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## COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request

Date: 3/18/2020

### Contact Information

Organization Name: Chester County Historical Society  
Address: 225 North High Street West Chester PA, 19380  
Phone: 610-692-4800 ext. 267  
Website: www.chestercohistorical.org  
FEIN: 23-1371942

ED/CEO Name: Beverly Sheppard  
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### **In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:**

- 1. What geographic area is served?** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)
- 2. What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**
- 3. How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

- 1. Chester County Historical Society is the official historical society for all of Chester County. More than 300 years of local history are represented in the permanent collections that comprise 80,000 museum objects, a special collections library with 20,000 reference books and 750,000 manuscripts, and more than 100,000 images of all types in the photo archives. These collections are the important touchstones to understanding the county's past and its relationship to who we are today.*

*We are not just a repository of artifacts, photos, and documents. We are **an essential educational institution for all ages** that builds from these collections to provide a conduit to the stories that create our region's identity. We examine and share that identity through our exhibits, programs, resources, community partners, and staff expertise.*

- 2. COVID-19 has impacted the Historical Society in multiple ways. **The financial impact is profound.** We were forced to cancel our 38th Annual Antiques and Art Show the weekend of March 13. The decision was made out of concern for the safety and wellbeing of our community. This is a largest fundraiser of the year, contributing as much as \$90,000 to our operating budget. Not only have we lost that income, we also have significant debt from the costs of presenting the show.*

***Being fully closed to the public** also impacts funding from attendance, programs, services, and school partnerships. These losses will be critical to our ability to retain staff and pay the essential bills related to mortgage, utilities, insurances, maintenance and collections care. We have also **had to delay exhibit construction and new gallery installations.** They are key to reenergizing our community, expanding membership, and launching a major giving campaign*

***CCHS is responding by keeping all staff working remotely.** We have created a variety of ways to provide them the necessary resources to continue their core functions. We are currently developing a series of web-based and social media projects that can keep our community engaged with our stories and support their own day-to-day learning and social connections. We are also monitoring all the necessary systems for collections care through regular building checks.*

3. ***CCHS' monthly costs for payroll and essential expenses is approximately \$72,000. In conjunction with our Board of Trustees we are reviewing all financial sources available to us to maintain a cash flow as well as augmenting those sources through applying for external support, such as this funding opportunity through the Chester County Community Foundation. All financial resources will immediately support staff and building needs. At this point, we are seeking to secure three months' worth of core support while we seek additional funding and address ways to reduce costs.***

Please email [grants@chescof.org](mailto:grants@chescof.org)

- This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request  
 Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit  
 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation's website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.

Grants will be processed a few times monthly.

We estimate mini-grants will range from \$500 to \$5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to [grants@chescof.org](mailto:grants@chescof.org).  
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.