



AFFILIATED WITH THE PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION

## **Revitalizing Westmoreland – Year 3 Program Guidelines**

### **WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE**

The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County was founded in 1995 by local leaders of Westmoreland County to encourage philanthropy, to build a sense of place, and to embrace the spirit of community. Having merged with The Pittsburgh Foundation in 2010, The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County continues to work with county residents to encourage that spirit of giving and investment in community organizations and residents.

We believe that:

- All types of community groups: residents, business owners, nonprofits, churches, etc., should be part of determining what happens in their communities;
- Everyone and every type of organization has something to bring to the community table;
- All communities have assets: people, places, institutions;
- It is vital to engage and encourage people to be a part of where they live in order to uncover the resources and resourcefulness of a community; and
- Grant funds are not the means to an end, but merely a piece of the process in which Westmoreland County can become clean, safe, productive, and REVITALIZED.

### **OVERVIEW**

The Revitalizing Westmoreland Program is a city-based program designed to encourage new, creative ways to revitalize these seven cities of Westmoreland County: Arnold, Jeannette, Greensburg, Latrobe, Lower Burrell, Monessen, and New Kensington. Revitalizing Westmoreland provides matching grants to community nonprofits, development corporations, neighborhood associations, church groups, civic organizations, and city governments for small-to-medium sized innovative projects within city limits.

The program was created to engage, educate, strengthen, and improve the quality of life for residents of the county through funding that promotes Westmoreland County as a clean, safe, and productive place to live. Additionally, it was developed to stimulate partnerships between neighborhood residents, business associations, civic groups, nonprofits, and local government to support efforts such as safety, education initiatives, cleanup projects, beautification, and downtown façade improvements.

In 2015 and 2016, The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County granted a total of \$300,000 for 21 revitalization projects in the seven cities. The funded organizations leveraged the grant funding with matching dollars for a total investment of over \$650,000. The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County seeks to grow the success of Revitalizing Westmoreland, focusing our efforts based on the results of the 2015 and 2016 initiatives.

This year, community groups and organizations of all types will compete for grants and must match funds awarded by The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County. Matching contributions can be in the form of volunteer time, cash, or in-kind donations of goods and services.

Grants ranging from \$500 to \$40,000 will be awarded. Historically, the average grant size has been \$15,000. The match requirement is \$1 for every \$3 awarded and must be secured before beginning the project.

Applications are due no later than end of business on **October 14, 2016**. This year, applications must be submitted online through our new online application portal. The portal can be accessed by visiting [www.cfwestmoreland.org/revitalization](http://www.cfwestmoreland.org/revitalization) and pressing the 'click to apply' button. For technical assistance in regard to the use of the online application, please contact Jennifer Steinmetz, [SteinmetzJ@pghfdn.org](mailto:SteinmetzJ@pghfdn.org) or 412-391-5122 x272. For questions and guidance in regard to the application, please contact Phil Koch, Executive Director, at 724-836-4400 or [PKoch@cfwestmoreland.org](mailto:PKoch@cfwestmoreland.org)

### GOALS

Revitalizing Westmoreland will provide unique opportunities for community benefit organizations and residents to create change and to improve the quality of life in the cities of Westmoreland County. Goals of the program include:

- ❖ Creating partnerships between The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, residents, community benefit groups, and city government;
- ❖ Engaging and increasing involvement of local residents, community groups, and organizations;
- ❖ Leveraging funds to carry out city and neighborhood projects and activities; and
- ❖ Improving infrastructure and resources.

### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- ❖ Community Development Corporations
- ❖ City Agency or Department
- ❖ Church Groups
- ❖ 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organizations
- ❖ Civic or Community Groups
- ❖ Neighborhood Based Organizations

Any city/neighborhood-based group is eligible to apply, even if they are not an incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Groups without nonprofit status will need to partner with a 501(c)(3) group to serve as the Fiscal Agent (see below).

A Fiscal Agent must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and in good standing with the IRS,
- Provide a letter indicating a willingness to function as a fiscal agent, and
- Provide a 501(c)(3) IRS determination letter.

### Revitalizing Westmoreland will not provide grants to:

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Capital campaigns   | Individuals                                    |
| Endowment funds     | Political groups                               |
| For-profit entities | Religious organizations for religious purposes |
| Fundraising events  | Businesses                                     |
| Public schools      | County agencies or departments                 |

## ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

To be eligible, projects must:

- Provide clear benefit to the public, residents, neighborhood, or economy of a defined area/city;
- Have matching resources (cash, donated goods and services, volunteer time) to cover funds requested through the Revitalizing Westmoreland program. The matching requirement is \$1 for every \$3 awarded, up to a maximum of \$40,000 in grant funds.
- Specify a time frame for completion within 2017. Funds will not be payable on invoices or projects started or dated before January 1, 2017.

