# Welcome

## Trusted Response Fund: Phase II Information Session

Wednesday, October 14th
1:00 – 2:00 PM

LEHIGH VALLEY
Community Foundation

CONNECT. GROW. FUND.

**The staff  presentation will be recorded. The recording will stop before the Q&A.**

# Meet the Team

Megan Barnes Briggs (she/her)
Vice President,
Community Investments

Robyn Weaver (she/her)
Program Officer,
Capacity Building

Mary Mancino (she/her)
Program Associate

# Goals of the Information Session

- Share the context of this grant application
- Ensure we are being transparent
- Answer your questions

# Agenda for Today

- Overview of LVCF
- Connecting to Current Context
- General Trusted Response Fund Information
- Process Supports
- Application & Evaluation Criteria
- Q&A

LEHIGH VALLEY
Community
Foundation

CONNECT. GROW. FUND.

For more than 59 years, the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation has helped donors with their charitable contributions with a simple, powerful, and highly personalized approach.

**Simply put, at the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation:**

- We **CONNECT** people who care to causes that matter.
- We **GROW** their charitable legacies.
- We **FUND** nonprofit organizations to improve the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley.

# Grantmaking Areas – Community Investments

- Capacity Building
- Early Childhood
- “Support Grantmaking”

# Capacity Building

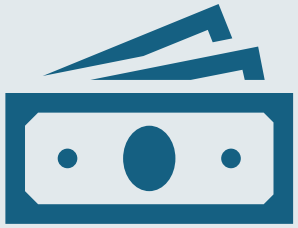
Since 2018, the Community Foundation has worked towards a vision of supporting a **strong, equitable nonprofit sector**, dedicating our staff time, funding and resources to partner with leaders, organizations and systems to fulfill that vision.

Our strategies since 2018 - present:

