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**Contact Information**

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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?**

The Kennett Symphony of Chester County (KSCC) sincerely thanks the Chester County Community Foundation for this opportunity to submit our Letter of Request for a COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant. While we are disappointed and concerned that COVID-19 has impacted our ambitious and carefully thought out plans for our 2019-2020 Season, we are equally aware of and deeply concerned about the dramatic impacts of COVID-19 on the health and safety of the communities we serve. As Chester County’s only fully professional symphony orchestra, we know that as an organization we are not alone in being impacted by COVID-19. We respectfully request $5,000 to combat the financial impacts of COVID-19 on the KSCC.

1) **Geographic Area Served:** KSCC serves all of Chester County and beyond. In addition to Chester County, we serve audiences in Montgomery County, Delaware County, and Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; New Castle County, Delaware; and Cecil County, Maryland.

2) **Population Served:** 5,000 audience members per season in all age groups.

**Impacts:** COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the KSCC and has resulted in significant and concerning financial impacts. At minimum, there is a loss of $75,000 with the capacity to climb to $125,000. Areas of financial loss include: Cancellation of four (4) concerts, which is two-thirds of ticket income streams for 2019-2020 performances; Cancellation of two (2) fundraising events; Refunds processed for tickets already sold to cancelled concerts and events; Loss of grant income from three (3) grantors who diverted funds from the KSCC to answer the immediate and emergency needs of social service organizations on the front lines of serving and protecting the needs of our community (and we very much understand and support the decision to do so); Unpaid annual fund pledges for the current 2019-2020 season due to change in personal circumstances due to COVID-19; Non-renewed annual fund gifts from the 2018-2020 season usually annually received in March – June due to change in personal circumstances.

**KSCC Response:** The KSCC’s mission is to get music back on stage when it is safe to do so. To do that, we must keep the KSCC organization whole and financially sound during this time of COVID-19 restrictions so that we have the capacity and financial strength to bring live, professional symphonic music back when it is safe to gather again in the concert halls of Chester County. COVID-19 has created the opportunity - and the necessity - for the Kennett Symphony to create new ways of engaging with our audiences and donors while we are out of the concert hall. We have: 1) Created new digital content on new digital platforms including YouTube, enhanced use of Facebook, weekly music videos from our professional musicians and educational videos from our Music Director, Michael Hall; 2) Increased stewardship with donors and ticket holders including phone call campaigns, eblast greetings and sharing of digital content, and postcards mailed to all donors and patrons so that all constituents are kept up to date should they not use technology as their primary means of connection and communication; 3) On-going strategic scenario building and artistic planning so that we are ready to “go live” when it is safe to do so. This includes 3 different scenarios depending on a start date in October.
2020 or December 2020 or February 2021; 4) Surveys to patrons and donors are in progress to assess future concert-going plans inquiring on their thoughts on attending concerts in person vs. attending concerts only digitally vs attending both digitally and in person.

3) **Funding Sought: $5,000**

**Comparison To Annual Operating Budget:** $5,000 request is 1% of the KSCC annual budget of $404,060

**Use Of Funds:** Costs associated with increasing stewardship and connection with audiences and donors while the KSCC is out of the concert hall. Includes: Creation of digital musical content by professional musicians; Creation of educational videos by Music Director, Michael Hall; Expenses for mailed communications via postcards and letters to donors and audiences who do not use digital platforms or technology as their primary form of communication and connection so that we keep our primary audience informed and front of mind for what the KSCC is doing now while out of the concert hall, and what we are planning for the future.

**Time frame for the use of funds:** June – September, 2020.

Please let me know if you would like additional information on our current activities. We stand by ready to answer any questions you may have.

We send our best wishes for health and safety to all. We thank you for your consideration of our request for funding.

Sincerely,
Monica Buffington
Executive Director
Kennett Symphony of Chester County

Please email grants@chesocf.org

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