

**Buncombe County FY2019 Strategic Partnership Grants
Application Summary Sheet**

Project	Sandy Mush: Preserving our Heritage, Strengthening our Community's Future
Organization	Sandy Mush Community Ctr.

Amount Requested	\$45,000	Strategic Priority or Sustainability Goal	Healthy Living
New or Renewal Request	Renewal	Area Served	District 3

Organization Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of the organization is community improvement and capacity building through goals including, but not limited to: Strengthen the sense of community and awareness of community history and its agricultural heritage; Increase educational and health and wellness opportunities; Increase preservation efforts, including the historic Sandy Mush School and grounds; Strengthen and support community organizations. The SMCC projects are supported by community volunteer teams who contributed over 5000 hours of service in 2017. Key projects in 2017 included fiber optic Internet and computer lab, a weekly playgroup for families, a monthly food pantry serving more than 50 families, and mountain heritage activities including square dancing, a school reunion and oral histories.
Key Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SMCC is connected and provides a computer lab that is open five days per week and a WiFi hot spot that is available 24 hours / 7 days a week. Request is for funding to pay for the monthly access, which benefits our students, community members seeking higher education and our local small businesses. As the SMCC continues to increase community access and collaborate with community partners such as 4-H, there is a need to continue to make safety and accessibility improvements to all floors of the building, as well as the grounds.
People Served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves a rural farming community of approximately 550 Buncombe County families with an estimated population of 1,500. Families are predominately white with a small Latino population with overall median income below \$42,000 per year. One specific target group is youth, with 20% age 17 or younger. Internet connectivity is vital for our adult population who want to continue their higher education and improve their career prospects. This 22-64 age group makes up 57% of our population, with an additional 7% in the 18-21 age group.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to resources and study groups for students. Provides rural residents with access to global information, cultural resources, health care and education. Enables tech and creative businesses an opportunity to succeed.

Budget			
Amount Funded FY2018	\$20,000	Increase Request	\$25,000
Administrative Budget	No IRS Form 990 or audited financial statements available	Total Organization Budget	\$168,600 (projected FY2019)

Other Funding Sources: Grants, Individual donations, Government funding, Private foundations, Sponsorships and Supporting Families, Yoga Class and Events, T-shirt Sales, Building Rental

Strengths
Project design is evidence based, replicating a structured model, and/or best practice
Diverse/Balanced funding sources
Strong implementation plan

Sandy Mush: Preserving our Heritage, Strengthening our Community's Future

FY2019 Strategic Partnership Grants

Sandy Mush Community Ctr.

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Application Form

Question Group

Project Name*

Name of Project.

Sandy Mush: Preserving our Heritage, Strengthening our Community's Future

Amount Requested*

\$45,000.00

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Area Served*

Which areas of the County will be served by this project? Which Commissioner District(s) will be served?

A Buncombe County Commissioner district map is available at [THIS LINK](#).

Sandy Mush is located in the northwest rural farming community of Buncombe County, with many youth attending Erwin District schools. Sandy Mush is within Buncombe County District 3.

Organization Description*

Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? Highlight two or three key facts and accomplishments that best define your organization.

The Sandy Mush Community Center (SMCC) is organized exclusively for charitable purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. The purpose of the organization is community improvement and capacity building through goals including, but not limited to:

- Strengthen the sense of community and awareness of community history and its agricultural heritage
- Increase educational and health and wellness opportunities
- Increase preservation efforts, including the historic Sandy Mush School and grounds
- Strengthen and support community organizations

The SMCC projects are supported by community volunteer teams who contributed over 5000 hours of service in 2017. Key projects in 2017 included fiber optic Internet and computer lab, a weekly playgroup for families, a monthly food pantry serving more than 50 families, and mountain heritage activities including square dancing, a school reunion and oral histories.

Strategic Priority*

Which of the following priorities best reflects the primary goal of your project?

