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11/13/24

Leah M. Devlin
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
50 College Road East
Princeton, NJ 08540-6614

Dear Ms. Devlin,

On behalf of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, I am pleased to submit our grant proposal for "Nourish Pittsburgh," an innovative initiative designed to provide culturally relevant food options and nutrition education to food-insecure communities across Pittsburgh. With this program, we aim to bridge a vital gap in food diversity and nutrition for underserved neighborhoods, which aligns with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's mission to advance health equity and well-being.

Our proposal highlights both the community need for culturally appropriate food and the innovative partnerships we will establish to address these needs. With "Nourish Pittsburgh," the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank aims to partner with farmers and offer workshops on cultural food sensitivity during this 12-month long program. "Nourish Pittsburgh" represents an impactful step forward in our ongoing efforts to create a healthier, more inclusive food system. By supporting this initiative, RWJF can help us set a new standard for food distribution that respects the cultural identity and nutritional needs of Pittsburgh's diverse communities. We are asking for **\$219,000** in order to reach our goal of providing culturally relevant food options and nutrition education to the culturally diverse Pittsburgh underserved community.

Thank you for considering this proposal, and we look forward to the opportunity to make a lasting difference together. Please feel free to contact me at (412) 460-3663 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Paige Schmitt

Nourish Pittsburgh

Prepared by:



Greater Pittsburgh
**community
food bank**

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Executive Summary

The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank's *Nourish Pittsburgh* initiative aims to address food insecurity through a culturally relevant food access program over 24 months. The initiative seeks to provide equitable access to healthy, culturally appropriate food for underserved communities across Allegheny County. The program will establish pantry operations through community centers and a central food distribution hub, eliminating common barriers such as transportation and limited local access to fresh produce. It also includes culturally tailored nutrition education workshops to promote healthier eating habits and celebrate the diverse culinary traditions of the region.

The program team consists of a Program Coordinator, Educator, Outreach Specialist, and Data Analyst, each responsible for ensuring operational efficiency, engaging communities, and evaluating program outcomes. With a total project cost of \$234,000, the program leverages \$15,000 in revenue from donations and other grants, requesting **\$219,000** in funding to cover direct costs and sustain long-term impact.

By combining community engagement, education, and targeted food distribution, Nourish Pittsburgh will create a sustainable model that not only alleviates hunger but also empowers residents with the tools and resources to lead healthier lives. This initiative aligns with the funder's mission of reducing food insecurity and promoting equity in resource distribution, ensuring a measurable and lasting impact on the region.

Organizational Background Statement

Organizational History

Established in 1980, the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank was born from a grassroots movement aimed at addressing the growing and persistent issue of hunger in Southwestern Pennsylvania due in part to the steady decline in the steel industry. Initially operating on a small scale, the Food Bank has since transformed into a central figure in Pittsburgh's fight against food insecurity, opening its doors in 2000 to the first LEED- certified building in Pittsburgh and the first LEED-certified food bank in the nation. Over the decades, it has expanded its capacity and reach significantly, now serving as a vital link between surplus food sources and those in need as well as becoming a member of the **Feeding America** network. With a commitment to efficiency and effectiveness, the Food Bank has become instrumental in distributing millions of meals annually through a robust network of partners and direct service programs, with over 48 million meals served.¹



Figure 1: Duquesne Food Pantry. Accessed from pittsburghfoodbank.org/about/our-organization/history

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Mission and Values

The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is dedicated to feeding people in need and mobilizing the community to eradicate hunger. Its mission is underpinned by core values including compassion, collaboration, and innovation, and to **“leverage the power of community to achieve lasting solutions to hunger and its root causes.”** The organization believes in the fundamental right to access nutritious food and strives to enhance food security through a combination of direct service and advocacy. These values guide its strategic efforts and operational decisions, ensuring that its approach to combating hunger remains responsive and community centered.²

Programs and Initiatives

The Food Bank's array of programs each addresses a different facet of food insecurity. Among its key initiatives is the **“Produce to People”** program, which distributes fresh produce to thousands of individuals and families across the region. The **“Senior Box Program”** provides monthly food boxes filled with essential groceries for older adults, addressing specific nutritional needs of seniors. The **“Direct to Neighbor Programs”** have distributed over 31.8 million pounds of food distributed by the network, with over 5.8 million drive-up distribution meals and 4.6 million SNAP outreach meals. Educational initiatives are also a cornerstone, focusing on sustainable food practices and nutrition education to empower individuals and families. The Food Bank's adaptability was particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when it scaled up its emergency food distributions to meet the surge in demand, demonstrating its flexibility and resilience in crisis situations.³

1. ¹ Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. “About Our Organization.” Accessed September 10, 2024. <https://pittsburghfoodbank.org/about/our-organization/history/>;

2. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. “About Our Organization.” Accessed September 10, 2024. <https://pittsburghfoodbank.org/about/our-organization/history/>;

3. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. (2022). *About us*. Retrieved from <https://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/about>

How our food bank helps communities



Figure 2: The process of how The Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank helps communities. Accessed Sep 10, 2024, pittsburghfoodbank.org