- Nonprofit Effectiveness
- Project Equity
- CORE Fellowship

… and now…

# Capacity Building Today



## Funding

Trusted Response Fund

Trusted Response Fund: Phase II

## Convening

CORE Learning Series

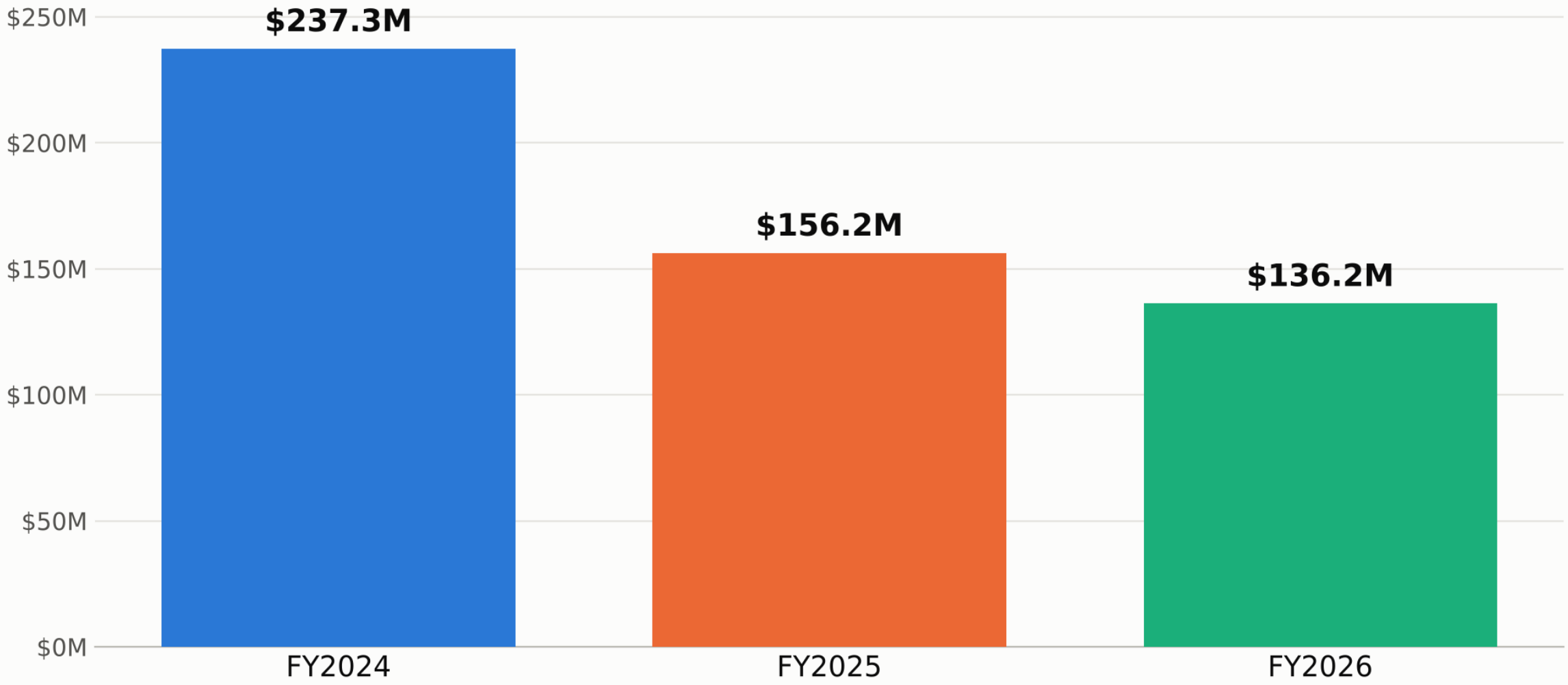
Alumni Network

# Connecting to Current Context

National and Local Data

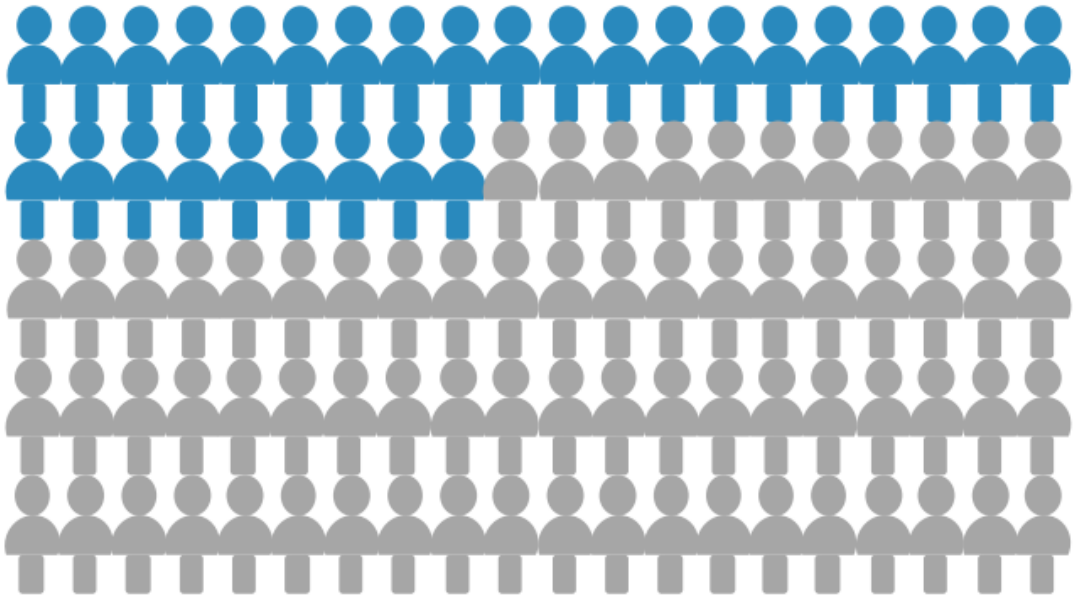
## Total Federal Grants to Recipients Based in Lehigh & Northampton Counties, PA

Includes grants to higher education, government, nonprofits, businesses, and other/unclassified recipients




Source: USAspending.gov, Advanced Search (api.usaspending.gov), retrieved Oct. 2026. Grant obligations by fiscal year, recipient location.
FY2026 figures are preliminary and may increase as agencies complete reporting.

# The Impacts Overlap



225,000 people
in the Lehigh Valley region*

29%
receive Medicaid/SCHIP

OR
receive SNAP

OR
receive rental subsidies

OR
receive energy assistance

* *Based on estimates from U.S. Census Bureau, "Who is Receiving Social Safety Net Benefits?" (2024)*

THE PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION

# Philanthropy cannot replace federal spending

**$2.0 trillion**

Combined assets of all U.S. private and community foundations

**$7.5 trillion**

Federal expenditures, 2025

*Liquidating all foundation assets would cover about one-quarter of federal spending for one year*

Source: *FRED (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis), Council on Foundations*

THE PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION

# Trusted Response Fund: Phase II

Overview, Key Dates and Process Supports

# Fund Overview

The Trusted Response Fund provides **capacity building support for the tools, strategies, programs, and partnerships that nonprofits need most right now**.

