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**Applicant Information Session**

**October 2020**



**The  
Community Fund  
of Darien**

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# Agenda:

- Why restructure?
- What changes are we making?
  - What is the same? What is different?
  - Process Flow Chart
  - Grants Eligibility
  - Funding Goals
  - Criteria used for evaluation
  - Timeline and Dates
- Questions

# Why is TCF Revising Grants Process?

- Funding goals scheduled to be revised in 4Q20
- Small grants process needed updating/not working as intended
- Streamline process for small grant applicants under \$5K
- Composition of TCF Grants committee changed in past 2 years creating opportunity to perform internal analysis of our process
- Incorporate recommendations from May 2020 Strategic Plan (HBS Community Partners)
- Desire to streamline and enhance transparency of our process
- Desire to learn about and potentially include new grantees
- Fund programs and organizations that closely link to our new funding goals

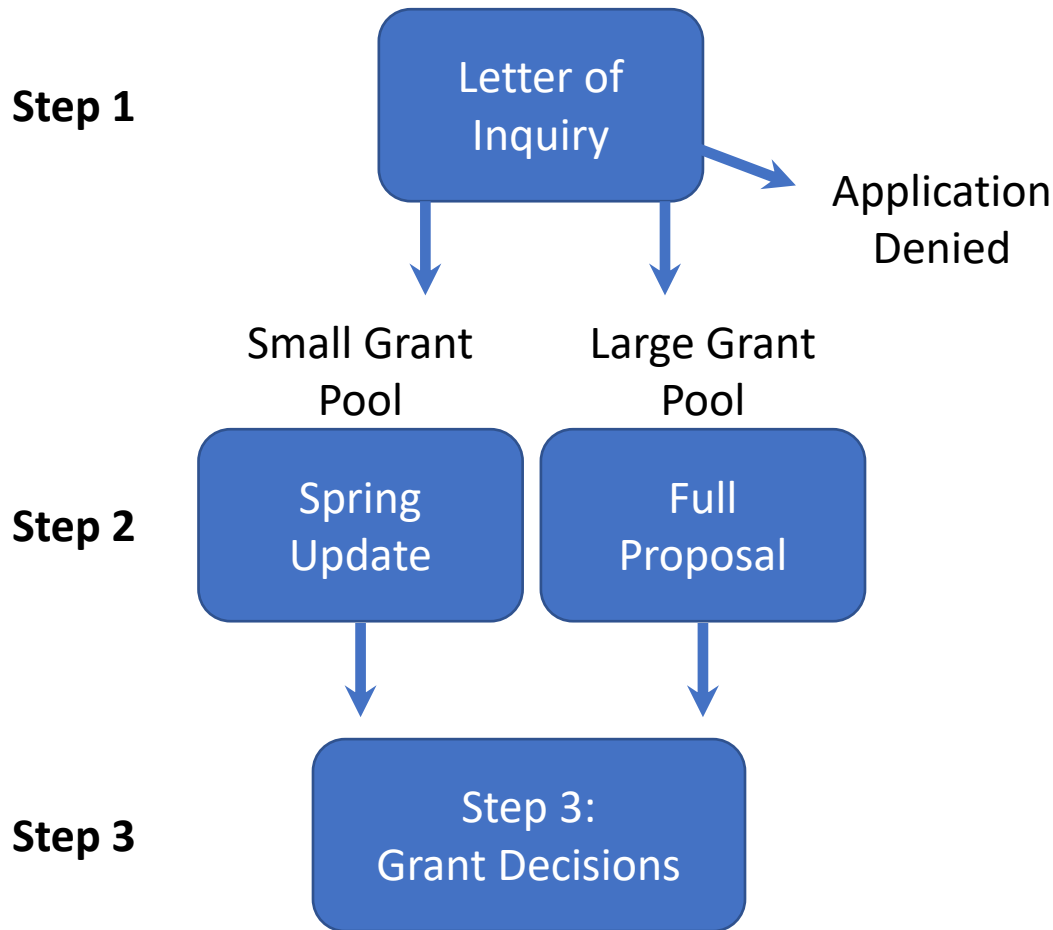
# What is staying the same?

