



2025 Visionaries Grant Guidelines

The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County was founded in 1995 by local leaders of Westmoreland County to encourage philanthropy, build a sense of place and embrace the spirit of community. Merging 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. Our mission is to encourage residents to become PHILANTHROPISTS, to provide GRANTS that support a wide variety of nonprofit organizations and serve as a COMMUNITY LEADER.



Visionaries is an initiative of The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County... a fresh approach to philanthropy. It consists of young professional leaders throughout Westmoreland County who are committed to making our community a better place. Our mission is to nurture philanthropic leadership among young people through engagement, education, grant making and the development of a permanent endowment to support initiatives throughout the county.

The Visionaries participate in a series of workshops to learn about challenges, needs and opportunities in Westmoreland County. They also participate in exercises to demonstrate how they can develop their personal philanthropy and give back to the community. With this knowledge, the group selects a focus for grantmaking and issues guidelines to solicit proposals from the nonprofit community. Ultimately, three applicants are selected as finalists, receive a grant and attend a “Pitch-In Party” where they present their case for funding from attendees made up of organization partners, board members, former visionaries and members of the community.

STATEMENT OF NEED

The pandemic drew attention to many needs within our community. Among them are two key areas of concern among youth living in Westmoreland County – **mental health and food insecurity**. The Visionaries have identified both as their areas of focus for the 2025 RFP.

In recent years, the country experienced an increase in individuals suffering from depression, isolation, anxiety, and post- traumatic stress and amplified other existing mental health conditions. Children and young people were one of the demographics greatly impacted during COVID, dealing with the effects of being removed from their classrooms, shifting to a new way of learning, being separated from their social networks and fearing the future. Not to mention the sense of loss felt by all.

Food insecurity also remains prevalent within our community as the cost of goods and living increases, while many people grapple to make ends meet and provide enough food for their families. Children are particularly vulnerable as it affects their physical wellbeing and their ability to learn.

GRANT OPPORTUNITY

The Visionaries are seeking proposals from nonprofit organizations with a **budget of \$1 million or less** that address **mental health and/or food insecurity** needs of **youth** living in Westmoreland County.

Three organizations will be selected to receive a \$6,000 grant for operating support and will present at the **September 23 Pitch-In Party** to spread awareness of their work and crowdsource additional funding from attendees. Applicants must provide direct services.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS & APPLICANTS

Applicants must:

- Be a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization serving communities in Westmoreland County.
- Have a budget of \$1 million or less.
- Address mental health and/or food insecurity of youth living in Westmoreland County.
- Attend the Visionaries Pitch Party on September 23 at Knead Community Café in New Kensington if selected as a finalist.
- Access the online portal to apply at <https://cfwestmoreland.org/visionaries>.

Visionary grants will not provide grants to:

- Capital campaigns
- Endowment funds
- For-profit entities
- Fundraising events
- Individual business owners
- Political groups
- Religious organizations for religious purposes
- Businesses (direct financial support)

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Organization provides programs and services in alignment with the eligible projects and applicants criteria listed above.
- Offers innovative solutions.
- Demonstrates track record of success.
- Maximizes partnerships whenever applicable.

Additionally, applicants will be asked to submit the following information:

- IRS Determination letter
- Current Board Member roster
- Copy of 2025 Operating budget

All applications meeting the basic requirements will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of Visionaries.

AWARDS

Three organizations will be selected to receive a \$6,000 grant for operating support. Each will present their case for additional funding at the Visionaries “Pitch-In Party” event on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 6:00pm at Knead Community Café in New Kensington. Party attendees can choose to donate money to cast a vote for their favorite pitch, and each presenting organization will receive all proceeds from the voting. In addition, a People’s Choice Award of \$1,000 and two runner-up awards of \$500 each will be given to the organization based on the votes received.

Grant recipients must be able to attend the September 23 event to be eligible for funding consideration.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

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| July 29, 2025 | RFP Released/Application Opens |
| August 14, 2025 | Application Closes |
| September 10, 2025 | Finalists Announced |
| September 23, 2025 | Pitch Party/Awardees Announced |

The online application portal can be found at <https://cfwestmoreland.org/visionaries>. **All applications must be submitted using the online application portal through our parent organization, The Pittsburgh Foundation.**

QUESTIONS

Visionaries is a program of The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County. Please direct questions about the grant guidelines to Sara Swaney at swaneys@cfwestmoreland.org.