Buncombe County Commissioners are dedicated to strengthening the quality of life for everyone by setting new fiscally, socially and environmentally responsible goals that will guide decisions and improve our community for future generations. The Board has committed to strategic priorities as a guide to shape partnerships and investments of resources to insure a healthy, safe, well-educated, thriving and sustainable community.

Details about the Strategic Priorities are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Other Sustainability Goal

Strategic Priority - Other Sustainability Goal

If you selected "Other Sustainability Goal" from the list of Strategic Priorities, please list it here.

Details about the Sustainability Goals are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Healthy Living, Equity in Access, and Quality Education

Shared Vision*

What critical community problem or challenge are you hoping to improve through this project?

Our Sandy Mush community is rural and remote, with a lack of services that are typically found elsewhere in Buncombe County. In order to provide programming that will increase our community members health, and their educational and economic opportunities, the SMCC needs a safe and accessible building and grounds. Additionally, we need to provide access to the best in current technology for our students, businesses and community members. Specifically, we are working to address these strategic priorities:

Increase access to higher education.

Increase the use of recreation facilities, programs, and services.

Expand access to information.

Increase the number of recreational activities available in the community.

The SMCC is providing the physical space, access to technology and programming that our community needs for success in the greater world while continuing to preserve the cultural heritage and historic building that has served the community for almost one hundred years.

Key Steps*

How will the project work? What are specific activities and milestones that your project entails?

After partnering with Buncombe County in 2017-18 to connect the SMCC to high speed fiber Internet through AT&T State, Local, and Education Public Sector Solutions, we need to continue to partner to offer this valuable resource to our community members. The SMCC is connected, and we provide a computer lab that is open five days per week and a WiFi hot spot that is available 24 hours / 7 days a week. We request funding to pay for the monthly access, which benefits our students, community members seeking higher education and our local small businesses.

As the SMCC continues to increase community access and collaborate with community partners such as 4-H, we need to continue to make safety and accessibility improvements to all floors of our building, as well as the grounds. Since this is a Buncombe County owned property, we will continue to collaborate with BC to make sure we meet standards as we work with contractors to complete necessary building and grounds improvements.

People Served*

Who are the members of our community this project will serve? How many people will be served? Include demographics, including age, area median income, race, neighborhood and/or school.

The Sandy Mush Community Center serves our rural farming community of approximately 550 Buncombe County families with an estimated population of 1,500. Our families are predominately white with a small Latino population with overall median income below \$42,000 per year. The SMCC is committed to providing services to all of our community members, one specific target group is our youth, with 20% age 17 or younger. The Sandy Mush 4-H is the oldest 4-H Club in the county, serving youth from the Erwin District for more than 40 years. We are proud to partner with them to provide a home base for their group. Additionally, community members have requested that we partner with AB-Tech to offer GED support services in our computer lab. The SMCC Internet connectivity is vital for our adult population who want to continue their higher education and improve their career prospects. This 22-64 age group makes up 57% of our population, with an additional 7% in the 18-21 age group.

Partners*

Which other organizations are you working with to reach your goals? What other local organizations provide similar services or serve similar beneficiaries, and how do you work together?

The SMCC is partnering with two local youth organizations to provide safe community facilities for their youth programming at no charge: the Sandy Mush 4-H Club and the Mountain Lady Farm Project. Additionally, we partner with both youth groups for our April Spring Fling event as a fundraiser for each of their programs. This past year, the SMCC collaborated with Buncombe County on an energy audit, and will continue to collaborate with BC to make sure we are implementing best practices for our Sandy Mush Community Center building and grounds. Due to our recent high speed fiber Internet connection and the set up of our computer lab, we are currently talking with AB-Tech Department of Transitional Studies program leaders to explore a potential partnership to offer high school equivalency online and class instruction at the SMCC. This partnership has the potential to help many of our community members obtain the education they need in order to improve their career prospects.

Personnel*

Who is responsible for the project? Briefly describe project leaders and the role each will play in the project. How do these leaders reflect the population or community that you serve?

