

# Opportunity Fund for Southshire Youth (2024)

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## *Vermont Community Foundation*

### *Guidelines*

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Established in 2018, the Opportunity Fund for Southshire Youth is a growing fund with the goal of ensuring a source of revenue for dynamic and innovative youth programs in Bennington, North Bennington, Pownal, Shaftsbury, and Woodford in perpetuity.

The Opportunity Fund for Southshire youth awards grants for creative and effective initiatives that empower and support Bennington-area teenagers, particularly those facing challenges and limited access to opportunities due to economic distress, disengagement from school, mental health issues, racism, gender identity, disability, legal status, or other reasons.

In 2024, the Opportunity Fund for Southshire Youth aims to support spaces, activities, and opportunities for youth to gather, connect, and feel a sense of belonging. The four priority areas of the grant program include youth-led or youth-focused events, programs, or projects that:

- Bring youth together, especially those that introduce a new activity and/or have a low barrier to access. Examples include:
  - Themed camp
  - Festival/celebration
  - Intramural sport
  - Casual club or extracurricular;
- Create, maintain, or expand spaces or places that allow youth to gather, connect, and share experiences in formal and informal ways;
- Provide opportunity and access for youth facing hardships;
- Encourage feelings of belonging and increase inclusion.

The Fund will support programs that benefit teenagers entering or enrolled in 6th through 12th grades (typically ages 12 to 18) including students at Mount Anthony Middle School or High School and/or those who live in the communities served by those schools.

All applicants to this grant program must meet the guidelines on the Opportunity Fund for Southshire Youth page on the Vermont Community Foundation website. Please view the website for the most current deadline information.

For questions regarding the application process, please contact Jane Mulcahy, Program

Associate for Grantmaking at 802-828-7760 or [jmulcahy@vermontcf.org](mailto:jmulcahy@vermontcf.org).

**Applications will be accepted between September 3 - October 15, 2024. Applications must be received by 5PM on Tuesday, October 15 in order to be considered. No late applications will be accepted.**

## *Organizational Questions Part I*

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**Please share the mission of the organization.\***

*Character Limit: 500*

**Issues your organization works to address (words not sentences).\***

Ex. homelessness, food insecurity, carbon emissions, forest fragmentation, childcare, substance misuse.

*Character Limit: 500*

**Which areas of the state does the organization serve?\***

*Choose all that apply.*

### **Choices**

Statewide  
Addison County  
Bennington County  
Caledonia County  
Chittenden County  
Essex County  
Franklin County  
Grand Isle County  
Lamoille County  
Orange County  
Orleans County  
Rutland County  
Washington County  
Windham County  
Windsor County

**What is your organization's annual operating budget?\***

*Character Limit: 20*

**Did you receive a grant from the Community Foundation in either 2022 or 2023?\***

### **Choices**

Yes  
No  
Unsure

## Financial Statements\*

Upload a copy of your organization's profit/loss statement and balance sheet from its most recently completed fiscal year. Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our Online Grants Center FAQ for more details.

*File Size Limit: 3 MB*

## What status best describes the applicant?\*

Our grants must be paid to a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, place of worship/religious group, or town/municipal agency. If your organization or group does not fall into one of these categories, you will need to use a fiscal sponsor. If you have questions, please contact 802-388-3355 ext. 222. We are happy to talk through your options.

### Choices

Municipal entity (i.e., town, public school, or other municipal department or agency)

Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit

Place of worship or religious group

Other - Please provide details in your answer to the next question.

## Use this space to provide additional information about the applicant's status. (If Applicable)

If you have a fiscal sponsor—or if you operate under the umbrella of a larger registered nonprofit—provide their name below.

*Character Limit: 200*

## Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form (If Applicable)

Download a blank Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form ([click here to download the form](#)) and forward it to your fiscal sponsor to print, fill out, and sign. The form must be filled out completely and you must use the official VCF form. Please call 802-388-3355 if you have questions.

**Upload the form here.**

*File Size Limit: 3 MB*

## Which of the following strategic focus area(s) aligns best with the work of your organization?\*

Choose all that apply.

### Choices

Economic Equity

Climate & Environment

Health & Wellbeing

Education & Training

Democracy, Trust, & Community Leadership

## *Economic Equity*

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**Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Economic Equity.**

*Choose all that apply.*

### **Choices**

Enabling Home Ownership and Housing Creation  
Supporting Economic Innovation  
Catalyzing Business Ownership and Entrepreneurship

### **Other:**

*Character Limit: 500*

## *Climate & Environment*

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**Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Climate & Environment.**

*Choose all that apply.*

### **Choices**

Improving Land Use and the Forest Economy  
Strengthening Farm Viability and Food Systems  
Protecting Climate and Environmental Justice  
Promoting Clean and Efficient Energy Use

### **Other:**

*Character Limit: 500*

## *Health & Wellbeing*

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**Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Health & Wellbeing.**

*Choose all that apply.*

### **Choices**

Supporting Mental Health and Wellness  
Ensuring Health Equity  
Helping Youth to Thrive  
Caring for Older Vermonters  
Fostering Social Connectivity  
Other

### **Other:**

*Character Limit: 500*

## *Education & Training*

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Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Education & Training.

*Choose all that apply.*

### Choices

Addressing College Affordability, Access, and Persistence  
Building Pathways to Promising Careers  
Strengthening Early Childhood Education and Childcare  
Increasing Access to Expanded Learning Opportunities  
Other

### Other:

*Character Limit: 500*

## *Democracy, Trust, & Community Leadership*

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Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Democracy, Trust, Leadership.

