

Opportunity Fund for Southshire Youth (2024)

Vermont Community Foundation

Guidelines

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 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.