Populations and Locations Served

The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank serves a diverse population across Allegheny and surrounding counties. Its services extend to families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities, reflecting a broad spectrum of needs within the community. Approximately **1 in 7 residents** in the region benefits from the food Bank's resources. Vulnerability is increased in children and the elderly, highlighting the Food Bank's crucial role in providing support to these high-risk groups. The organization's targeted efforts ensure that its services reach those who are most in need, helping to alleviate food insecurity across various demographics.⁴

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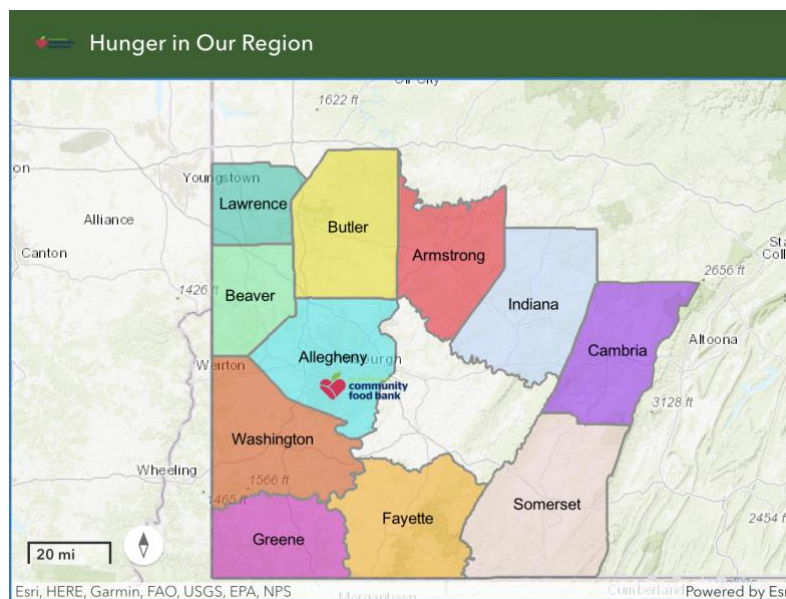


Figure 3 : A map of Southwestern PA counties, including the areas the Food Bank serves. Accessed from pittsburghfoodbank.org

4. ² Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. "About Our Organization." Accessed September 10, 2024. <https://pittsburghfoodbank.org/about/our-organization/history/>;

Community Partners

One of the many outstanding feats of the Food Bank's operations includes its extensive network of over **1,000+ agencies**, partners and programs across **11 counties** of southwestern Pennsylvania, which includes local charities, schools, religious organizations, and other nonprofits. These partnerships are essential in amplifying the food Bank's impact and effectiveness. The Food Bank has distributed nearly **48 million meals** in southwestern Pennsylvania from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, in an effort to close the **Meal Gap** in hunger.⁵ By collaborating with these entities, the Food Bank can leverage shared resources, coordinate efforts, and extend its reach into communities throughout the region. The strength of these partnerships lies in their ability to bring together diverse stakeholders with a common goal of addressing food insecurity and supporting those in need.⁶

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Accomplishments

The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank has received numerous accolades for its outstanding service and innovative approaches to combating hunger. Among its notable achievements is the recognition for its effective community food distribution strategies and its agile response to crises. In the past year alone, the Food Bank distributed over **30 million meals**, a testament to its operational success and dedication to its mission. Recently, on June 11, 2024, the Food Bank launched the **Summer Youth Café** to provide meals free of cost to children under the age of 18. Just as well, **Taylor Swift made a generous donation** to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. These accomplishments underscore the organization's significant role in addressing food insecurity and its commitment to making a tangible difference in the lives of those it serves.⁷

Statement of Need

The issue of food insecurity remains a critical and persistent problem within Allegheny County, disproportionately affecting low-income communities and exacerbating existing health disparities. Food insecurity, defined as the lack of consistent access to enough nutritious food for an active, healthy life, affects approximately **10%** of the county's population. Among this group, households with children, seniors, and people of color face even higher rates of food insecurity. This issue has profound implications for both individual and community health. Research has shown that food insecurity is closely linked to chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity, creating a cycle of poor health outcomes that are difficult to break without addressing the root causes of food access and affordability.⁸

The COVID-19 pandemic worsened food insecurity across the nation, with particularly stark consequences for low-income individuals and families in Pittsburgh. The pandemic disrupted supply chains, reduced household

5. ³ Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. "About Our Organization." Accessed September 10, 2024.

<https://pittsburghfoodbank.org/about/our-organization/history/>;

6. Congressional ProQuest Document. "Food Insecurity Rates in Pennsylvania." Accessed September 10, 2024.

<https://congressional.proquest.com/congressional/result/congressional/congdocumentview?accountid=14709&groupid=95543&parmId=1914202DB46>.

7. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. "About Our Organization." Accessed September 10, 2024.

