visitors and program participants.

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

Pearl S. Buck International runs on a July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> fiscal year and operates our programs throughout the year. Interest in our historical site is growing, and we anticipate seeing the largest number of visitors to the Pearl S. Buck we have seen since our founding. We also plan to launch a new exhibition titled "Pearl and Petals", which aims to highlight the importance of flowers and plants in the life and literary works of Pearl Buck. Our program staff will also spend FY25 planning our activities to commemorate the United States' 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We will also continue our cultural programs throughout FY25, including events celebrating Diwali, Lunar New Year, Eid, and Chuseok, with planning taking place in late summer and late winter. We anticipate hosting 3,000 to 4,000 people across all these events.

Our 2025 Global Leadership Program runs from July 21<sup>st</sup> to August 1<sup>st</sup>. Program planning begins in November, with participant recruitment ongoing throughout the spring and summer of 2025. The first week will consist of learning, seminars, and workshops, with the second week set aside for the program's service project.

Our international aid programs run throughout the year, with major milestones varying depending on the needs of the local community. Overall, our international aid affiliates provide essential services such as in-person and virtual education, vital health care services in vaccinations and meals, and programs that build these participants' mental health and resiliency.

### **4. How impact and results will be demonstrated**

Pearl S. Buck International measures impact through qualitative and quantitative measures like revenue, annual visitors, number of program participants, visitor surveys, and graduation rates for students served by our international programs. Our staff uses these measures to inform our future programming and work. We've been grateful to receive positive feedback for all our programs, including:

- *"I knew Pearl S. Buck was an author, but didn't know about all her humanitarian endeavors. I learned so much more about her life, and she was an outspoken support for human rights and the international community."* - Historical Site Visitor
- *"It was a wonderful way to build self-confidence and skill as a leader, both of which are integral skills for future members of the workforce. I gained a lot from this program and would love to see others gain from it as well."* - Global Leadership Program Participant
- *"Thanks to the support of my sponsor and Pearl S. Buck International, I was able to pursue my degree in Nursing and help bring stability to me and my family. I am grateful for the unwavering love and care I have received."* - International Aid Program Participant