The fund gives financial support to assist organizations as they **strategically respond in a rapidly changing environment**.

# About the Fund

Total Pool of Funds: $300,000

Grants can be requested in the range of $20,000 - $40,000.

# What TRF is Prioritizing?

Organizations who:

- Engage in **planning and action** that **responds to critical community needs**
- **Plan for sustainability** in the face of funding gaps or policy changes
- **Bolster essential programs and services** that are critical during this moment
- **Strengthen collective capacity** to meet the needs of individuals, organizations and/or systems
- **Innovate to respond** to emerging or growing community needs
- Prioritize **access or advancement of resources for supporting marginalized and underrepresented communities**

# Categories

### Purpose and Impact

- E.g. Expanding your mission to include a new service or program to meet increased demands, including growing food access programs for households affected by SANP benefit changes.

### Financial Sustainability

- E.g. Hiring a consultant to create and launch a new fundraising strategy that fills gaps to keep low-barrier housing and supportive services available amidst Housing First model changes.

### Strategic Response

- E.g. Implementation of key shifts such as adapting services to address SNAP and Medicaid eligibility requirement changes.

### Operational Efficiency/Effectiveness

- E.g. Developing and implementing an IT improvement plan to increase efficiency, safety, and accessibility of critical services.

### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)

- E.g. Implementation of key programmatic changes to support populations impacted by policy and priority shifts.

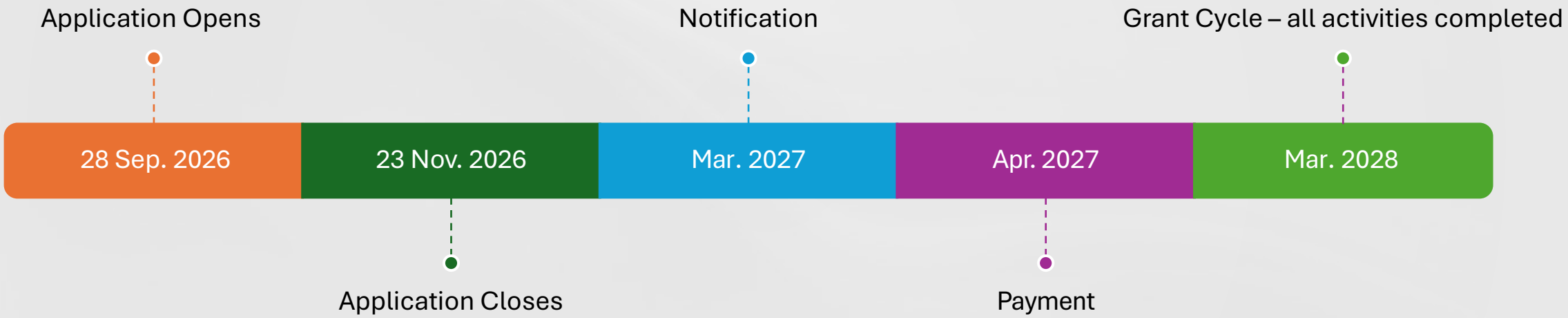
### Other

- We are here to learn from you.

# Eligibility

- Organization serves residents in Lehigh and/or Northampton counties
- Organization recognized as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
- Organizations under fiscal sponsors are encouraged to apply
- Coalitions planning for systems readiness are encouraged to apply

# Key Dates

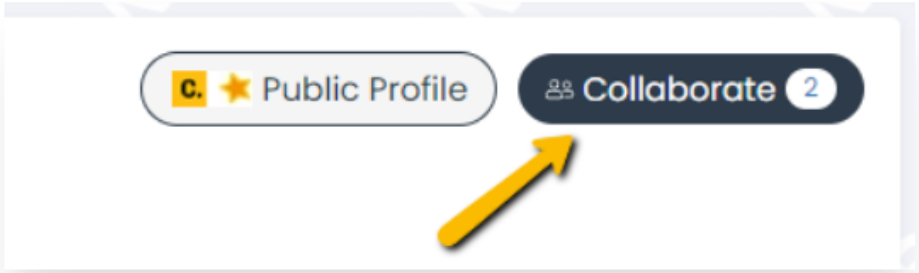

Application Opens
Notification
Grant Cycle – all activities completed
28 Sep. 2026
23 Nov. 2026
Mar. 2027
Apr. 2027
Mar. 2028
Application Closes
Payment