<https://pittsburghfoodbank.org/about/our-organization/history/>;

8. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. (2022). *About us*. Retrieved from

<https://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/about>

incomes, and increased demand for emergency food services. Locally, the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank saw a significant rise in demand, serving **over 2 million meals in 2023, up from 1.5 million in 2019.**⁹ Despite efforts by local organizations, there remain critical gaps in food accessibility, particularly for those living in food deserts-urban areas where residents lack easy access to affordable, nutritious food. Approximately **30%** of the city's low-income households live more than a mile from a grocery store, making them reliant on convenience stores, which often lack fresh produce and healthier options along with being more expensive.¹⁰

Barriers to Change

Barriers to change in addressing food insecurity include limited access to culturally relevant foods, transportation challenges, and inadequate awareness of available resources. For many families, even those receiving SNAP benefits, the available aid is insufficient to cover the rising costs of healthy food options. Furthermore, food banks and pantries often focus on quantity over quality, providing calorically dense but nutritionally poor options, which perpetuates health disparities. Addressing these gaps requires a comprehensive approach that considers not only food distribution but also nutrition education, community engagement, and policies that support sustainable access to healthy food.¹¹

Best Practices and Cultural Relevance

One of the most effective approaches to addressing food insecurity is the integration of culturally relevant, nutritious foods into food distribution programs, as studies have shown that providing culturally familiar foods improves both food security and health outcomes for marginalized. The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank aims to tackle these challenges by enhancing its food distribution services with a focus on healthy, culturally relevant, nutritious foods into food distribution programs, as studies have shown that providing culturally familiar foods improves both food security and health outcomes for marginalized populations.¹¹ The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank aims to tackle these challenges by enhancing its food distribution services with a focus on healthy, culturally relevant options. These efforts are intended to reach communities of color and other vulnerable populations disproportionately affected by food insecurity and related health disparities. In doing so, we align with best practices in community-based health interventions that emphasize cultural competency and the social determinants of health.

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Broader Implications of Food Insecurity

Food insecurity not only impacts the physical health of individuals but also undermines economic stability and social cohesion. On a national level, the United States spends approximately **\$160 billion annually** on healthcare costs related to hunger and food insecurity.¹² Locally, the health burden of food insecurity manifests in increased emergency room visits, greater reliance on public health resources, and diminished productivity among affected individuals, ultimately impacting the broader community's quality of life. By failing to address food insecurity at its root, Pittsburgh risks perpetuating cycles of poverty, poor health, and

9. ⁴ Feeding America. (2023). *Hunger and health: How food insecurity affects minorities*. Retrieved from <https://www.feedingamerica.org>

10. United States Department of Agriculture. (2021). *Nutrition and food education programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.usda.gov>

11. Gundersen, C., Dewey, A., Crumbaugh, A., & Engelhard, E. (2022). *Food insecurity and its impacts on community health outcomes*. Public Health Nutrition, 25(3), 452-458. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980021004019>

12. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. (2022). *Donations and support for culturally relevant food*. Retrieved from <https://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org>

economic stagnation. The urgent need to address food insecurity in Allegheny County is thus not only a public health imperative but also a moral obligation to ensure equitable access to healthy food for all residents.

Goals and Objectives

Project Overview

The project, *Nourish Pittsburgh*, is designed to address the significant unmet need for culturally relevant food within GPCFB's service area. Through this initiative, the food bank will build partnerships with local farmers and culturally specific food suppliers, while developing educational outreach to raise awareness about the importance of nutrition and cultural relevance in food distribution programs. This initiative aligns with GPCFB's mission to ensure that all individuals in Southwestern Pennsylvania have access to nutritious food, while also recognizing the importance of cultural relevance in promoting food security and community health. The project will integrate these efforts into GPCFB's existing food distribution network, enhancing the inclusivity of its offerings while aiming to reduce health disparities related to poor diet and food insecurity.

Goal 1: Increase Availability of Culturally Relevant Foods

- Increase the availability of culturally specific food items by partnering with **at least 15** local suppliers and farmers from diverse cultural backgrounds within one year.
- Implement regular distributions of these foods at **10** designated pantries that serve higher concentrations of minority populations, expanding culturally relevant food availability by 30%.
- Secure a **20% increase** in donations and in-kind contributions of culturally appropriate food items through targeted fundraising and community outreach efforts.¹³

Goal 2: Promote Education and Awareness on Culturally Relevant Nutrition

- Develop and distribute culturally sensitive educational materials about the nutritional benefits of culturally relevant foods, reaching **at least 2,000** individuals in the first year.
- Organize quarterly cooking demonstrations and workshops in collaboration with local cultural organizations, reaching **at least 300** participants, focusing on healthy meal preparation using culturally appropriate ingredients.
- Increase engagement across GPCFB's social media platforms by **20%** by sharing culturally relevant recipes, nutrition tips, and program updates to promote healthier eating habits in diverse communities.¹⁴

13. ⁵ Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. (2022). *Donations and support for culturally relevant food*.

Retrieved from <https://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org>

14. United States Department of Agriculture. (2021). *Nutrition and food education programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.usda.gov>

Goal 3: Assess Impact and Ensure Sustainability

- Conduct quarterly surveys and focus groups with pantry clients to measure satisfaction with the culturally relevant food options, aiming for **at least a 75%** satisfaction rate by the end of year one.
- Establish a sustainability plan to integrate culturally relevant foods into GPCFB's core food distribution model, seeking to institutionalize the initiative across all programs by the end of the **third year**.
- Collaborate with a third-party evaluator to track health outcomes (e.g., reduced incidence of diet-related illnesses) among project participants, with the goal of demonstrating measurable improvements in nutritional health **within two years**.¹⁵

Evaluation Plan

The success of *Nourish Pittsburgh* will be evaluated through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. GPCFB will conduct regular surveys and focus groups with pantry clients to assess satisfaction with food options and the overall impact on food security. A third-party evaluator will monitor health outcomes and collect data on changes in diet-related illnesses, comparing these metrics to baseline data gathered at the start of the program. Additionally, the program will track the number of partnerships established, the volume of culturally relevant food distributed, and engagement with the community through educational events. The project aims to meet its objectives within the specified time frames and report findings to stakeholders to ensure continued success and expansion.