- Investing in our community through vital nonprofit health and human services that meet our funding goals
- Catchment area of Darien, Norwalk and Stamford
- Target to fund approximately same number of nonprofits each year (25-35)
- Fund areas of community need that research indicates are critical and increasing
- Fund areas of community need that are high priority to donors
- Use community grant review volunteers to assist with evaluation
- Total grants, while determined by TCF fundraising, expected to stay in the \$600K range

# What is different?

- Grant application open to all eligible nonprofits; no longer by invite only
- Grants process will be 2 steps: 1) LOI and 2) Full Proposal
- Small grants and large grants combined into one cycle
- Small grants (\$5,000) will only participate in LOI to limit workload (of nonprofits and volunteers)
- Eligibility requirements refined
- Funding goals updated
- Process will be more competitive, and some applicants will not receive funding
- Applicants can apply for programs or general operating support
  - If your organization has many programs or larger budget, we recommend applying for a program
- Grants will range from \$5,000 - \$40,000

# Process Flow Chart



## Step 1:

- Due Nov. 20, 2020
- All eligible nonprofits can apply
- Reviewed by GEC (and board volunteers)
- NPOs notified Jan. 13, 2021 if invited to Full Proposal or if denied

## Step 2: Full Proposal Only

- Due Feb. 19, 2021
- Will be grouped by need and reviewed by grant panelists
- Panelists will conduct site visits for large grant applicants
- Panelists will rank NPOs to determine funding

## Step 3:

- Panelists will present to GEC in May 2021
- GEC will select 25-35 organizations to fund including small grants of \$5000
- GEC will determine final allocation of funding
- Grants awarded at end of FY- July 2021

# Eligibility Requirements

The Community Fund of Darien invests in the community by making grants to vital, nonprofit health and human services organizations that achieve the following:

Be a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization

Address Basic Needs, Youth Success, Workforce Development or Community Health

Recipients of applicant's services predominantly reside in Darien, Stamford or Norwalk

Typical Range of Grants  
\$5000 to \$40,000

Minimum 3 years of audited financials

Adhere to a non-discrimination policy

Individuals  
Annual Appeals  
Fundraising Events  
Membership Drives

Capital Projects  
Capital Campaigns  
Endowment Campaigns  
Political or Lobbying Efforts

## Ineligible

Scholarships  
Religious Activities  
Research  
Conference Fees

Environmental Programs  
Art Programs  
Cultural Programs

Full information regarding eligibility requirements can be found on our website.

# Funding Goals

Our vision is for all community members to have the opportunity to reach their full potential as healthy, educated, and self-sufficient individuals.

## BASIC NEEDS

- Reduce Food Insecurity
- Homelessness to Housing
- Emergency Assistance
- Greater Self-sufficiency thru case management

## YOUTH SUCCESS

- Prepare Young Children for Kindergarten
- Enhance Academic Performance for Underserved
- Prepare High School Students for Graduation
- Increase Engagement
- Promote Leadership, Independence and Positive Asset Development
- Connect Youth and Their Families to Social Services

## COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Improve Access to Physical Healthcare
- Improve Access to Mental Health Services
- Improve Access to Substance Abuse Treatment Programs

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Teach Skills Geared Towards In-Demand Industries
- Identify Potential Employers
- Improve Employment Opportunities and Economic Independence
- Promote Educational and Employment Opportunities for Young Adults
- Support Financial Independence
- Support Childcare & Eldercare Services to Enable Work Outside Home

Indicators have been developed for each funding segment to ensure success can be measured for each grantee. Full information regarding updated funding goals can be found on our website.



# Criteria used for evaluation:

Community Need

Target Population

% in Darien, Stamford and Norwalk

Track Record

Ability to measure outcomes

Demonstrated Impact

Strong Leadership  
Strong Board  
Planning and Vision

Ability to adapt to challenges  
Response to COVID

Financial stability  
Fiscal strength  
Defined use of funds

# Timeline

- Mon Oct 26: Open LOI on Smarter Select
- **November 20: LOI Due**
- Nov-Dec: TCF Grants committee reviews LOI
- Jan 13: Nonprofits are notified if selected to submit Full Application.
- Mon Jan 21: Smarter Select opens for application
- **Fri Feb 19: Full Application due**
- March-April: Organization host site visits for grant review panels
- May: Grant review panels submit recommendations to TCF Grants Committee
- July: Grants announced and awarded

Questions?