



## **Uniting for Safe and Strong Communities** **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the purpose of this program?**

*Uniting for Safe and Strong Communities* (USSC) brings together an ideologically, racially, generationally, and geographically diverse cohort of 25-30 Pennsylvanians, called *Uniters*, from Adams, Dauphin, Franklin, and York Counties to build relationships, strengthen collaboration skills, explore different views on key issues, and work together with community partner organizations to take action on urgent local challenges.

### **Is this political?**

No. Urban Rural Action is an apolitical 501(c)(3) organization and USSC is a non-partisan civic participation program that does not engage in politics. Beyond that, we actively seek to include perspectives from across the political spectrum in the program.

### **Who can participate?**

Anyone who lives or works in one of the four target counties is eligible to apply. All applicants will be interviewed by members of the USSC Core Team. Acceptance to the cohort is based on ability to commit to the full program, expressed interest in the program's purpose and goals, and the need to balance different perspectives and experiences within the cohort.

### **Does it cost anything?**

Nope. In fact, if you are accepted we will give you a \$500 stipend to cover travel and other costs associated with your participation in the program.

### **What are the benefits of participating?**

The biggest benefits are the opportunity to make a positive contribution to addressing significant local challenges, and becoming part of the *Uniters* community through relationships that you would be unlikely to form outside the program and that will endure beyond its end.





## UNITING

### FOR ACTION IN PENNSYLVANIA

Adams | Dauphin | Franklin | York

Additional benefits include:

- Developing and practicing constructive conversation skills
- Strengthening interpersonal and team communication skills
- Learning frameworks for problem analysis, project design, and conflict management
- Working with a community organization to take action in your community
- Sharing your experiences in local or national media

#### **How will the project be selected?**

Your team, alongside your community partner lead, will work through our problem analysis and project design processes to jointly decide on the focus of your project. It will be something that the whole team feels strongly about and is prepared to tackle, and that aligns with the community partner organization's mission and goals.

#### **Do I have to come to every program gathering?**

Yes. Participation in every program gathering is crucial because one of our principal goals is to build relationships across the cohort through our in-person gatherings. Every gathering will build on earlier gatherings, so missing one means missing information and skills you need to make the contributions we expect of all *Uniters* as well as not showing up for your teammates.

Of course, we understand the reality of emergencies, illness, and unavoidable conflicts, and we will make exceptions in those circumstances as necessary while applying our full participation principle as consistently as possible.

#### **How much time will the program take?**

Outside of the program gatherings, you will need to spend some time implementing your team's project. Ultimately, you and your team will decide on the scope of the project and how each team member will contribute to its success, so the actual time commitment will vary and may fluctuate over the course of the program. On average, 1-2 hours per week is a reasonable estimate.