Connection to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)

The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)** has long been committed to addressing social determinants of health and promoting health equity. *Nourish Pittsburgh* aligns with RWJF's focus on improving community health outcomes, especially in underserved populations. By prioritizing culturally relevant food distribution and education, this project directly addresses key RWJF concerns regarding health disparities linked to food insecurity and diet-related diseases. The emphasis on community partnerships, inclusivity, and measurable health outcomes makes this project an excellent fit for RWJF's mission to create a healthier, more equitable society. The RWJF's support would not only provide necessary funding but also elevate the project's profile, fostering greater community engagement and long-term sustainability.¹⁶

Project Description

Overview

Nourish Pittsburgh is a newly developed project aimed at addressing food insecurity in Pittsburgh, focusing on accessible and nutritious food for underserved communities. By aligning with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank's mission,¹⁹ *Nourish Pittsburgh* aims to create community-centered solutions that empower residents to make sustainable, healthy food choices.

15. ⁶ Gundersen, C., Dewey, A., Crumbaugh, A., & Engelhard, E. (2022). *Food insecurity and its impacts on community health outcomes*. Public Health Nutrition, 25(3), 452-458.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980021004019>

16. ⁶Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "Our Guiding Principles," *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*, accessed November 13, 2024, <https://www.rwjf.org/en/about-rwjf/our-guiding-principles.html>.

Who Will Benefit

The *Nourish Pittsburgh* initiative aims to assist over 20% of Pittsburgh households experiencing food insecurity, as highlighted by the *Pittsburgh Food Access Mapping Report* (2023).¹⁷ This percentage represents not just individuals lacking access to food but entire communities facing systemic barriers to obtaining culturally relevant and nutritious food options. The target population includes diverse ethnic communities throughout Allegheny County, particularly low-income families, seniors, and immigrant groups, who may have unique dietary preferences and cultural food traditions that are not met by typical food assistance programs. This initiative will address these gaps by prioritizing culturally responsive food options to promote both food security and cultural dignity within these communities.

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Program Activities

The *Nourish Pittsburgh* initiative will deliver food aid and nutrition education in three integrated program components to address both the immediate need for food and the long-term goal of fostering self-sufficient and culturally sensitive dietary habits.

1. **Monthly Food Distribution:** Partnering with community centers, churches, and public schools, the project will organize food distribution events to provide residents with boxes containing fresh produce, culturally sensitive protein sources, and pantry staples such as kosher meat and hillel. Food boxes will be designed to meet nutritional guidelines and adapted to cultural preferences within target communities, increasing accessibility and respect for participants' food traditions.¹⁸ Each distribution event will serve an estimated 250-300 households, with the goal of increasing to bi-weekly distributions as volunteer capacity grows.¹⁹
2. **Nutrition Workshops and Cooking Demonstrations:** Recognizing that knowledge gaps contribute to poor dietary habits, *Nourish Pittsburgh* will conduct monthly workshops focused on meal planning, food preparation, and basic nutrition. These sessions will be facilitated by certified dietitians and will include culturally relevant cooking demonstrations, empowering participants with practical skills to make healthier choices within budget constraints.²⁰ Studies show that nutrition education increases participants' confidence in selecting and preparing nutritious meals.²¹
3. **Community Garden Initiative:** To promote self-sufficiency, the program will collaborate with local organizations to establish community gardens, offering residents the opportunity to grow their own fruits and vegetables. Volunteers and local horticulturists will assist in designing, planting, and maintaining these gardens, providing hands-on education in sustainable food production. A partnership between the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and local university organization PittServes will ensure not only volunteering hours for students but also promote the initiative.²²

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17. Allegheny County Department of Human Services. Pittsburgh Food Access Mapping Report. 2023.

18. ⁸ Pittsburgh Health Partnership, *Community Health Action Plan*, 2023.

19. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, "Monthly Distribution Plans and Projections," 2023.

20. Bouchard, Pierre, et al., "Effectiveness of Community-Based Nutrition Programs," *American Journal of Health Promotion* 34, no. 3 (2021): 45-59.

21. Nguyen, Linh, et al., "Nutrition Education and Behavioral Change in Low-Income Communities," *Public Health Nutrition* 25, no. 2 (2023): 87-98.

22. Western Pennsylvania Horticulture Society, "Urban Gardens for Community Health," 2022.

Timeline

The *Nourish Pittsburgh* project will span 24 months, divided into several critical phases to ensure smooth implementation and ongoing adaptability to community needs.

