



2021 Revitalizing Westmoreland Program Guidelines

WHO WE ARE

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. Our mission is to encourage local residents to become philanthropists, provide grants that support a wide variety of charitable organizations, and serve as a community leader. 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.

In 2019, the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County completed a planning process to more clearly articulate its funding priorities through the Comprehensive Community Investment Strategy. The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the needs of vulnerable populations in the county while helping to develop the places in which they live. Grants to help develop the places in which vulnerable populations live will continue to be distributed through Revitalizing Westmoreland, as described in these program guidelines.

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

VISION: Westmoreland County will be a vibrant community where citizens are enthused and energized to live, work and share in its abundant resources.

MISSION: The mission of the Comprehensive Community Investment Strategy is to provide unique opportunities for community benefit organizations and residents to create transformational change in vulnerable communities by collaboratively improving community assets, strengthening organizations and supporting improved quality of life for all people.

VALUES: The following values help to frame the Comprehensive Community Investment Strategy.

- **Relationships** – *Facilitating collaboration by making connections and building alliances across sectors, organizations, and groups, including local leaders and community members.*
- **Innovation** – *Working creatively to rethink how to build and invest in the community and people.*
- **Impact** – *Ensuring the value of investments by strengthening the capacity of individuals, communities, and organizations.*

REVITALIZING WESTMORELAND – OVERVIEW

Revitalizing Westmoreland is a program designed to encourage new, creative ways to revitalize vulnerable communities in Westmoreland County. 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, capital projects.

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.

Since the inception of the program in 2015, The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County has granted a total of \$978,308 for over 56 revitalization projects in Westmoreland County. The funded organizations leveraged the grants with matching dollars for a total investment of over \$2,300,000.

In 2021, funding priority will be placed on communities which have a majority of households with low to moderate income levels. These communities have been identified by The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) using the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year 2011-2015 low-and moderate-income summary data and HUD's Income Limits for Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan Areas data. For the Revitalizing Westmoreland Program Guidelines, we will refer to these areas using the term "vulnerable communities".

Please use the following [mapping tool](#) to verify if your Revitalizing Westmoreland project falls within these identified areas. <https://arcg.is/5WCmL>. In the mapping tool, please enter the address of the location in which you are proposing your project. If the location is in the darker colored area, it is identified as being in a vulnerable community. Priority will be given to projects in these areas, but the foundation will accept applications from any community in Westmoreland County.

Grants up to \$40,000 will be awarded. Historically, the average grant size has been \$20,000. Organizations must provide match funding in the form of cash, volunteer hours, or in-kind support. The match requirement is \$1 for every \$2 awarded and must be secured before beginning the project.

Applications are due by 11:59pm on **March 26, 2020**. Applications must be submitted online through our online application portal. The portal can be accessed by visiting <https://cfwestmoreland.org/revitalizing-westmoreland> and pressing the 'click to apply' button.

For technical assistance regarding the use of the online application, please contact Jennifer Steinmetz, SteinmetzJ@pghfdn.org or 412-391-5122 x272.

For questions and guidance regarding the application itself, please contact Phil Koch, Vice President of Policy and Community Impact for The Pittsburgh Foundation at kochp@pghfdn.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 Westmoreland County. Goals of the program include:

- Create partnerships between municipalities, community benefit organizations, and residents,
- Leverage funds through matching dollars,
- Expand infrastructure, resources, capital upgrades, and assets that are a catalyst for additional community improvements, and/or
- Connect projects to formal and informal community benefit plans as well as the county comprehensive plan, Reimagining Our Westmoreland.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organizations
- Cities, Townships, Boroughs, or Municipalities
- Community Development Corporations
- Faith Based Organizations
- Civic or Community Groups
- Neighborhood 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 or a local governmental entity to serve as the Fiscal Agent (see below).

A Fiscal Agent must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) charitable organization (or a local governmental entity) 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:

- For-profit entities
- Individuals
- Political Groups
- Religious Organization for Religious Purposes
- Individual Businesses (unless they are working in collaboration)

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

To be eligible, projects must:

- **Provide a Match:** Applicants must commit to providing a financial match of 2:1 towards the project. This means that for every \$2.00 requested, the organization must provide \$1.00. This can be committed in the form of additional cash resources, in-kind support, or volunteer hours. Each volunteer hour is calculated at \$27.20/hour as calculated by Independent Sector. Staff time/wages cannot be used as a matching resource.