# Process Supports

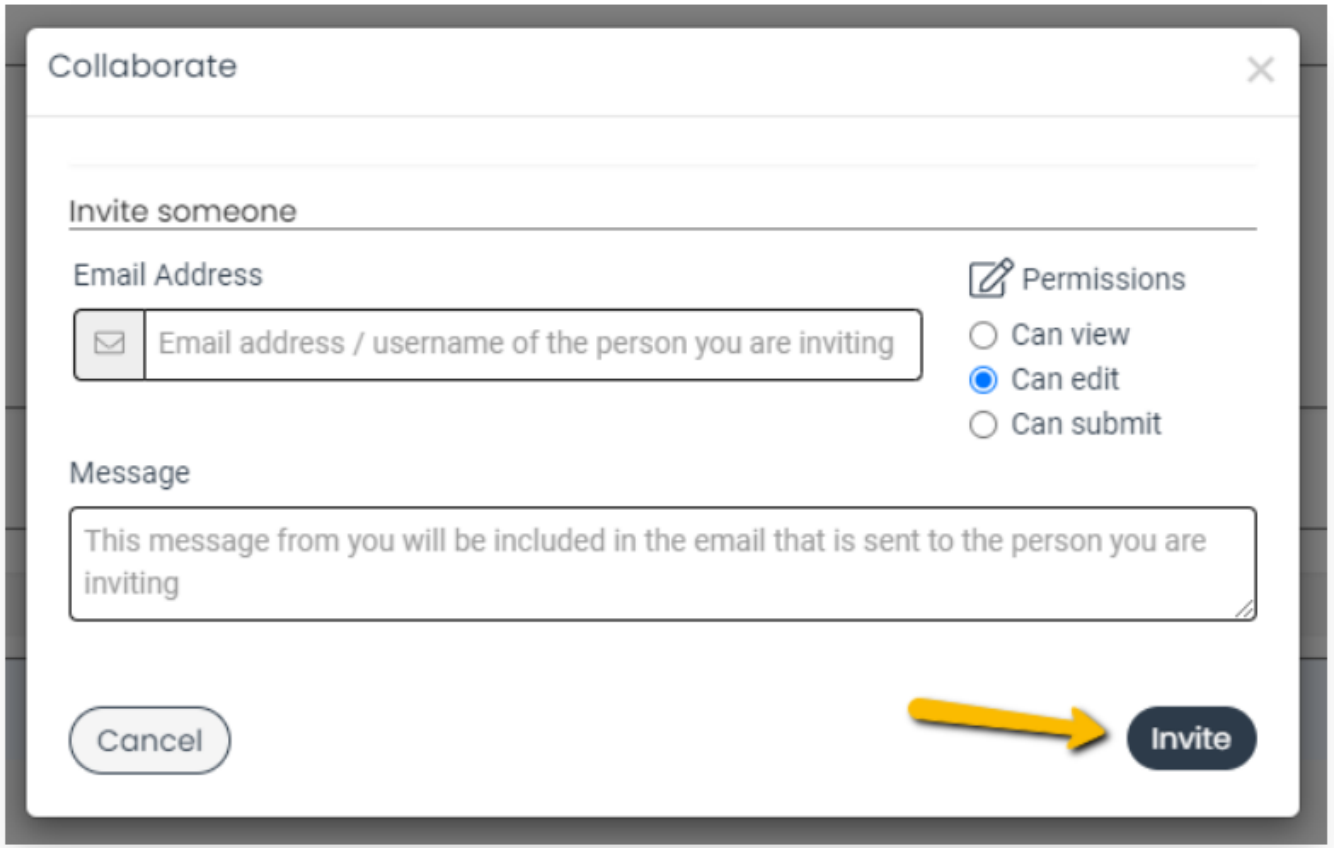
- Video/voice submission for certain questions
- Invite Collaborators
- Copy Previous Answers from prior applications
- **Required** Project/Strategy Budget Template
- Open office hours offered through the application window
  - Friday, Oct. 23rd: 8:30 – 9:30 AM (https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81024957412)
  - Thursday, Nov. 12th: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM (https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84812249749)