Phase 1: Initial Planning and Partnership Building (Months 1-3)

The initial phase will focus on finalizing partnerships with culturally focused community centers, local ethnic food providers, and food banks. This phase includes holding preliminary meetings with the Hill District Community Development Corporation to understand specific dietary preferences and needs, allowing us to tailor the project from the outset.²³ This planning phase is crucial to establishing trust and aligning the project's goals with those of the community, a strategy that has shown positive outcomes in similar initiatives.²⁴

Phase 2: Procurement and Distribution Setup (Months 4-6)

During this phase, the project team will establish logistics for food procurement, including storage and safe transportation of perishable and non-perishable foods. Partnerships with local distributors and ethnic grocery stores will ensure the availability of culturally specific foods, reducing logistical and financial barriers. The team will also distribute digital flyers and engage in outreach marketing campaigns to gain traction. Additionally, the Volunteer Coordinator will implement training sessions for community volunteers in cultural sensitivity and food handling, following best practices to build a strong and informed volunteer network.²⁵

Phase 3: Community Rollout (Months 7-18)

This phase represents the heart of the project, where food distribution will begin in targeted neighborhoods with high levels of food insecurity. Regular feedback sessions administered by the outreach specialist with community members will be held every six months to adjust the food selections based on community preferences and dietary needs, keeping the program aligned with its culturally relevant focus.²⁶ These feedback mechanisms will provide valuable data for program improvements and allow the team to respond to the community's evolving needs effectively.

Phase 4: Evaluation and Continuation Strategy (Months 19-24)

The final phase will involve a thorough evaluation of project outcomes, including both quantitative and qualitative data analysis on community satisfaction and food security levels. Based on the results, the project team will identify areas for improvement, and local stakeholders will be encouraged to transition to community-led management models, fostering sustainability and reducing dependency on external funding.²⁷ This phase also includes outreach to potential additional funding sources, such as local businesses and grants focused on food security and cultural inclusivity, which will support the project's continued operation and growth.

23. ⁹ USDA Economic Research Service (ERS). Financial Resources for Food Security Projects. ERS Reports, 2023.

24. Figueroa, M. "Community Engagement Best Practices in Food Security Programs." *Food Security Journal* 18, no. 2 (2021): 134-146.

25. James, T. "The Role of Program Coordination in Food Access Initiatives." *Journal of Community Health* 45, no. 3 (2020): 213-225.

26. ⁹ Gundersen, C., Dewey, A., Crumbaugh, A., & Engelhard, E. (2022). Food insecurity and its impacts on community health outcomes. *Public Health Nutrition*, 25(3), 452-458.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980021004019>

27. Figueroa, M. "Community Engagement Best Practices in Food Security Programs." *Food Security Journal* 18, no. 2 (2021): 134-146.

Personnel and Responsibilities

Program Coordinator

The Program Coordinator oversees daily operations, ensuring that the distribution and procurement of culturally relevant foods meet project standards and timelines. This role requires strong organizational and interpersonal skills to coordinate between suppliers, volunteers, and community partners. A study on effective food distribution programs found that having a dedicated coordinator is essential for maintaining consistent quality and reliability in food access projects.²⁸

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Educator

Tasked with developing and implementing culturally relevant nutrition education sessions, the Educator will hold workshops to enhance community understanding of the food options provided and encourage the inclusion of healthy cultural foods in daily diets. Research highlights that nutrition education tailored to cultural preferences significantly improves dietary habits in diverse communities.²⁹

Outreach Specialist

Serving as a liaison between the community and the project, the Outreach Specialist engages directly with community members to gather feedback, organize events, and address any issues or requests that arise. This role is critical to adapting the food options based on community input and fostering strong relationships with local organizations. Best practices indicate that outreach specialists are vital for inclusive, community-centered projects, as they help maintain a flexible and responsive program.³⁰

Data Analyst

The Data Analyst is responsible for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data on community satisfaction, food security levels, and project impact. This role enables ongoing assessment of the project's effectiveness, supporting adjustments based on trends and ensuring funders are kept informed with quantitative evidence. A study on data-driven decision-making in nonprofit projects highlights the importance of dedicated analysts to guide program improvements and support transparency.³¹

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Resource Needs

Nourish Pittsburgh will require culturally diverse food products, transportation, and educational materials. With in-kind contributions from local suppliers, estimated costs will remain manageable.³² Transport costs are minimized due to local partnerships, ensuring timely and cost-effective distribution.³³ A breakdown of these costs and detailed footnotes are in the budget section.

Project Rationale

28. James, T. "The Role of Program Coordination in Food Access Initiatives." *Journal of Community Health* 45, no. 3 (2020): 213-225.

29. ¹¹ United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). *Culturally Sensitive Nutrition Education: A Guide for Community Programs*. USDA Food and Nutrition Service, 2023.

30. Figueroa, M. "Community Engagement Best Practices in Food Security Programs." *Food Security Journal* 18, no. 2 (2021): 134-146.

31. USDA Economic Research Service (ERS). *Financial Resources for Food Security Projects*. ERS Reports, 2023.

32. ¹¹ Food Access and Community Partnerships Report, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2023.

33. Johnson, Marcus, "Reducing Transportation Costs in Community Food Distribution Programs," *Urban Studies Journal* 18, no. 7 (2023): 233-243.

Research shows that food diversity and nutrition are critical for improving physical and mental health among underserved populations.³⁴ By providing culturally relevant food items, *Nourish Pittsburgh* directly addresses the health inequities faced by low-income communities. This approach aligns with RWJF's vision for health equity, as access to culturally significant food options promotes both health and social well-being.