Examples of eligible projects:

- ❖ ADA compliance projects
- ❖ Beautification programs
- ❖ Community art/Murals
- ❖ Community gardens
- ❖ Community park/Space rejuvenation
- ❖ Façade improvement
- ❖ Streetscapes or planter programs
- ❖ Play equipment/Playgrounds
- ❖ Residential stabilization initiatives

Examples of ineligible projects and expenditures:

- ❖ Lobbying or fund raising activities
- ❖ Basic operating and/or administrative support
- ❖ Human services programs
- ❖ Projects cannot be an extension or duplication of a social service agency program
- ❖ Computers and printers
- ❖ Payments to individuals
- ❖ Public Service activities that are not new
- ❖ Projects which primarily support staff and other costs to a governmental unit or public agency
- ❖ Construction of new, or purchase of, buildings
- ❖ Nonspecific equipment
- ❖ Salaries/wages, including fringe benefits
- ❖ Scholarships

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Based on the first two years of this initiative, we believe that the following characteristics demonstrate our most successful projects.

- ❖ Projects that serve as a catalyst for additional revitalization efforts. How can your project spark additional growth within the city?
- ❖ Projects that are designed and implemented through meaningful community partnerships.
- ❖ Projects that leverage the grant dollars to access additional resources for revitalization.
- ❖ Projects that are visible, accessible, and beneficial to a significant portion of the population.

## BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS

Beautification projects on city-owned property must be coordinated via the City to determine if existing plans or projects exist for the site. This determination must be made before applications are submitted.

## FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations may not use grant funds to support inherently religious activities such as evangelism, worship, or religious instruction. We believe that faith based organizations play a vital role in our communities and are encouraged to participate in other ways.

## **2015 and 2016 REVITALIZATING WESTMORELAND GRANTEES**

Those organizations that received Revitalizing Westmoreland grant funding in 2015 or 2016 are eligible to apply for funding in 2017. These organizations are encouraged not to apply for the same project. Applicants can apply for a grant that will build upon previous successful projects. These applications will be judged on their own merit and will not be given preferential treatment.

## **MATCHING FUNDS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

Organizations must match the funds they request from the Revitalizing Westmoreland program. The value of the contribution must be equal to or greater than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total project budget. Make sure that each element used as match is needed to complete the project. For example, if \$30,000 is requested, matching funds required would be \$10,000 or greater.

Matching contributions are not reimbursable. However, they may be obtained in a variety of ways:

- ❖ Volunteer labor (valued at \$23 per hour) – value of citizen volunteer time,
- ❖ Donated supplies or equipment (indicate dollar amount for each donated supplies),
- ❖ In-kind donated supplies and equipment,
- ❖ Pro-bono professional services valued at the commercial rate of the product or service, and/or
- ❖ Cash.

You must supply letters or other documentation confirming matching resources and/or primary partners.

Staff time/wages cannot be used as a matching resource.

## **ESTIMATES/QUOTES/BIDS**

For projects requiring a significant amount of labor and materials, CFWC strongly encourages independent estimates to be submitted as an attachment to accompany the application and budget. If these documents are not submitted with the application, the Revitalization Committee of The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County reserves the right to request estimates as a contingency of funding.

## **REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

All applications will be reviewed and ranked by the Revitalization Committee of The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County.

Applications will be reviewed based on the following criteria. The project must:

- Take place within the existing zoning of one of the following cities in Westmoreland County: Jeannette, Monessen, New Kensington, Arnold, Lower Burrell, Latrobe and Greensburg;
- Demonstrate the ability to be a catalyst for greater community revitalization;
- Be innovative and provide clear benefit or improvement for the targeted area;
- Promote community pride and relationship building;
- Involve broad support from residents, businesses, and groups within a targeted area;
- Maximize partnerships through skill sharing, volunteer time, cash contributions, and the involvement of multiple groups;
- Be submitted from an organization which has the capacity to complete and finish the project;
- Have a realistic budget and timeline;
- Meet or exceed the minimum required match; and
- Build upon the strengths or assets of the area.

## **GRANT MANAGEMENT**

Projects may begin only upon the execution of a signed grant agreement between The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County and the applying organization. The grant agreement will set forth all reporting and monitoring requirements and required conditions.

Organizations will be required to submit a comprehensive final project report.

All applicant organizations must either be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, must work with a 501(c)(3) organization, be a city agency or department, or a church or religious group recognized by the IRS.

It is the responsibility of the applicant organization to ensure that all federal and city regulations are abided by and projects are conducted in accordance with regulations.

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

- All organizations will be required to sign a grant agreement agreeing to specific terms and conditions.
- Funds will be distributed directly to the applying organization by December 31, 2016 (once a signed grant agreement is received).
- Organizations are required to provide full accounting of project costs, matching funds and expenditures when requested.
- Any costs incurred before the start of the project are not reimbursable.
- Funds must be expended, and projects completed, by December 31, 2017.
- Community Foundation staff will periodically conduct on-site monitoring of any project. This may include observation of work, activities, and review of files and/or financial records.
- All organizations will be required to meet with Program Staff and to provide a close out evaluation report to CFWC.