# Invite Collaborators

1. Navigate to the Request Summary Page for the request.
2. Click **Collaborate**.




3. Enter the applicable Collaborate information, and then click **Invite**.
   - Enter the email address of the person being invited to collaborate on the request.
   - Enter a message to that person, including any specific instructions about questions they need to complete or review.
   - Select the permission level for this collaborator.
     - The permission levels are view, edit, and submit.
     - These collaborator permissions apply to all forms within the request such as the application and any follow ups assigned to you. If edit is selected, for example, the collaborator can edit any forms within the request.

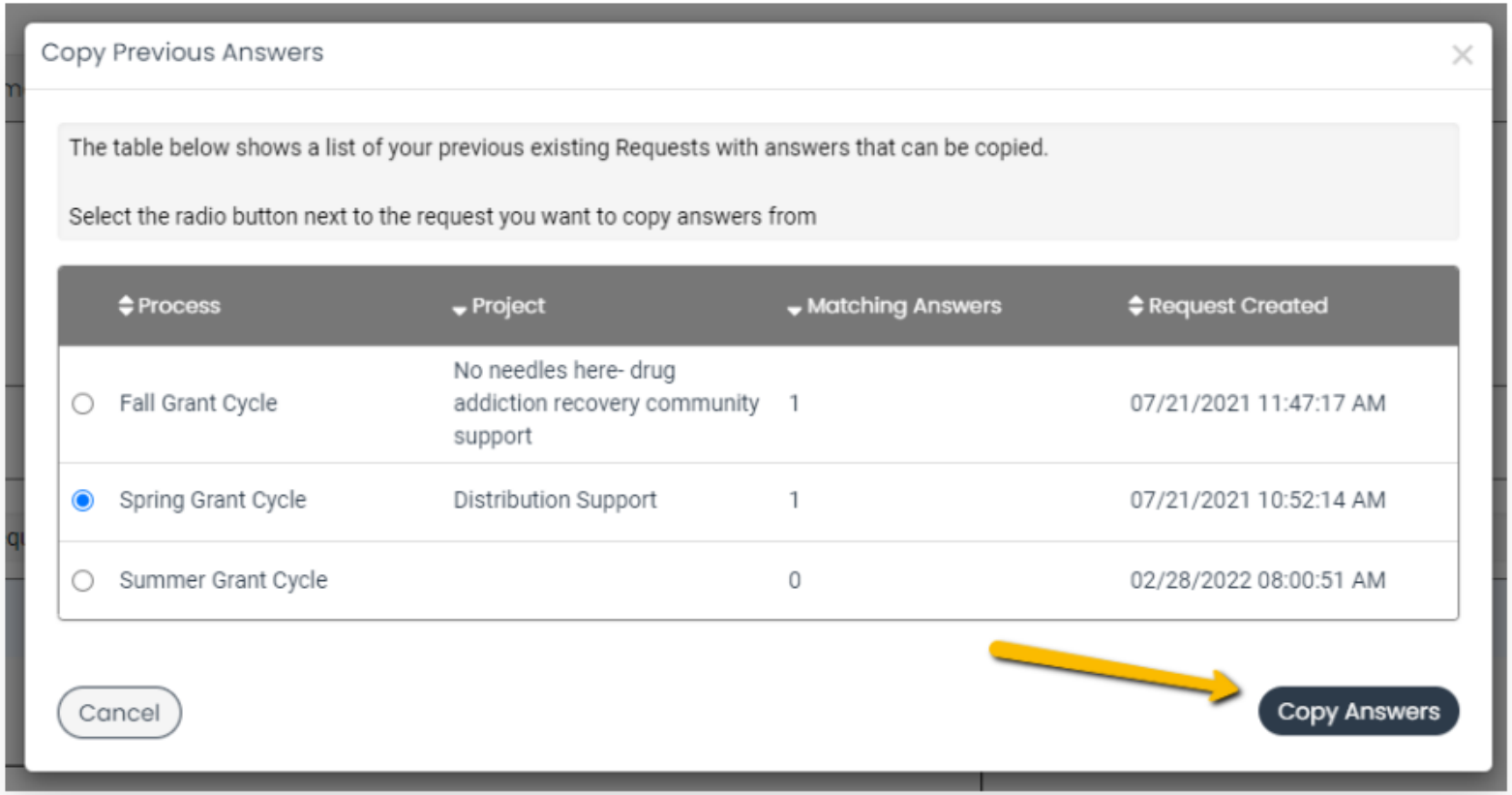


# Copy Prior Application Responses

Click **Copy Previous Answers**.