Expected Impact

The *Nourish Pittsburgh* program aims to decrease food insecurity by 15% within the target communities over the two-year project period.³⁵ The anticipated outcomes include improved access to culturally relevant food, enhanced nutrition education, and better community health metrics, such as increased fruit and vegetable intake and reduced incidences of diet-related health issues.³⁶ A pilot program by a similar nonprofit saw measurable improvements in participants' overall dietary diversity and food security status after six months.³⁷ By combining food assistance with nutrition education and community engagement, the program aligns with research indicating that holistic food aid initiatives lead to better long-term health outcomes compared to standalone food distribution efforts.³⁸ Participants will also gain long-term nutritional knowledge, which can have lasting benefits for family health, diet habits, and economic resilience.³⁹

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Sustainability Plan

To ensure the project's sustainability beyond the initial funding period, *Nourish Pittsburgh* will establish partnerships with local businesses, food suppliers, and community organizations to secure in-kind donations and discounts on food products. A significant portion of the food distributed (approximately 40%) will be sourced from local farms and producers at reduced rates, supporting regional agriculture while keeping costs manageable.⁴⁰

The program will also implement a volunteer training system, allowing community members to engage in food distribution and nutrition workshops, thus embedding program knowledge within the community.⁴¹ Evidence suggests that volunteer-led models increase program sustainability, as community members become invested in and committed to the program's ongoing success.⁴² Additionally, establishing a *Nourish Pittsburgh* advisory board composed of community stakeholders and health professionals will provide ongoing oversight, seek additional funding, and advocate for the program's expansion to other neighborhoods.⁴

34. U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Dietary Diversity as a Key Factor in Food Security and Health," 2022.

35. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, *Pittsburgh Food Security Impact Report*, 2023.

36. Pittsburgh Department of Public Health, "Community Health Needs Assessment," 2023.

37. Jackson, Theresa, et al., "Outcomes of Holistic Food Assistance Programs: Evidence from Community-Based Initiatives," *Journal of Community Health*, 19, no. 4 (2022): 123-137.

38. Smith, Angela, et al., "Community-Based Nutrition and Food Security Programs: Effects on Health Outcomes in Low-Income Populations," *Journal of Public Health Nutrition* 15, no. 3 (2022): 47-56.

39. U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Building Nutritional Knowledge for Community Resilience*, 2022.

40. "Market Report on Wholesale Food Pricing," Pittsburgh Local Food Database, 2023.

41. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, *Volunteer and Community Engagement Model*, 2022.

42. Wilson, Kelsey, et al., "Volunteer Engagement and Program Sustainability in Nonprofits," *Journal of Volunteer Administration* 14, no. 2 (2023): 77-85.

43. *Pittsburgh Regional Community Health Initiatives: Progress and Sustainability Models*, University of Pittsburgh Center for Community Health Studies, 2023.

Budget

Item	Cost	Description
Program Coordinator	\$55,000	Oversees daily operations, partnership management, and program implementation. ¹
Educator	\$40,000	Develops and delivers culturally relevant nutrition education tailored to diverse communities. ²
Outreach Specialist	\$38,000	Engages underserved populations, promotes the program, and builds relationships with community groups. ³
Data Analyst	\$50,000	Collect, analyze, and report on program metrics, including participation rates, community feedback, and food distribution efficiency ⁴
Pantry Operations	\$15,000	Transportation, storage, equipment maintenance ⁵
Educational Materials	\$5,000	Flyers, workshop handouts, online resources ⁶
Food Supplies	\$30,000	Fresh produce, dairy-free options for pantry and meals and culturally sensitive food options ⁷
Marketing	\$2,500	Digital, print outreach campaigns ⁸
Facility Rental	\$5,500	Event space for workshops ⁹
Indirect Costs (Utilities)	\$3,000	Includes utility costs for food storage and distribution centers ¹⁰

In-Kind Contributions	-\$10,000	Donations from local grocers, community, and farmers ¹¹
Total Project Cost	\$234,000	Total operational and program costs.
Revenue Sources	-\$15,000	Donations, other grants
Total Requested	\$219,000	Requested funding amount for the "Nourish Pittsburgh" initiative.

¹³PROJECT TOTAL= \$244,000- REVENUE \$15,000= **\$219,000 TOTAL REQUESTED**

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1. The salary aligns with the median annual salary for program coordinators in Allegheny County
 2. This salary reflects the need for a professional with expertise in nutrition education and cultural competency.
 3. The salary is based on local benchmarks for similar outreach positions for similar outreach positions.
 4. This salary aligns with standard rates for data analysts in the Pittsburgh area.
 5. Covers transportation, equipment maintenance, and logistics for storing and distributing culturally relevant food through community centers and the main distribution hub.
 6. Costs for print materials, including culturally relevant recipe booklets and nutrition information pamphlets, and digital resources for the community.
 7. Estimated costs for additional fresh produce, dairy-free options, and culturally relevant foods based on current market rates and supplier agreements.
 8. Covers advertising through social media, local newspapers, and other channels to maximize community awareness.
 9. For community workshops and meal events, based on standard rental rates in Pittsburgh's community centers and halls.
 10. Includes utilities for storage and refrigeration, a necessary cost to maintain fresh food supplies for distributions.
 11. An estimated \$10,000 in donated food supplies from local farmers, grocers, and community members to reduce overall project expenses.