- **Demonstrate Transformational Characteristics:** The most successful projects are those that can demonstrate the ability to spark additional community growth through the effective completion of the project. We value projects that serve as a catalyst for change, creating a ripple effect or domino effect throughout the community.
- **Include Collaboration:** Applicants will need to demonstrate how they are going to work with others to generate ideas and broad-based support. Successful projects will include multiple organizations and voices around the table in the planning and implementation process.
- **Connect to a Formal or Informal Plan:** Each project will be required to be connected to a formal or informal community plan. Some cities, borough, and townships have already developed formalized community plans. If this is the case, the projects must be in line with that local plan. If this is not the case, the applicant must demonstrate their effort to collaborate with the local governing body and community groups to achieve a shared vision. Additionally, the project must make a connection to the Westmoreland County comprehensive plan, Reimagining Our Westmoreland. <https://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/654/Comprehensive-Plan>

Examples of eligible projects:

- Main Street Initiatives
- Façade Improvement Programs
- Streetscape or Planter Programs
- Beautification Programs
- Public Art
- Green Space Developments
- Playgrounds
- ADA Compliance Projects
- Residential Stabilization Initiatives

Examples of ineligible projects and expenditures:

- Capital Campaigns
- Endowment Funds
- Lobbying
- Operating or Administrative Support
- Human Services Programs
- Community Programs, Grassroots Organizing, or Public Service Activities
- Computers, Printers, or Office Technology
- Staff Support for Governmental Units or Public Agencies
- Salaries/Wages, including Fringe Benefits
- Scholarships

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

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/community? How is it transformational?
- 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.
- Projects that are tied to a greater plan or purpose.
- Projects that are implemented in vulnerable communities.
- Projects that serve as hope and inspiration for the greater community.

WRITTEN COMMITMENTS

We are asking that you collaborate with multiple groups, which might include governmental agencies, informal community groups, nonprofit organizations, institutions of faith, and/or universities. Any party mentioned in the application must submit a letter of support, confirming their commitment to the project. For example, if a community group wants to do a project at a local park, the township must submit a letter agreeing that the project can be carried out.

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.

BUSINESSES AND FOR-PROFIT ENTITIES

Individuals businesses may not apply if the intention of the grant is to solely benefit that specific business. Revitalizing Westmoreland funds may be used to benefit multiple businesses or a business district. For example, a community development association might apply to implement a façade improvement program or main street beautification initiative. This is an acceptable use of funds and would benefit multiple for-profit businesses and the business community as a whole.

ESTIMATES/QUOTES/BIDS

For projects requiring a significant amount of labor and materials, CFWC strongly encourages independent estimates be submitted as attachments to accompany the application and budget. If these documents are not submitted with the application, the Grants 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 Grants Committee of The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County using the criteria listed above.

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 one year after the onset of the project.

It is the responsibility of the applicant 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 organizations by May 15, 2021 (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 June 1, 2022.
- 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 provide a closeout evaluation report to the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County.

APPLICATION TIMELINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

Program Guidelines Released and Application Process Opens: January 19, 2021

Community RFP Information Sessions (virtual):

Session 1: February 2, 2021 from 4:00-5:00 pm

Register at:

https://pghfdn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcqfuygqT4jEtWBOQu21fzAS_CFHF--EsGI

- **Session 2:** Feb 11 from 10:00-11:00 am

Register at:

<https://pghfdn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcpc-CoqDosEte1LekkMEDK0SgNjXvE87T>

Application Consultation Open Houses (virtual):

Consultations will be pre-scheduled in 30-minute increments. Please email Allison Womer (awomer@cfwestmoreland.org) to schedule a 30-minute session during one of the listed dates. Requests must be made at least 24 hours before the consultation window block.

- **Session 1:** February 23, 2021, from 1:00-4:00 pm
- **Session 2:** March 4, 2021 from 9:00- noon

Individual consultation services available upon request.

Application Due Date: March 26, 2021

Grantees Announced: April 30, 2021

Please note, staff of the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County will be available from January 19 – March 19 to consult with applicants and conduct site visits as scheduling permits. We will also be hosting online application consultations on the dates listed above for those that would like to meet with foundation staff and other community planning consultants to help brainstorm ideas, explore options, and assist with applications including understanding how their projects might connect with Reimagining Our Westmoreland, the Westmoreland County comprehensive plan.

Applications must be submitted online using the following link:
<https://cfwestmoreland.org/revitalizing-westmoreland>. Using the online application portal, applicants must upload all supporting documents including partnership letters, quotes/bids, budgets, and organizational attachments. Only one application per organization can be submitted.