



CFMC Grant Application

COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION FOR FUNDING REQUESTS FOR THE Community Foundation of Middlesex County Competitive Cycle.

Instructions: Complete the application on the website. You may "Save and Continue Later" - the site will email you a link which is active for 30 days. Review instructions document for full details before completing. Complete all questions.

Section V requires certain documents to be uploaded to the form - see the Application Instructions Document for a list of the required items. All items must be uploaded as PDF Files. The CFMC Budget Summary form is available on the website in Word. This document must be submitted as PDF file as well.

I. Application Information

Legal Name of Organization

A Little Compassion, Inc.

Division or Department Name (if applicable)

Other Tax Exempt Entity?

Are you a 501(c)3 Organization

Yes

EIN #

82-5502666

If your organization is not a 501(c) 3 tax exempt entity or division/department of a 170(c)1 government agency or religious organization, please contact Thayer Talbott, 860.347.0025, for further information before completing the application.

Total Cost associated with request \$

530,463

Dollar Amount Requested \$

5000

Summary Statement

General Program Operations funding will support A Little Compassion's programs for neurodiverse young adults including Nest Gatherings, N.E.S.T. Employment, Possibilities Boutique and Doggie Barks Social Enterprise. Our community outreach program, Acceptance, Inclusion and Outreach provides support for families, allies and providers as well as community events promoting a greater understanding among community members. All programs are vital to this marginalized population.

II. Funding Request Information

1. Proposal / Purpose

A Little Compassion provides direct services to neurodiverse youth and their families by providing a range of programs tailored to their unique needs and challenges. Our programs are designed to support them in building essential skills, fostering social connections, and promoting inclusion within the community. No individual is ever turned away for lack of funding.

N.E.S.T. Employment Program: Offers direct support to neurodiverse youth through our New Employment Skills Training Program provides individualized job coaching, skill development, and workplace training in our authentic and inclusive shop. Participants engage in hands-on activities and receive support from our staff to help them thrive. 100% of our baristas are neurodiverse along with 100% of our lead staff.

Nest Gatherings: Our Nest Gatherings program offers opportunities for neurodiverse youth to socialize, connect with peers, and participate in engaging activities - all in a safe and supportive environment. These gatherings are facilitated by our team and provide valuable opportunities for social interaction and skill-building. Gatherings include an inclusive Open Mic Night, Trivia Night, Hikes, Field Trips, Game Night, Cooking Night, Craft Nights, Pokemon Night, Switch Night, Movie Night and more.

Artist Possibilities Boutique: Through our boutique, we empower emerging and established neurodiverse artists to showcase their talents and sell their creations to the community. We provide direct support to artists, including mentorship and assistance with product development and marketing.

Doggie Barks Program: Our Doggie Barks program employs neurodiverse young adults to produce and sell dog treats made from spent grains. Participants receive direct training and support from our team to develop essential job skills and contribute to the success of the program. The spent grains are sourced free of charge from local breweries making them a sustainability partner and fostering further community outreach.

Acceptance, Inclusion, and Outreach (AIO) Program: Our AIO program delivers support and resources to individuals and families within the neurodiverse community as well as allies, providers and stakeholders. This includes neurodiversity informational sessions, sensory training workshops, Compassion Story Hours, parent support meetings, Open Mic Nights and community events aimed at promoting acceptance and inclusion to the greater community. These include Neurodiversity Acceptance Month, Compassion Walk, Lantern Illumination Celebration and more.

We primarily provide direct services to neurodiverse youth and their families, yet also collaborate with our local schools, library and youth organizations to expand our reach. These partnerships enable us to connect with individuals who may benefit from our programs and facilitate access to resources and support. Additionally, with the help of our partners, we have been able to bring new programs to our community. This past year we welcomed Jacques Pepin who completed a cooking demo with our young adults, toured the Katherine Violet Hubbard Sanctuary and had a sensory friendly ride on The Essex Holiday Steam Train.

Our goal is to empower neurodiverse youth and their families to thrive, build meaningful connections, and lead fulfilling lives within their communities. We strive to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals of all abilities beyond the doors of our space. With the funding from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and the support of other donors, we are able to provide these crucial programs to the populations of the Connecticut River Valley which is often referred to as an "Autism Support Desert."

2. Sustainability and Assessing Impact

We employ various measurements to assess the impact of our organization's programs and initiatives. These measurements help us gauge the effectiveness of our efforts and identify areas for improvement. Here are the key measurements we use and recent results of each:

Participant Satisfaction Surveys: We regularly conduct participant satisfaction surveys to gather feedback on our programs and services. These surveys have indicated high levels of satisfaction among participants, with over 90% reporting positive

experiences and expressing appreciation for the support and opportunities provided.