Terri Wells is leading the Internet access aspect of the project. She led a small team of volunteers to implement this project, and continues to work with a growing team of more than twenty volunteers who are committed to the continued growth of this program, with the potential to provide educational opportunities in addition to expanding access to information. Terri is a 9th generation Sandy Mush native who is a first generation college graduate. During her youth, she was an active 4-H club member and Sandy Mush Community Center member. Her career as an educator provides a valuable asset to this project.

Kurt Eckel is leading the safety and accessibility aspect of the project. Kurt has lived in Buncombe County 30+ years and has owned land in Sandy Mush for most of that time, farming the land at one time. Professionally, a retired CEO of YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly where he managed a nonprofit with a 5 million dollar budget on 1,200 acres with 40 buildings, many historical.

Success*

How will you measure results? What will success look like? How will you document the impact of your project? Include whether there is a model that serves as basis for project design.

Once we improve the safety and accessibility of the SMCC, we will increase the use of the building and grounds. We will document the use of building and grounds by community organizations, as well as new community programs.

With current community use and the request of a partnership with AB-Tech by community members, we are already experiencing success. Our intent is to build upon this by developing these partnerships, and working with community members to provide the resources they need to better their lives. We will document the impact of this by keeping records of community use, detailing notes of various types of use, and specifically keeping records of educational attainment.

The Speed Matters Project of CWA notes these benefits that apply to our project:

- Access to resources and study groups for students.
- Provides rural residents with access to global information, cultural resources, health care and education.
- Enables tech and creative businesses an opportunity to succeed.

Funding*

What is your plan for finding the balance of the project budget? What is your funding timeline and what are your other sources of support?

The monthly AT&T bill for the high speed Managed Internet Service and public WiFi is \$750 for an annual total of \$9000. For this, we need to partner with Buncombe County to provide a service that has previously been denied to our community. We do, however, have a commitment from a private funder to provide \$5000 to help with technology purchases or services needed for educational enhancement of the computer lab. We have very strong volunteer community support, including Board member, Mark Diaz, who has career experience with technology and provides significant volunteer support.

For the safety and accessibility improvements to the SMCC building and grounds, we continue to count on Buncombe County to help with the major improvements to this Buncombe County owned property. A \$36,000 investment will help ensure that this community resource can continue to thrive and grow to meet community needs. Community investment of funds and volunteer hours provide the on-going maintenance.

Sustainability*

How will this project be maintained? Please describe funding sources and how you plan to sustain the project in future years.

High speed Managed Internet Service with WiFi community service is maintained through a contract with AT&T ISP, and the SMCC volunteers provide regularly scheduled open hours and technology support. We are

continuing to build community awareness and investment in this service to help supplement Buncombe County funding as we continue to build community revenue streams for this program.

Building and grounds improvements will be sustained through volunteer labor and community funding for ongoing maintenance needs. Once we are able to get assistance on the safety and accessibility improvements, our volunteers are able to maintain the ongoing upkeep of the building and grounds.

ATTACHMENTS

Project Budget*

Download the budget form at [THIS LINK](#).

Complete the budget form for this project and the overall organization.

Save it to your computer, then upload it.

SMCCBUDGET.xlsx

Financial Statements*

Upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements.

All financial statements must be audited, reviewed or compiled by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.

2017 SMCC Financials.pdf

IRS Form 990*

Upload a copy of the 990 nonprofit tax reporting form that you most recently completed.

If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.

We are eligible to file a 990N, which is the electronic postcard.

Board of Directors List*

Upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors.

If your organization does not have a board of directors, briefly state the reason.

SMCCBoard.pdf

Authorized Signatory

By typing in below the name of the authorized signatory and date of submittal, you acknowledge that your governing body has authorized this application, that it is true and current to your knowledge. As a condition of any grant awarded, this organization will provide all information in the manner described in the contract to be executed between the organization and Buncombe County or its designee, including program and financial reporting.

Name & Date

Peggy Baldwin January 29, 2018