Conclusion

The proposed budget for *Nourish Pittsburgh* reflects a comprehensive and strategic allocation of resources to ensure the program's success. Personnel costs prioritize skilled staff essential to managing and delivering the program's culturally relevant food access services. Pantry operations and educational initiatives are designed to maximize impact, addressing critical food insecurity in Allegheny County as highlighted in the *Pittsburgh Food Access Mapping Report (2023)*, which shows that over 20% of households in the region face food insecurity.⁴⁴

The inclusion of educational materials, culturally sensitive food options, and marketing efforts ensures a well-rounded approach to community engagement. Indirect costs have been minimized to focus funding directly on program delivery. Additionally, the program leverages in-kind contributions and local support to enhance sustainability and reduce the total requested amount. This budget positions *Nourish Pittsburgh* as a cost-effective, impactful solution to meet the diverse needs of underserved populations in our region.

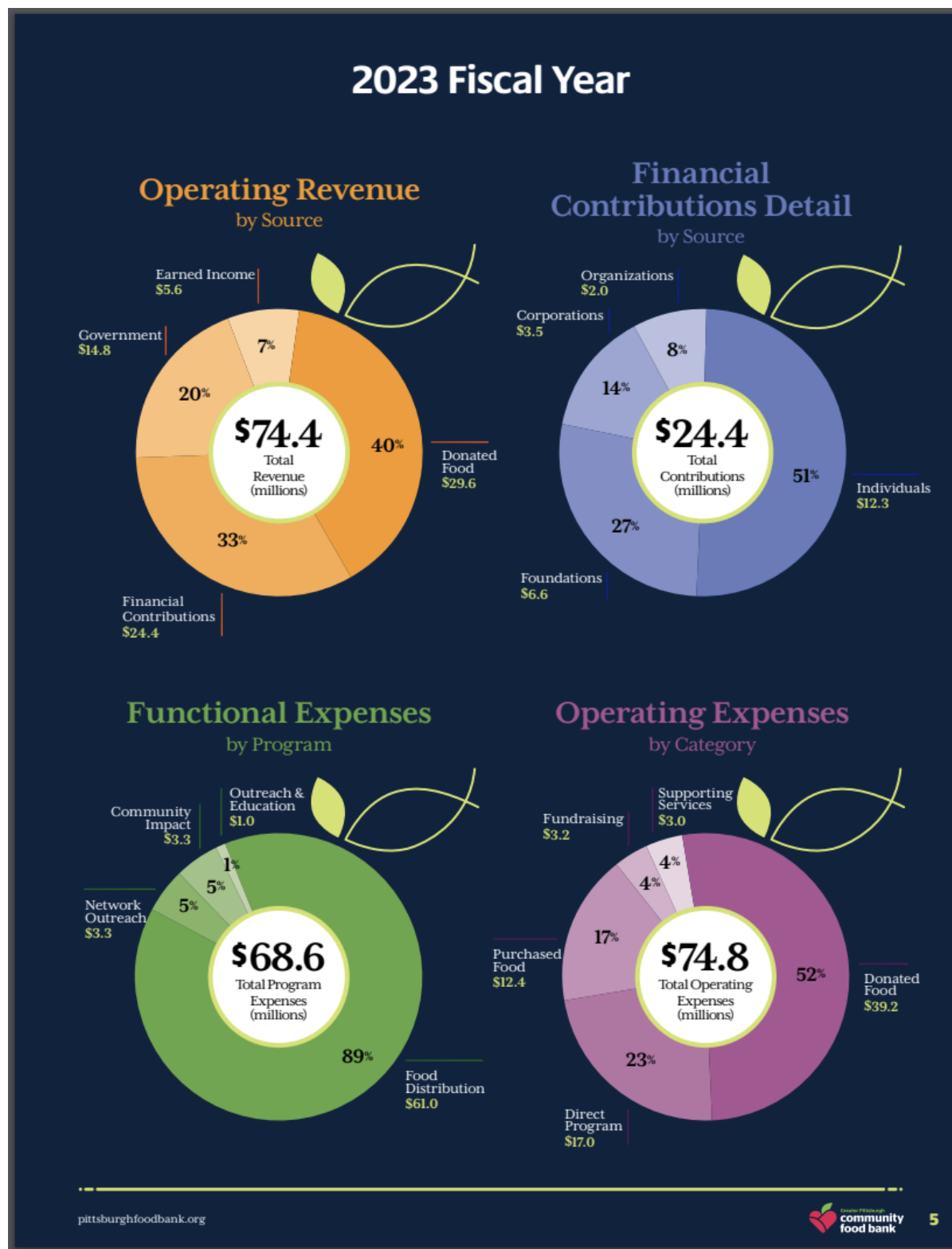
Grant Conclusion

The *Nourish Pittsburgh* project provides a vital and community-focused approach to combating food insecurity, particularly within Pittsburgh's underserved populations. With a well-defined budget of \$106,000, the project leverages partnerships, in-kind contributions, and existing resources, reducing the requested funding to \$91,000. This initiative will empower residents, support health equity, and create lasting solutions by fostering a community-centered food distribution model that is culturally inclusive and nutritionally beneficial. *Nourish Pittsburgh's* anticipated impact aligns with GPCFB's mission and demonstrates a commitment to creating a healthier and more resilient community.