Outcome Assessments: We track specific outcomes related to program participation and skill development. Our job coaches have reported significant improvements in participants' social skills, communication abilities, and workplace focus following their engagement in our programs. In their evaluations, participants reported that their confidence level dramatically increased through the program. These results were both an increase in their own feelings of comfort level in the workplace and their ability to socially interact positively within a workplace environment.

Attendance and Participation Rates: We monitor attendance and participation rates across our programs to assess engagement levels and identify trends. Recent results demonstrate consistent attendance and active participation among program participants, indicating strong interest and ongoing engagement in our offerings.

Overall, these measurements provide valuable insights into the impact of our organization's programs and initiatives, allowing us to continuously evaluate and enhance our services to better meet the needs of neurodiverse youth and their families. By tracking outcomes, assessing participant feedback, and monitoring engagement metrics, we remain committed to driving positive change and fostering a more inclusive and supportive community for all.

With the aid of a small business advisor, we have been formulating new marketing and distribution plans to create expansion of our Doggie Barks program. This will result in a higher level of earned revenue which will help make our numerous programs more sustainable.

Our specific impact goals for this grant are:

Outcome 1: 75% of N.E.S.T. program participants will report feeling more confident in the workplace after program completion via survey results.

Outcome 2: 75% of N.E.S.T. program participants will improve their hard and soft skills via Job Coach assessments.

Outcome 3: Average number of participants per Gathering will increase by at least 10%.

Outcome 4: Our Artist's Boutique will expand its neurodiverse artist pool by 20% and we will host an artist showcase open to the public.

Outcome 5: Doggie Barks production and staffing will increase by 20%.

Outcome 6: The AIO team will expand our family-centered programs to three per month.

III. Grant Program / Project Information

Organization Area of Impact (choose ONE)

Public / Social Benefit (Civic Improvement/ Social Service)

Grant Type (choose ONE)

General Organization Support/Improvement

Target Demographics (Select all that apply):

- Adults
- Young Adults (ages 18-25)
- Youth (ages 13-17)
- Families

- Parents / Guardians
- LGBTQIA+

Geographic Area(s) Served By This Application:

- Chester
- Clinton
- Cromwell
- Deep River
- East Haddam
- East Hampton
- Essex
- Haddam
- Killingworth
- Middletown
- Old Saybrook
- Westbrook

Total Number of People in Middlesex County Personally Impacted

2716

IV. Organization Information

Board of Directors / Trustees Information

Percent (%) of Directors/Trustees who contribute annually to Operations

100%

Total Number of Directors/Trustees:

8

Average number attending in person:

8

Total Number of Board meetings held last year:

10

Year of Return:

2022-2023

Date most recent IRS Form 990 was filed:

3/1/24

Organization's Total Operating Budget

530463

Organization's Fiscal Year

July 1 - June 30

Division Operating Budget Information

National Organization Chapter Information

Did you RECEIVE a competitive process grant in the:

- 2020-2021 process
- 2021-2022 process
- 2022-2023 process (fall 2022 or spring 2023)

Brief Background Statement of the Organization:

Founded in 2018, A Little Compassion builds a safe, kind, and inclusive community for neurodiverse young adults. ALC was born out of founder Jane Moen's passion to address the challenges facing her autistic daughter. What started as small group gatherings blossomed into wraparound services that offer support, bolster confidence, and create opportunities for financial independence and peer connections as well community programming to create a more inclusive and compassionate community. This vital work is done at The Nest Coffee House in Deep River, which was recently expanded to house a dedicated Gathering space. ALC is also dedicated to supporting our greater community by supporting local service organizations.

V. Additional Information To Be Included with the Application

Please Note: Additional information requested below MUST be uploaded in PDF files. Other document formats will not be accepted by the application form. Attempts to upload other file formats could result in a loss of all application data entered.

A. Current Organization Operations Budget (Required)

- 2023_2024-Budget-A-Little-Compassion.pdf

B. Board of Directors and Officers List (Required)

- [A-Little-Compassion-Board-of-Directors-List-2024.docx-1.pdf](#)

C. IRS Tax Exempt Determination Letter

- IRS-Determination-Letter1.pdf

D. For Program/Project Requests only - CFMC Budget Summary Form:

E. Organizations serving a region greater than Middlesex County - county-based budget summary:

F. America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Yes

ARPA Funding detail

| Designate Will Apply or Have Been Approved/Received | Amount Requested / Approved |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Will Apply for funds for a handicap ramp. | 25,000 |

Additional financial documentation, including the organization's most recent audit, annual report, and IRS Form 990 may also be required. Only provide this information if requested.

For programs or projects which are collaborations among two or more organizations or where an organization provides in-school or after-school programming for schools, the Community Foundation requires a list of organizations or schools partnering with your organization as well as Letters of Support.