*Choose all that apply.*

### Choices

Engaging Vermonters in Decision Making and Democracy  
Building Trust and Connection  
Supporting Strong, Skilled Community Leaders  
Exploring Innovations in Democracy  
Other

### Other:

*Character Limit: 500*

## *Application Questions*

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### Project Name\*

*Character Limit: 100*

### Project Summary\*

Provide a concise overview of the project and what it will accomplish in one or two sentences. Please use complete sentences - this description may be used in publications.

*Character Limit: 500*

### Total Amount Requested\*

Minimum \$500 / Maximum \$5,000

*Character Limit: 20*

### Geographic Area\*

Choose all that apply.

#### Choices

- Bennington
- North Bennington
- Pownal
- Shaftsbury
- Woodford

### Alignment with Funding Priorities\*

How does your project align with the Opportunity Fund for Southshire Youth's funding priorities? *Check all that apply.*

In 2024, the Opportunity Fund for Southshire Youth aims to support spaces, activities, and opportunities for youth to gather, connect, and feel a sense of belonging. The four priority areas of the grant program include youth-led or youth-focused events, programs, or projects that:

#### Choices

- Bring youth together around an activity
- Create spaces or places that allow youth to gather, connect, and share experiences
- Provide opportunity and access for youth facing hardships
- Encourage feelings of belonging and increase inclusion

### Project Description\*

Describe your project, your project partners, the work you will do, and the overall timeline.

*Character Limit: 3000*

### Youth and Community Engagement\*

Please describe how youth have been involved in decision-making regarding this idea or project. We encourage you to attach up to two letters of support from teenagers involved with the project planning or implementation in addition to your answer.

*Character Limit: 2000*

### Youth and Community Benefit\*

Please describe the youth that will be engaged with and benefit from this project. When possible, please include the number of youth that will benefit.

*Character Limit: 2000*

## Project Outcomes\*

Tell us how this project will cover one or more of the 2024 grant priority areas.

The four priority areas of the grant program include youth-led or youth-focused events, programs, or projects that:

- Bring youth together, especially those that introduce a new activity and/or have a low barrier to access.
- Create, maintain, or expand spaces or places that allow youth to gather, connect, and share experiences in formal and informal ways;
- Provide opportunity and access for youth facing hardships;
- Encourage feelings of belonging and increase inclusion.

*Character Limit: 3000*

## Letter of Support (Optional)

*File Size Limit: 2 MB*

## Letter of Support (Optional)

*File Size Limit: 2 MB*

## Project Budget - Itemized (PDF)\*

Attach a copy of your itemized project budget. You should include both expenses and revenue, including pending and secured support. *Sample budget documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our [Resources for Grantseekers page](#) for more details.*

*File Size Limit: 3 MB*

## Project Budget - Narrative\*

Please feel free to include additional information about the budget here or within the budget itself.

*Character Limit: 1000*

## Bonus Words (Optional)

What else should we know about the project that we didn't ask?

*Character Limit: 1200*

## Organizational Questions Part II

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**Which of the following populations does your organization serve? Please check all that apply.\***

**Choices**

- Children and youth
- Families
- Older Vermonters (age 65+)
- Small, rural communities
- Low-income or those living in poverty
- Black, Brown, or other People of Color
- Indigenous People
- LGBTQ+
- People with disabilities or special needs
- No special populations
- Unsure
- Other, describe:

**Other:**

*Character Limit: 500*

**Approximately how many people do you serve on a regular basis during the course of a year?\***

*If your service level varies from year to year, you can use an estimate of the number you served in the last year.*

**Choices**

- Fewer than 100
- 100-499
- 500-999
- 1,000-4,999
- 5,000-24,999
- 25,000-50,000
- More than 50,000
- Unsure

**How many years has your organization existed?\***

**Choices**

- Less than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21-50 years
- More than 50 years
- Unsure

**How many paid full-time employees or the equivalent does your organization have?\***

**Choices**

- no paid employees
- 1-2 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- 3-10 full-time employees (or equivalent)
- 11-20 full-time employees (or equivalent)



21-30 full-time employees (or equivalent)  
 31-50 full-time employees (or equivalent)  
 51-100 full-time employees (or equivalent)  
 More than 100 full-time employees (or equivalent)  
 Unsure

## What are the demographics of your organization's leadership? Please check all that apply.\*

### Choices

BIPOC led organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)  
 BIPOC members on the Board of Directors  
 LGBTQ+ led organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)  
 LGBTQ+ members on the Board of Directors  
 People with disabilities lead the organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)  
 People with disabilities are members of the Board of Directors  
 None of the above  
 Unknown or prefer not to say  
 Other, describe:

### Other:

*Character Limit: 500*

## *Save and Submit*

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All applications must be submitted electronically to the Vermont Community Foundation through the application form in the Online Grants Manager. Applications will not be accepted by mail or email. If you have questions about the Online Grants Manager, please contact: [jmulcahy@vermontcf.org](mailto:jmulcahy@vermontcf.org) or 802-828-7760.

**2024 deadline: 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 15.**

*By submitting your application to the Vermont Community Foundation, you give us permission to share your application and information about your project with other potential funders, both individuals and foundations.*