Previous requests with this funder that can have responses copied into this new request are displayed. Select the request to copy responses from, and then click **Copy Answers**.

- If this form already has responses, this will not overwrite or affect any new responses.



## Project/Strategy Budget

**Request Amount***

**What grant amount are you requesting for your chosen project?**

Grants can be requested within the range of **$20,000 to $40,000.**

$

**Budget Upload***

**Please upload the budget for your proposed project or strategy**. ***To support a consistent review process, we are requiring the use of our budget template.***

Click here to download the **required template**.

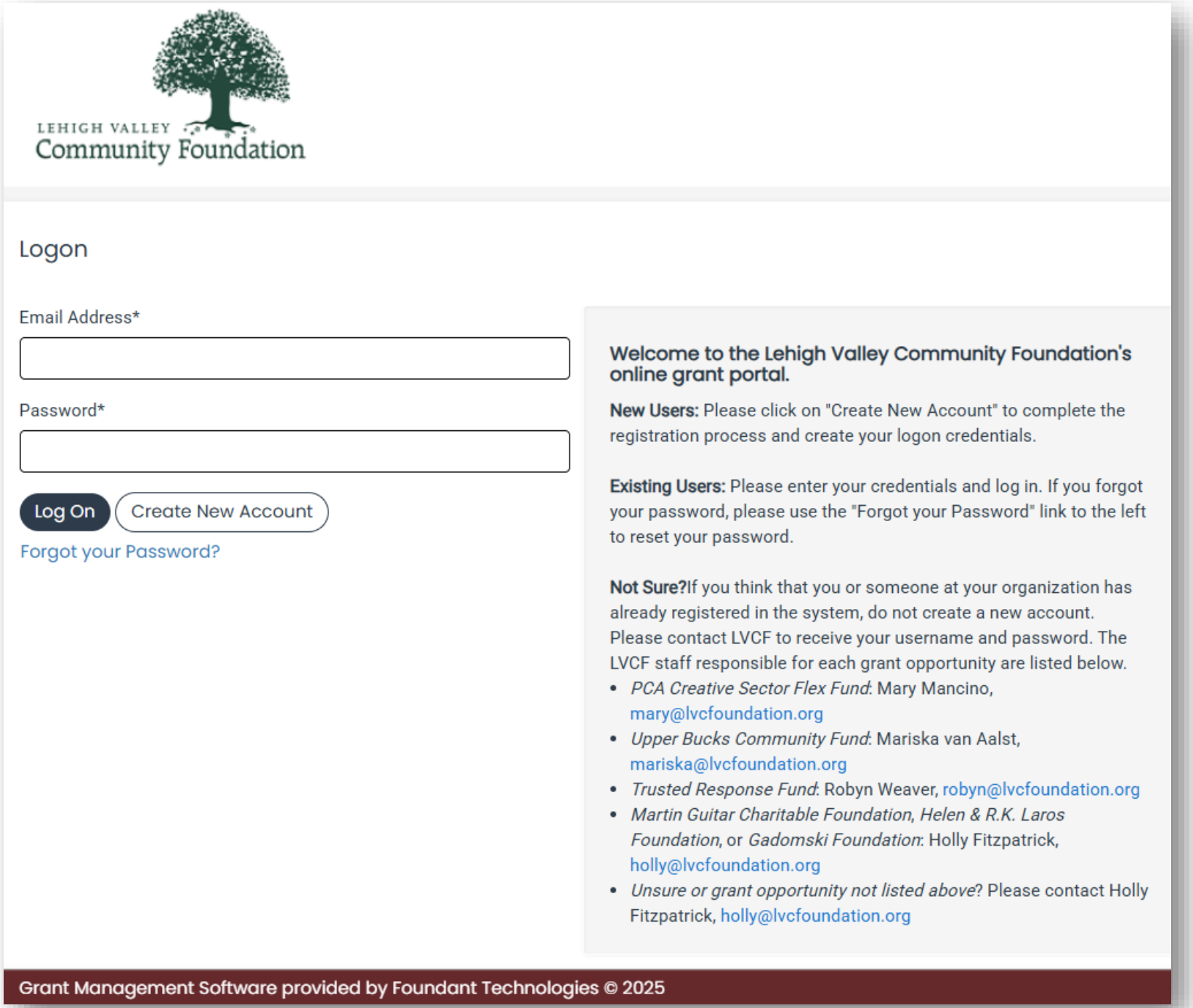
Upload a file [4 MiB allowed]