44. UrbanKind Institute. *Pittsburgh Food Access Mapping Report*. Pittsburgh Food Policy Council, 2023.

Appendices

Appendix A: Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report (Fiscal Year July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023)



Appendix B: Form 990 (Fiscal Year July 1, 2022, June 30, 2023)

** PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COPY ** Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax		OMB No. 1545-0047
Form 990 Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service	Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except private foundations) Do not enter social security numbers on this form as it may be made public. Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.	2022 Open to Public Inspection
A For the 2022 calendar year, or tax year beginning JUL 1, 2022 and ending JUN 30, 2023		
B Check if applicable: ☐ Address change ☐ Name change ☐ Initial return ☐ Final return/terminated ☐ Amended return ☐ Application pending	C Name of organization GREATER PITTSBURGH COMMUNITY FOOD BANK Doing business as Number and street (or P.O. box if mail is not delivered to street address) Room/suite 1 NORTH LINDEN STREET City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code DUQUESNE, PA 15110 F Name and address of principal officer: LISA SCALES SAME AS C ABOVE	D Employer identification number 25-1420599 E Telephone number 412-460-3663 G Gross receipts \$ 82,400,149. H(a) Is this a group return for subordinates? Yes ☐ No ☒ H(b) Are all subordinates included? Yes ☐ No ☐ If "No," attach a list. See instructions H(c) Group exemption number
I Tax-exempt status: ☒ 501(c)(3) ☐ 501(c) () (insert no.) ☐ 4947(a)(1) or ☐ 527		
J Website: WWW.PITTSBURGHFOODBANK.ORG		
K Form of organization: ☒ Corporation ☐ Trust ☐ Association ☐ Other L Year of formation: 1982 M State of legal domicile: PA		
Part I Summary		
1 Briefly describe the organization's mission or most significant activities: LEVERAGE THE POWER OF COMMUNITY TO ACHIEVE LASTING SOLUTIONS TO HUNGER AND ITS ROOT CAUSES.		
2 Check this box ☐ if the organization discontinued its operations or disposed of more than 25% of its net assets.		
Activities & Governance	3 Number of voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1a)	23
	4 Number of independent voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1b)	23
	5 Total number of individuals employed in calendar year 2022 (Part V, line 2a)	221
	6 Total number of volunteers (estimate if necessary)	7081
	7a Total unrelated business revenue from Part VIII, column (C), line 12	0.
	7b Net unrelated business taxable income from Form 990-T, Part I, line 11	0.
Revenue		Prior Year Current Year
	8 Contributions and grants (Part VIII, line 1h)	68,473,174. 68,705,150.
	9 Program service revenue (Part VIII, line 2g)	2,169,467. 4,481,217.
	10 Investment income (Part VIII, column (A), lines 3, 4, and 7d)	293,990. 628,726.
	11 Other revenue (Part VIII, column (A), lines 5, 6d, 8c, 9c, 10c, and 11e)	59,596. 138,869.
	12 Total revenue - add lines 8 through 11 (must equal Part VIII, column (A), line 12)	70,996,227. 73,953,962.
Expenses		
	13 Grants and similar amounts paid (Part IX, column (A), lines 1-3)	38,500. 46,000.
	14 Benefits paid to or for members (Part IX, column (A), line 4)	0. 0.
	15 Salaries, other compensation, employee benefits (Part IX, column (A), lines 5-10)	11,090,668. 12,543,106.
	16a Professional fundraising fees (Part IX, column (A), line 11e)	816,624. 956,004.
	b Total fundraising expenses (Part IX, column (D), line 25)	3,132,437.
	17 Other expenses (Part IX, column (A), lines 11a-11d, 11f-24e)	59,821,235. 60,442,982.
	18 Total expenses. Add lines 13-17 (must equal Part IX, column (A), line 25)	71,767,027. 73,988,092.
	19 Revenue less expenses. Subtract line 18 from line 12	-770,800. -34,130.
Net Assets or Fund Balances		Beginning of Current Year End of Year
	20 Total assets (Part X, line 16)	56,117,517. 55,427,718.
	21 Total liabilities (Part X, line 26)	7,357,343. 5,936,145.
	22 Net assets or fund balances. Subtract line 21 from line 20	48,760,174. 49,491,573.
Part II Signature Block		
Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this return, including accompanying schedules and statements, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete. Declaration of preparer (other than officer) is based on all information of which preparer has any knowledge.		
Sign Here	Signature of officer GARY DOYLE, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER Type or print name and title	
Paid Preparer	Print/Type preparer's name Preparer's signature Date Check if self-employed ☐ PTIN SARAH R. PIOT SARAH R. PIOT ☐ P01358891	
Use Only	Firm's name Firm's EIN Phone no. SCHNEIDER DOWNS & CO., INC. 25-1408703 412-261-3644 ONE PPG PLACE, SUITE 1700 PITTSBURGH, PA 15222	
May the IRS discuss this return with the preparer shown above? See instructions ☒ Yes ☐ No		
232001 12-13-22 LHA For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the separate instructions. Form 990 (2022)		

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