



**Chester County Nonprofit  
Innovation & Resiliency Fund  
Grant Request Form**

**Contact Information**

Nonprofit Org Name: ACT Players	ED/CEO Name:
Address: P. O. Box 173	ED/CEO E-mail:
City, State Zip: New London, PA 19360	Board Chair Name: Karen M. Weaver
Phone: (717) 475-4600	Grant Proposal Contact Name: Karen M. Weaver
Website: actplayers.org	Grant Proposal Contact E-mail: <a href="mailto:lassofthewind@yahoo.com">lassofthewind@yahoo.com</a>
EIN: 27-1674251	Grant \$ Amount Requested:\$20,000
Year Founded: 2004 (Formerly Avon Grove Community Theater)	

*In filing this application, the nonprofit certifies that it complies with all federal, state & local laws, including taxation; complies with current public health guidelines; and complies with coronavirus pandemic phased reopening restrictions.*

Agreed by: Karen M. Weaver	Date: 10/22/2020
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**Nonprofit Field/s of Interest**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Arts, Culture & Historic Preservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment & Animal Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human Services

Figures	Current	PRE-COVID (as of 1/1/20)
Annual Operating Budget	\$5,000	\$60,805
Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff	#0	##0
# Board Volunteers	#15	#15
# Committee Volunteers	#5	#20
# Active Direct Service Volunteers	#0	#0
Annual Volunteer Hours	#360/Total Board & Com	#550/Total Board & Com

**Funding:** Please indicate if your nonprofit has received funding from any of these regional sources over the past few years. We will invite them to review this funding request.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Comm Fdn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brandywine Health Fdtn	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Way ChesCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Dept Comm Devel
<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Fund/W&Girls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Phoenixville Comm Health Fdtn	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Way S ChesCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Dept Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other significant funders:					<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Dept Human Svcs

**Narrative:** In a few concise paragraphs, please explain:

1. **Mission**
2. **What geographic area is served?** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)
3. **What population is served? How have your service numbers been impacted by COVID?**
4. **What has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**
5. **What would this funding be used for? How does this demonstrate innovation and resiliency in dealing with COVID impacts? What would be the community impact of this anticipated funding? Why is it important to fund this now?**
6. **How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget and this years' projected deficit? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

Please e-mail all materials as a word.doc and/or pdf to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org):

	This <b>Innovation &amp; Resiliency Fund Grant Request</b> cover sheet & brief narrative
	Current annual operating budget & most recent audit
	501c3 determination letter
	Current strategic plan. If none, explain why your nonprofit doesn't have a plan.
	Support materials that strengthen the urgency of this funding request + indicate that your nonprofit is innovative and resilient (ie: COVID best practice research findings, consultant proposal/s, bids for COVID-related materials & equipment, etc.)

- Proposals will only be accepted by e-mail, on this grant form available at <https://chescocf.org/covidgrant/>
  - Receipt of grant proposals will be confirmed by e-mail.
  - Grant proposals will be posted on the Community Foundation's website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.
    - Grant proposals will be reviewed weekly.
  - We estimate grants awards will range from \$5,000 to \$50,000.
- For awarded grants, a written report on use and impact of this funding will be due within 6 months.

Please direct questions about **ChesCo Nonprofit Innovation & Resiliency Grants** to

Chester County Community Foundation  
28 W. Market Street, The Lincoln Building  
West Chester, PA 19382

[www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)  
[grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org) 610.696.8211

## ACT PLAYERS NARRATIVE

Mission: Established in 2004, ACT Players is home to a committed group of individuals who share a common passion for the “performing arts”, both on the stage and in the wings. We are not simply actors, but directors, pit musicians, producers, costumers, choreographers, and light and sound technicians with a great love for the theater. Most importantly, we are volunteers who support an organization built on core family values, inclusiveness, fellowship, talent, and mutual respect, and who strive to build a true sense of community strength and spirit by creating quality educational and cultural experiences for the diverse towns and neighborhoods which surround us.

Geographic Area Served: Southern Chester County; primarily, the Unionville/Kennett Square area down to and including Oxford, PA and out to the Atglen/Christiana area.

Population Served: Every resident of every community in our reach from very young children to the most senior of adults. We serve all; we welcome all.

