



## **Grant Templates**

### **TimeSlips' Background**

TimeSlips is an award-winning, international non-profit that brings meaning and purpose to late life by inspiring a dynamic of respect and wonder between older people and those who care for them. Founded by MacArthur "Genius" Award winner Anne Basting, TimeSlips provides inspiring tools and resources to spark creative engagement regardless of physical or cognitive disabilities. We work toward a moment when creative engagement is simply standard practice in our care relationships.

TimeSlips models innovation - inviting us all to transform late life into a time of meaningful expression, connection, and purpose. We offer training and inspiration worldwide with individual and organizational certification in our evidence-based approach to creative engagement.

### **TimeSlips History**

In 1995, Anne Basting received her PhD in Theatre Arts and Dance from the University of Minnesota. Her dissertation lauded the impact of the senior theater movement for its positive impact on the lives of older Americans. Specifically, Basting found that "taking on a new role" radically changed the experience of aging for these performers, their families and their audiences.

One thing that haunted Basting was what happened when a senior theater participant got sick, especially if dementia or Alzheimer's disease took hold. She wondered how the benefits healthy seniors got from these theater exercises could be transferred to older Americans struggling with dementia. In 1996, after moving to Milwaukee, she volunteered in a nursing home and began the process of discovering what worked best with this population. She found that fighting to retrieve memories simply frustrated the participants and did not change how those caring for the elders viewed them.

Then Basting decided to "forget memory." She simply held up a picture of the Marlboro man torn out of a magazine and asked the participants to build a story about the picture.

Forty-five minutes later an awe-inspiring story emerged and it became clear that encouraging imagination, with all its verbal and social benefits, had a profound impact on the seniors and the caregivers as well. Everyone saw beyond the roles of caregiver and cared for to recognize the person in each other. TimeSlips was officially born.

Basting received a National Brookdale Fellowship to test and replicate the TimeSlips model in 1998. In 2003, TimeSlips was transferred to the Center on Age & Community at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, giving the project even greater credibility and a broader national platform from which to expand. By 2008, at least 4,500 people with dementia had participated in TimeSlips creative storytelling sessions.

In 2013, TimeSlips evolved out of the university to an independent non-profit in order to better serve its mission – to improve the well-being of elders through creative engagement. Since then, the TimeSlips team published a Creativity Journal for one-on-one use; updated its website; created an inspiring webinar series featuring the work of certified facilitators across the world; offered the three-day intensive Create/Change workshop; and designed the Creative Community of Care (CCC) organizational training.

In 2016, Basting was named a MacArthur Foundation Fellow – commonly known as the ‘Genius’ grant. In their announcement, the Foundation said, “Basting’s perspective on aging and the power of stories is changing the perceptions of caregivers, family members, and policy makers around the artistic and creative capabilities of older adults, regardless of cognitive status.” Most recently, Basting was chosen as a 2017 Ashoka Fellow and honored as “one of fourteen systems-changing entrepreneurs that are taking on society’s biggest challenges with new ideas and visionary thinking.”

### **TimeSlips Qualifications**

TimeSlips’ training and program model shift away from the expectation of memory – where residents with dementia can feel shame and loss – toward imagination, where staff, family, residents, and volunteers can participate as equals from a position of strength. The theory of change in the TimeSlips model is that this approach fosters playfulness and expression, and boosts relationships, in turn easing social isolation and its myriad negative impacts on staff, residents, family, and volunteers alike.

Over the years, TimeSlips has earned a reputation for positive collaborations with its peers and service providers in the Arts, Health, and Creative Aging fields. The TimeSlips

Creative Community of Care organizational training model is designed to leverage the existing infrastructure of elder care communities. These collaborations efficiently infuse creative engagement across an organization, thus enabling TimeSlips to expand its reach and bring the benefits of the creative engagement method to exponentially more elders than could be served without such collaboration.

Numerous studies of the TimeSlips model have been conducted (George et al. 2011; Phillips et al. 2010; Bahlke et al. 2012; George and Houser, 2014; Sullivan and Klimberg, 2014) and have shown a variety of positive impacts, including:

- improved quality of life/well-being for elders;
- increased positive behaviors among elders with dementia;
- improved relationships between staff and people with dementia;
- created positive experiences for volunteers and students;
- increased sense of community among family members who visit loved ones in the nursing home;
- increased awareness of dementia and improved attitudes toward people with dementia among the larger community through story and art sharing community activities.

With its commitment to using creative tools and resources to bring meaning and purpose back into late life, TimeSlips inspires a new dynamic of respect and wonder between older people and those who care for them regardless of physical or cognitive disabilities. TimeSlips envisions a world where creative engagement is standard practice in elder care.