## **APPLICATION TIMELINE AND INSTRUCTIONS**

Revitalizing Westmoreland RFP Released: **September 1, 2016**

Community Information Session – New Kensington: **September 8, 2016**

Community Information Session – Greensburg: **September 14, 2016**

Community Information Session – Monessen: **September 15, 2016**

Application Submissions Begin: **September 19, 2016**

Application Due Date: **October 14, 2016**

Grantees Announced: **November 18, 2016**

Please note, staff of the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County will be available from September 1<sup>st</sup> – October 14<sup>th</sup> to consult with applicants and conduct site visits as scheduling permits.

Applications must be submitted online using the following link: [www.cfwestmoreland.org/revitalization](http://www.cfwestmoreland.org/revitalization). Using the online application portal, applicants must upload all supporting documents including partner letters, quotes/bids, budgets, and organizational attachments. Only one application per organization can be submitted.

If your organization is unable to submit the application online because of organizational constraints, please contact Phil Koch, CFWC Executive Director at [pkoch@cfwestmoreland.org](mailto:pkoch@cfwestmoreland.org) or 724-836-4400 ex. 125.

## **QUESTIONS**

Revitalizing Westmoreland is a program of The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County. Technical assistance will be available to answer questions about the development of possible proposals or the completion of the application. See the FAQ page for standard questions, or, direct inquiries to Caleb Crousey, Development and Program Officer, 724-836-4400 or [ccrousey@cfwestmoreland.org](mailto:ccrousey@cfwestmoreland.org).

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Can an individual receive money from the Revitalizing Westmoreland Program?**

No, individuals are not eligible. Organizations applying must either have a fiscal sponsor or be a 501 (c)(3) or an exempt organization.

### **Will grant dollars be distributed evenly across the seven cities in Westmoreland County?**

Where possible we will seek to fund a project/s in each of the seven cities in Westmoreland County. However, all grant applications will be reviewed on their merits and some organizations may receive a larger share of funds than others. Not all cities are guaranteed to receive funding.

### **Does the Revitalizing Westmoreland Program fund other communities or townships in Westmoreland?**

No, at this time, funds are restricted to the seven cities. Our hope is that, in time, we will secure enough permanent funds to expand the program to townships and boroughs.

### **How much money will Revitalizing Westmoreland provide to projects and activities?**

This year, a total of \$150,000 will be provided in grant funds.

### **Why is the program only for three years?**

Through a partnership with a private funder, funds were secured to pilot the program for three years. After this time, The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County will seek to create a permanent endowment providing funds for revitalization for all geographic areas within Westmoreland County, in perpetuity.

### **How large are the grants available?**

Grants range in size from \$500 to \$40,000 with the average grant size of \$15,000. All projects require a match of \$1 to every \$3 funded. We encourage organizations to consider projects that can be completed within the timeframes, the ability to secure match, and projects that clearly benefit the community, rather than focus on the maximum award.

### **What is the timeframe for project completion?**

Projects funded in December of 2016 will be required to be completed within one calendar year.

### **Are there any grant conditions?**

Groups are required to secure the matching component through donations of cash, in-kind services, and/or volunteer time. Please refer to the 'Grant Management' section of the guidelines for a full response.

### **Is funding available to buy buildings or for new construction?**

No. The purchase of buildings or construction of new buildings is not in the scope of the Revitalizing Westmoreland mission. Only façade improvements will be eligible for renovation funding. The construction or erection of a pavilion or pagoda that fulfills a community project is permissible.

### **What is the deadline for submitting a proposal?**

Proposals can be submitted between September 19 and October 14.

**Does a group need to have a 501(c)(3)?**

It is not a requirement; however, a fiscal sponsor is required for non 501(c)(3) organizations. City agencies/departments and churches do not require fiscal sponsorship.

**How do you build upon a strength or asset?**

By listening to people and what they care about, you will get to know people, groups and institutional leaders and discover the many strengths of your community. You can then connect, mobilize and utilize what you already have to create something fresh and innovational.

**How do you go about securing the required match?**

Each project will require any number of resources. Once you can define what those resources are, you can match up who or what might fulfill that match. The value of donated goods and services is volunteer time, additional financial resources, or a match. Staff time/wages cannot be included as a matching resource.

**Will Revitalizing Westmoreland fund the cost of personnel?**

No, the program will not fund requests to pay salaries or wages, including fringe benefits. Grant funds can be used to pay for contract services and in some instances as stipends for participation and recognition of commitment to a project.

**How many times will Revitalizing Westmoreland fund a city agency or organization?**

Groups can only be funded once per year, but the geographical location may receive any number of grants depending on applications. Groups can reapply in subsequent years.

**Can I get help putting together a grant proposal?**

Yes, The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County will host information sessions to review the RFP and answer any questions. Additionally, we will also provide one-on-one assistance to organizations that need help identifying projects and to conduct site visits between September 1<sup>st</sup> and October 14<sup>th</sup> and scheduling permits. Please contact us at 724-836-4400 if you need assistance.

**How long will it take to fund a project once an application is submitted?**

Proposals will be reviewed and funding decisions announced by November 18, 2016. Once all required paperwork is processed, the grant funds will be released. Projects can start anytime in 2017, but must be completed by the end of that year.