For the purposes of this application, collaborations are defined as partnerships where two or more agencies are committed through staffing, funding, and resource allocation to the goals and objectives of the program described. Because the nature of the collaboration requires two or more entities to work together, for the purposes of funding, only one organization may complete the application, and in doing so, accepts responsibility for all evaluative and fiduciary reporting.

For all collaborations, the Community Foundation requires letters of support from the non-applicant organization(s) and/or from the school(s) and school district(s) at which the applicant organization is the program.

Is this application in collaboration with a School(s) or School District(s)?

No

Is this application a collaboration of two or more nonprofit organizations (NOT schools)?

No

If this is an On-Going Collaboration, how long has the collaboration existed?

If Yes, is this a New or On-Going Collaboration?

On-going

List of Collaborators

ALC is thrilled to have so many partner/collaborators who work with us to help our programs flourish and often supports their organization as well. We work with a variety of school and community organizations to both increase our outreach and provide a greater variety of programming available to those we serve. See list below. For example, we are very grateful for the cooperation of the Essex Land Trust group, headed by Tom Gezo. In the last several months, we have worked collaboratively to bring nature hikes to our neurodiverse community. Our first event was a bird watching guided experiences. The collaboration brought more visitors to their beautiful trails and allowed our participants and enriching experience. In the future we will be continuing to share and create new experiences with the Essex Land Trust, in the form of scavenger hunts and learning how to navigate and orient oneself in a forest setting.

Another wonderful collaboration we are proud of is our work with local breweries for providing the spent grains (free of charge) which we use to create our Doggie Barks. Local breweries such as Little House in Chester, and High Nine brewery in Deep River. These local businesses not only see the value in our employment program which creates our Doggie Barks but also in our greater mission within the community even promoting our mission and our offerings with their own fundraising activities.

School and Agency Collaborations:

Region 4 Schools - Christen Papallo

Lyme/Old Lyme Schools - Allan Honer

Old Saybrook Schools - Kendra Flaherty

Deep River, Chester and Essex Elementary

Gatherings and A.I.O. Collaborations:

Teenzone - Victoria Taylor

Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary - Jennifer Hubbard

Jacques Pepin - Jacques Pepin

Essex Steam Train - Maureen Quintin

Essex Land Trust - Tom Gezo

Doggie Barks Collaborations:

Chapco - B. Weinstein

Little House Brewing - Sam Wagner

Pasta Vita - Richard Cersosimo

High Nine Brewing - S. Waldron

Letters of Support (if a collaboration with schools or other nonprofits))

VI. Organization Contact Information

Are you a new nonprofit applicant to the Community Foundation?

No

Title

Executive Director

Executive Officer's Name

Jane Moen

Executive Officer Email

jane@alittlecompassion.org

Phone

(860) 705-5748

Title

Director of Development

Contact Person

Rich Wills

Application Contact Email

development@alittlecompassion.org

Phone

(860) 705-5748

Mailing Address

162 Main Street, Deep River, CT 06417
Deep River, Connecticut 06417
United States

Street Address

Connecticut
United States

Website

<https://alittlecompassion.org/>

Social Media Channels

<https://www.facebook.com/thenestcoffeehouse>

@nestcoffeehouse - Instagram

VII. Non-Funding Needs

We are always looking for help in increasing our outreach to more groups in Middlesex County and would appreciate any introductions which the CFMC might help facilitate. Additionally, we would love to have anyone from CFMC join us for a variety of Gatherings and our special events which happen throughout the year. Particularly, we would appreciate volunteers for our Lantern Community Celebration in May and our Compassion Walk in October.

VIII. Marketing and Public Relations

Organizations receiving grants from the Community Foundation of Middlesex County must promote their funding awards according to the marketing and public relations guidelines established by the Community Foundation. By signing the application below, the CEO/Executive Director understands the Community Foundation's marketing and public relations requirements if awarded a grant. The Community Foundation will host a seminar on marketing guidelines and tips for grantees annually. The Community Foundation's Grantee Communications Kit may be downloaded on our website in the Nonprofit Resources section, middlesexcountycf.org/nonprofits/resources/forms-pr-guidelines/.

IX. Tax Exempt Standing and Use of Grant Funding Certification

By signing this application, the CEO/Executive Director/Board President is certifying that your organization is a qualified 501c3 organization or other charitable organization recognized and currently in good standing with the IRS, or 170(c)(1) governmental agencies. Should a grant be approved by the Community Foundation of Middlesex County, these funds may only be used for the purpose outlined in your original application; you must notify us if you are unable to do so. If grant funding is provided, you may only use these funds for charitable purpose as described in Section 170(c)2 of the IRS code, and funds may not be used for any political or lobbying activity. In addition, no tangible benefits, goods or services may be received by our donors or by staff members of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County in exchange for grant funding.

Signature Certification

I certify that my printed name as stated and assigned below constitutes my signature and may be accepted as such.

Title

Executive Director

Printed Name

Jane Moen

Date

03/07/2024