COVID-19 Impact and Our Response: The greatest impact to our organization and livelihood has obviously been our inability to realize our extensive 2020 scheduled live performance season. With the cancellations of these shows also came the loss of the publicity/fund-raising outings we typically wrap around our upcoming events. Our response to the COVID-19 presence was simply (and instantaneously), “The show must go on”. While we were disappointed that our plans had to be shelved, we also recognized that countless people stood to lose more than us, especially the children. We pulled together virtual cabarets, created a Facebook weekly story time with a Disney princess, composed and delivered personalized bedtime messages from a Disney princess, held car parades in front of houses to celebrate birthdays, wrote, voiced, and recorded two original old time radio broadcasts for YouTube, staged a virtual variety show, and we did so with no cost to our patrons. Yes, we didn’t make any money, but it was more important for us to entertain those who might be economically compromised during the lockdown and who simply needed to sing...to laugh...to temporarily escape the stress and anxiety. Through a lot of ingenuity and creativity, we were also able to offer a two week virtual drama camp for children/youth with a focus on theatrical education and fun. The camp culminated in a free live Zoom performance for the public at the end of each week! Our campers were charged a most minimal registration fee to cover small “thank you” stipends for our counselors who were wildly innovative and dedicated to making camp a success for the young people in our communities.

Use of Funding, etc.: Our organization has always depended upon the generosity of churches, university theaters, and high school auditoriums for

meetings, rehearsals, and performances. As most of these facilities have closed their physical doors for their own use, much less ours, we face a heavy-duty 2021 season which we have already begun preparing for and literally have no place to rehearse. Our "Shakespeare in the Vineyard" and "Rock N Roll Revival" practices have been outside to keep our performers and volunteer staff safe as none of our homes have sufficient square footage to spread folks out, but the weather has begun to turn, and backyard rehearsals are realistically no longer an option. This is a most pressing need for us if we are able to continue to support our community friends, as well as our mission. We are looking to find vacant store space that we can rent on a "per usage" rehearsal basis and perhaps even for small in-house shows in the style of a black box theater with folding chairs that can be arranged in adherence with social distancing guidelines. Having gained no income this year makes an outlay of rent a financial hardship for us, so any funds granted to us would be used for rehearsal space and the associated costs. We are an extremely resilient and proactive organization with our hearts in performing and our eyes on keeping our communities entertained and infused with hope and positive attitude. None of us know how 2021 will unfold as far as being able to return to live performances, but we are moving forward with optimism while simultaneously mapping out virtual options for shows in the event that we are still prohibited from our usual stage seasons.

Funding Sought: While we are seeking approximately \$20,000 in funding (roughly 1/3 of our annual budget and estimating rent/lease expenses of \$1500-\$1600 per month for our 2021 fiscal year), we will make excellent and productive use of any grant awarded to our organization. It is difficult for us to gauge our deficit for 2020 as our income is largely driven by show attendance/ticket sales/fund-raising efforts which vary from production to production, and while we experienced little in the way of production costs and expenses this year, we generated zero profits. Our need for rehearsal space is pressing as we are "homeless" and facing winter, so any funds we receive would be put to use immediately. Our strategic long range plan is to own a theater venue, and we have been working with a capital campaign consultant as far as time lines, project steps, and identifying potential donors, but the pandemic has forced us to temporarily put this goal on hold as we are now focusing on how to adapt to and overcome our current reality. Therefore, our short range plan is to continue to prepare for our 2021 season with the belief that we will return to the stage, and in the alternative if we remain restricted, how we can successfully generate and implement fresh and original ideas for virtual and outdoor patron experiences (concerts and pop up plays in the parks/vineyards, fresh air fund-raising ventures, etc.) throughout next year. This path would still necessitate rehearsal space which would double as work and meeting space as we are determined to support our mission of providing cultural, educational, and entertainment opportunities for the communities we serve despite the global state of being.

Summary: We at ACT Players act, react, breathe and live by the profound words of the great Oscar Wilde: "I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being." We have resolved to carry on in spite of the COVID-19 obstacles we face to bring and share that beautiful sense of humanity to the communities of Southern Chester County at a time when it's needed most.