| Project/Strategy Budget | |
|---|---|
| **Income** | **Amount ($)** |
| Trusted Response Fund grant (pending) | |
| Confirmed Income Sources | |
| | |
| | |
| Other Pending Income Sources | |
| | |
| | |
| **Total Income** | |
| | |
| **Expenses** | **Amount ($)** |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| **Total Expenses** | |
| | |
| **Net Income** (Total Income - Total Expenses) | |

# Application Overview

Trusted Response Fund: Phase II

# Accessing Foundant, LVCF's Grants Portal




Grants website: https://lvcfgrants.org/

# Trusted Response Fund - Application Sections

- Trusted Response Fund Application Overview
- Process Disclosures
- Organization Description
- Trusted Response Fund Application Narrative
- Project/Strategy Budget
- Financial Documentation Requests

# Process Disclosures

- **Use of AI**
  - LVCF may use AI-assisted tools for certain administrative tasks (such as summarizing and categorizing applications, or reviewing financial information). **These tools are not used to make funding decisions.** Every application is read and reviewed by human staff and/or peer reviewers. There is an option to opt-out of the use of AI for narrative sections of your response.
- **Sharing with fundholders and foundations**
  - We plan to share themes and applications with fundholders and foundations that have an aligned interest for additional funding consideration. There is an option to opt-out.

<u>LVCF will use AI to review publicly available information</u>

# Evaluation

# Evaluation Priorities

- Organizations **most impacted by public/governmental funding and policy shifts**
- Projects/strategies that allow organizations to **adapt in the current moment**, and **build toward solutions** as the external context keeps shifting
- Funding that is catalytic, **removing barriers for real programmatic or strategy change**

# Evaluation Criteria

- **Identification of Funding/Policy Change Impact**
- **Responsiveness to Need**
- **Catalyst for Future Change/Impact**
- **Intentionality and Strategic Alignment**
- **Organizational Readiness**
- **Clarity of Plan**
- **Evaluation and Learning**

# Evaluation Criteria

## Identification of Funding/Policy Change Impact

- If the applicant demonstrates a **clear impact from a loss of federal, state or local funding stream** and/or a **clear impact on programming or communities** they are serving **due to a federal, state or local policy change**. The funding we are talking about is public, or governmental funding, not loss of private funding.

## Responsiveness to Need

- If the applicant clearly **identifies a critical current or emerging need** the organization/community/system faces AND has **proposed a project/strategy that directly addresses** the presenting need.

# Evaluation Criteria

## Catalyst for Future Change/Impact

- If the applicant clearly **identifies the change/impact catalyzed by their chosen project/strategy** AND the organization clearly **describes how this funding will remove barriers** to implementation of the project/strategy.

## Intentionality and Strategic Alignment

- If the applicant demonstrates that **the chosen project/strategy is a result of thoughtful, strategic, and inclusive decision making**.
- If the organization **produced a project/strategy that is informed by and accountable to those most impacted** by the identified need.

# Evaluation Criteria

## Organizational Readiness

- If the organization has the structures, systems, resources, relationships, and **capacity to carry out the project/strategy effectively**.

## Clarity of Plan

- If the organization has **outlined a clear plan** for their chosen project/strategy **that is feasible** given their context, has a **realistic timeline**, and **includes the right people** for success.

## Impact and Learning

- If the organization has identified an **impact that is clear**, contextually feasible, and **relevant to the critical need and chosen project/strategy**.
- If the applicant has identified a **clear plan to capture learning** from both the process and implementation of the project/strategy.

# Q&A

Robyn Weaver

Program Officer, Capacity Building

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# Thank You!

Robyn Weaver

Program Officer, Capacity Building

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