



BHWF History & Grantmaking Guidelines

History

The Berwick Health and Wellness Fund (BHWF) is the original and largest component fund of the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation. The fund, valued at approximately \$30 million, was created through the sale of the Berwick Hospital in 1999 from nonprofit to for-profit ownership. The Foundation seeks to enrich the lives of the residents of the hospital's service area by using the investments from the BHWF to promote individual and community health and well-being.

The mission of the Berwick Health and Wellness Fund is to select, identify, and invest in programs and projects that improve the health and welfare of the community. The terms "health" and "wellness" are interpreted in a broad sense to include a wide variety of efforts that have an impact on the community's overall well-being.

The geographic boundaries of the BHWF encompass 8 boroughs and 15 townships in eastern Columbia County and lower/western Luzerne County in northeastern Pennsylvania. Home to approximately 55,000 residents, this region is a historic intersection of once thriving iron manufacturing, anthracite coal mining, railways and canals. The diverse terrain is bisected by the north branch of the Susquehanna River and includes small cities, rural villages, new residential communities, farmlands and forest.

Service Area

All grants must benefit the residents and communities within the defined BHWF service area (23 locales):

- **Columbia County Boroughs:** Berwick Borough*, Benton Borough, Briar Creek Borough, Stillwater Borough. **Columbia County Townships:** Benton Township, Briar Creek Township, Fishing Creek Township, Mifflin Township, North Centre Township, and South Centre Township
 - **Luzerne County Boroughs:** Berwick Borough*, Conyngham Borough, Nescopeck Borough, New Columbus Borough, and Shickshinny Borough. **Luzerne County Townships:** Butler Township, Conyngham Township, Hollenback Township, Hunlock Township, Huntington Township, Nescopeck Township, Salem Township, Sugarloaf Township, and Union Township
- *Berwick Borough is in both Columbia and Luzerne Counties

Grantmaking Approach

Central Susquehanna Community Foundation favors preventive approaches and collaborative endeavors that enhance community health and wellness. Proposals receiving the most favorable review show evidence of:

- A solid understanding of community needs, current research in the field and best practices in service delivery
- A clear connection between the organization's mission and the project for which funds are requested
- Measurable outcomes and a practical plan for reaching them, outcomes must be measurable

- Concrete plan to measure and validate impact of the project
- Staff and/or volunteers who will be able to undertake the project successfully
- An ability to leverage or match grant dollars from other sources
- A plan to sustain the project beyond the grant period
- Who the applicant will collaborate with and how

Priority Areas of Interest:

The Foundation board invests in programs and projects that promote overall health and wellness within the geographic boundaries of the BHWF. In the grant review process, priority is given to proposals that respond to one or more of the areas of need identified by a community assessment process:

- Ensuring that children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school
- Promoting oral health for residents who lack access to regular dental care
- Reducing the risks of cardiovascular disease through nutrition, physical activity and tobacco-free lifestyles
- Improving mental and behavioral health through community awareness, support and treatment

Grant Types:

- Program support
- Capital projects (equipment and facilities)
- General operating expenses

Duration of Grants:

- One-year grants (preferred)
- Multi-year grants (considered on an individual project basis)

Please note: It is not the intention of the Foundation to establish permanent or dependent relationships with grantees. The applicant must demonstrate sustainability without future support of the Foundation. The Foundation should build a foundation for future growth.

Size of Grants:

- Grant size varies per the type of project, the needs of the organization and the target population
- Approximately 70% of grants awarded are \$10,000 and under
- Approximately 30% of grants awarded are over \$10,000
- Recommended grant amounts are determined based on the applicant's number of residents served within the service area

Number of Applications:

- There is no limit on the number of applications an organization may submit; however, organizations are strongly encouraged to submit few applications and to prioritize their requests accordingly.
- Organizations that submit more than one application must also submit a request prioritization form. The prioritization form may be

Limitations:

- Organization must hold 501(c)3 nonprofit status - if you are unsure if your organization qualifies to receive a grant, send your EIN # to CSCF program officer to verify
- All grants must benefit the residents and communities within the defined BHWF service area

Miscellaneous Grantmaking Guidelines

Religious Organizations

- Foundation does not fund sectarian or explicitly religious activity
- The Foundation welcomes religious or faith-based organizations with tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) status to apply for grants to support projects or programs that (a) broadly benefit the communities within the geographic boundaries of the CSCF; (b) do not contain explicit religious content, material or instruction; (c) serve participants without limitation to religious belief; and (d) do not promote a religious ideology

Playground Projects

- The Foundation welcomes requests for playgrounds and will consider a grant match up to \$10,000 if the following criteria are met:
 - Project has community/neighborhood support
 - Equipment and design geared for age group (for example: early childhood) and encourages physical activity and exercise
 - Meets current industry standards and practices for child safety
 - Consideration will be given to:
 - Child safety and children’s physical development
 - “Sweat equity”; volunteer contributions
 - Community use; meets a community/neighborhood need – do other nearby playgrounds already exist
 - Open and available to neighborhood outside of school hours
 - Older playgrounds in need of being replaced because safety standards/codes have changed
 - A project located on the grounds of a school has the support of the school administrator
 - Leveraged funds:
 - Evidence of community support, including some financial support/fundraising
 - Project attracts diverse funding sources including local businesses, the Parent Teacher Organization, etc.
 - Includes a plan for regular inspection and maintenance

Grant Review Process

- The grant timeline is reviewed and approved by the BHWF advisory committee annually in November, this timeline is made available to all applicants at the grant workshop.
- Grant proposals are reviewed and recommended by the CSCF program officer and the BHWF Advisory committee. The following tools are utilized during the review process.
 - Review sheet used for evaluating applications during the competitive grantround, the review sheet is a direct reflection of the requirements and priorities outlined in the grant guidelines
 - Committee may ask additional questions to applicants via email during the grant review process
- Upon recommendation by BHWF advisory committee, all grants are ratified by the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation Board of Directors