The timeslips.org web platform supports large-scale training both efficiently and playfully (in keeping with the organization's mission). Based in Milwaukee, TimeSlips has Master Trainers and Certified Facilitators throughout the country who can assist in modeling the approach to new trainees, and help form a network to inspire staff, family, and volunteers to continue this exciting work. TimeSlips has created multiple, large-scale arts projects inspired by the creativity of elders, including plays and art installations held in museums and professional performance venues in Wisconsin, New York, New Jersey. In 2018, TimeSlips has trained staff and volunteers at 67 memory cafes across the state of MA; six Veterans' Homes across Pennsylvania; and 12 nursing homes in KY. The organization also trains high school and university student volunteers using creative engagement as service learning in classrooms across the United States.

Anne Basting, TimeSlips' CEO, holds a PhD in Theatre Studies from the University of Minnesota and is internationally recognized for her innovations in scholarship and

practice in creative engagement in long-term care. She is author of *Forget Memory: Creating Better Lives for People with Dementia* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009) (<https://jhupbooks.press.jhu.edu/content/forget-memory>) and co-editor (with Maureen Towey and Ellie Rose) of *The Penelope Project: An Arts-based Odyssey to Change Elder-care* (University of Iowa Press, 2016) (<https://www.uiopress.uiowa.edu/books/2016-spring/penelope-project.htm>), which is also the subject of a documentary (<http://371productions.com/work/penelope/>). She was named a MacArthur “genius” Fellow in 2016, and an Ashoka “Changemaker” Fellow in 2017. She has received and managed over \$1,000,000 in grants.

## **Project Need**

Social isolation is a significant issue facing the elderly and one that will clearly become more prevalent as older people become a larger portion of the population. People facing memory loss often self-isolate due to the stigma, fear, and frustrations related to cognitive decline. Those living with dementia often face much greater challenges connecting with loved ones and feeling like part of their community. Therefore, there is considerable need for person-centered programming that is meaningful to and enjoyable for residents and their support networks – staff, volunteers, and family.

Creative engagement is a powerful and evidence-based tool to improve resident quality of life by building relationships and increasing social connection in long-term care settings, and between the care setting and the broader community. TimeSlips trains and supports the integration of meaningful, creative engagement practices into nursing home care to improve quality of life. TimeSlips defines meaningful programming as having four elements, it: 1) provides opportunities for self-expression; 2) provides pleasure to participants; 3) has purpose, by being connected to the larger world; and 4) creates value by being rigorous in practice and execution.

Research on social connectivity suggests that people who lack social connectedness experience poorer physical and emotional health than those who feel connected (Cornwell & Waite, 2009; Orth-Gomer & Johnson, 1987; Peek & Lin, 1999; Pinguart & Sörensen, 2000). Consequences of poor social connectivity include increased risk for depression (Ron, 2004), loneliness (Luanaigh & Lawlor, 2008; Stephens, Alpass, Towers, & Stevenson, 2011) and premature mortality due to lack of self-care and/or active or passive suicide (Kjølseth, Ekeberg, & Steihaug, 2010). The Creative Community of Care Project directly targets the building of social networks, drawing staff, volunteers, families and residents into meaningful relationship through the process of art-making that

culminates in a communal event. Increased social connections and engagement may stop the negative cascade of health outcomes that stem from isolation (Liu & Hu 2015).

TimeSlips' creative storytelling method is evidence-based and recognized by the American Healthcare Research Quality's Innovation Exchange. Originally designed to engage people with dementia, this method is enjoyed by people with and without cognitive disabilities and serves to unite people across abilities in a meaningful and joyful activity. Creative storytelling can take place in one-on-one and in group settings. In both situations, a facilitator uses open-ended questions to invite elders to respond to a prompt (image, object, or question). The facilitator affirms and repeats responses, and then shapes responses (without editing) into a work of art (story, poem, song, dance or visual artwork). It is easy to learn and can be facilitated by students, volunteers, or staff of any level.

### **Project Description: Creative Community of Care**

TimeSlips teaches professional caregivers, families, and volunteers to use creative engagement to build relationships, bring elders out of isolation, and improve quality of life and well-being for elders, regardless of physical or cognitive abilities. This approach is in keeping with the steady movement towards person-centered care within the health and elder care fields. Professionals providing services to individuals with memory loss are now measured by regulatory agencies on the individualization of care plans and the implementation of therapeutic activities that reflect person-centered care. As a result, there is a growing need for well-trained professional caregivers. In addition, a recent study exploring the benefits of setting specific health goals for dementia patients and caregivers includes maintaining relationships and socializing with family and friends among the goals often set (Jennings et al. 2017). TimeSlips can help dementia patients and caregivers meet those patient-centered goals.

In response to this growing need for engaging, person-centered activities, TimeSlips tested how to holistically bring creative engagement to care communities. Building on the organization's proven individual training model and support resources, TimeSlips designed the Creative Community of Care (CCC), a program and training model that embeds creative engagement across the care community and views every person and the entire environment as creative assets to be activated for the betterment of elders, those caring for them, and their families. The online CCC training program is a solution for care-giving organizations looking for cost-effective ways to successfully engage groups of individuals, while still providing holistic and individualized activity.

In care settings, the arts are most commonly seen as enjoyable entertainments or distractions. Boredom and isolation are rampant. Families are disengaged. Volunteers are often unsure how to be helpful. The Creative Community of Care approach taps into the full, transformative power of the arts, integrating creativity into everyday relationships, programming, and building community through longer creative projects in which the entire community can participate. As an emotional and symbolic language, the arts can bring people into relationships across their myriad differences, including physical and cognitive disability. The TimeSlips CCC approach goes beyond arts as entertainment or distraction, to fully tapping its potential as a person-centered way to invite all community members (staff, residents, family, and volunteers) into meaningful relationships that have an impact on the daily care of the community's elders.

Organizations implementing the TimeSlips CCC approach receive creative engagement training as well as creative project models. The CCC training identifies lead facilitators for each organization, and takes them through a series of webinars and online trainings, including:

- Introduction to the CCC approach
- Online creative storytelling training
- Infusing creativity into everyday relationships
- Implementing and sustaining creative programming
- Using creative engagement to build community

Upon entering into a formal agreement with TimeSlips, organizations seeking to become trained as a Creative Community of Care begin by identifying staff to become Lead Facilitators to oversee the training process at the facility. When identifying Lead Facilitators, organizations often choose the Director of Quality of Life, an activity specialist, social worker, or a Certified Nursing Assistant. TimeSlips recommends that organizations choose people with the ability to gather and inspire a team to serve as Lead Facilitators.

In addition to choosing Lead Facilitators, TimeSlips asks organization leadership to communicate their support for the commitment of time and effort those engaged in the training will invest in the CCC and to give their approval for participation in the progress report and evaluation process. Before the training process begins, Lead Facilitators and other staff members view a 30-minute in-service video: Introduction to Creative Communities of Care.

While the training can be completed more quickly than the provided time estimates, trainees have a full year to train, certify, and receive consulting from TimeSlips Master Trainers. Typically, all training is done virtually, through a blend of phone calls, self-directed online training modules, and webinars.

The Creative Community Care training includes three phases:

### **Phase 1 – Creative Engagement Techniques**

Staff is trained to become Certified Facilitators

- Staff chosen to become Lead Facilitators take pre-surveys
- They then begin the online training in creative storytelling, an evidence-based, improvisational approach to engagement that incorporates words, movement, sound, and visual art in everyday relationships and scheduled programming
- Lead Facilitators hold 3 practice sessions with elders (approximately one hour each) and publish stories at timeslips.org
- Lead Facilitators participate in two hours of certification coaching (typically online, but possibly in-person, depending on trainer proximity) and then complete the Certification Survey

Estimated training time:

- 3-4 hours of online training (can be completed in multiple sittings);
- 3 practice sessions (approximately one hour each)
- 2 hours of certification coaching

### **Phase 2 – Creative Community Building**

Staff, now Certified Facilitators, complete three one-hour webinars:

- Sustainable Programming
- Documentation & Evaluation
- Partnership & Program Design

Then, they spend approximately one week completing one of two community building assignments (one per organization). These assignments include a feedback exchange with a TimeSlips Master Trainer:

- Creative Asset Map of Organization and Community
- Partnership and Project Plan

During this phase, Lead Facilitators start to identify staff, family members, and volunteers who could be engaged in TimeSlips and provide them with access to the online introductory training. They may also distribute Creativity Journals to interested family

members and/or volunteers and begin to plan a community-wide celebration of creativity (with guidance from TimeSlips). Lead Facilitators also begin to administer well-being surveys to residents, family members, and volunteers and they themselves complete a training post-survey.

Estimated training time:

- 3 webinars (approximately one hour each)
- Community building assignments – approximately one week

### **Phase 3 – In-House Trainer**

In Phase 3, one-two Certified Facilitators per CCC may opt to complete training to assess and inspire creative engagement in staff, residents, and volunteers; and to certify additional staff in their organizations. This training includes two one-hour sessions (online or in-person, depending on proximity of Trainer).

Estimated training time:

- 2 sessions (approximately one hour each)

Once fully trained as a Creative Community of Care, organizations will be empowered to:

- Invite elders into growth, learning, meaning, purpose and joy.
- Bring elders into meaningful connection with their broader communities.
- Improve job satisfaction among staff.
- Improve well-being among elders.
- Improve family satisfaction.
- Transform your organization’s programming by inspiring the creativity of your team.

### **TimeSlips Individual Training Overview**

We offer TimeSlips training to anyone who wishes to bring meaning and purpose to the lives of elders through creative engagement. We are evidence-based, award-winning, person centered and joyful. TimeSlips certification is ideal addition for elder care professionals as well as those in the arts, culture and education (social workers, activity professionals, administrators, clinical staff, and occupational recreation, physical and creative arts therapists).

Through a combination of instruction, interaction and practice, trainees will learn:

- The link between person-centered care and creative engagement.



- That late life is a time for growth, meaning, purpose, and expression.
- The TimeSlips improvisational storytelling method.
- How to connect to our international TimeSlips network of facilitators.
- How to use TimeSlips digital tools to support your creative engagement practice.