



The Chester County Nonprofit Innovation & Resiliency Fund

Administered by the Chester County Community Foundation

In cooperation with regional funders, donors, united funds and County government departments

Recognizing the importance of the nonprofit sector to the high quality of life throughout Chester County, the Chester County Commissioners have allocated \$3.5M to help nonprofits recover with innovation and resiliency. This funding is from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Per the CARES Act, grants must cover unforeseen financial needs and risks created by the COVID-19 public health emergency. **This includes grants to implement and publicize the safe resumption of programs and services.** The Community Foundation seeks proposals to support innovative, resilient COVID recovery needs, such as:

- Program and service redesign, in light of social distancing and public safety requirements
- Innovative technology to support virtual, mobile and/or pop-up programs and services
- Redesigned and reconceived marketing, fundraising and special events
- Strategic planning pivoting, refinement and revisions in light of COVID-19
- Partnership, merger, consolidation and/or acquisition activities due to COVID-19 impacts
- Infrastructure improvements due to COVID, including plexiglass dividers, technology upgrades, etc.
- Higher operating costs related to cleaning and social distancing requirements
- Other one-time or increased expenses incurred related to COVID-19.

This is a competitive, time-sensitive grants process. Grant decisions will be made weekly, on an ongoing basis. Electronic grant applications are only accepted by e-mail. No paper applications are accepted.

Eligibility

- Nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization formed and active in 2017 or earlier
- Nonprofit must be headquartered and providing services in Chester County, as evidenced by legal address in Box C of IRS 990

Priority Preference for Grant Funding

- Nonprofits that provide clear evidence of how they aim to/are reshaping their programs, services, administration, marketing and fundraising, to safely provide services and thrive in light of COVID impacts
- Nonprofits with substantial costs to comply with COVID public health requirements
- Nonprofits that serve a diverse constituency, and are governed and managed by diverse leadership

Ineligible Entities

- Nonprofits NOT headquartered in Chester County, PA, as evidenced by the legal address in Box C of the IRS 990
- Nonprofits NOT delivering services in Chester County
- Nonprofits that did NOT experience revenue loss due to the coronavirus pandemic and/or nonprofits that have no additional costs associated with the coronavirus pandemic
- Nonprofits that were NOT operational as of December 30, 2017
- Government or government-owned or controlled entities
- Churches or religious organizations with respect to their primarily religious activities and/or their activities which limit participation to members of the church or religious organization
- For-profit businesses
- Private clubs/organizations that limit membership for reasons other than capacity
- Nonprofits primarily engaged in lobbying or political activities
- Nonprofits NOT compliant with all federal, state, & local laws, including taxation
- Nonprofits NOT compliant with current public health guidelines, including coronavirus pandemic phased reopening restrictions ###





28 W. Market Street, Lincoln Biography Building
West Chester, PA 19382
610.696.8211 www.chesocf.org



Contact Information

Nonprofit Org Name: Uptown Entertainment Alliance	ED/CEO Name: April Evans
Address: 226 N. High Street	ED/CEO E-mail: april@uptownwestchester.org
City, State Zip: West Chester, PA 19380	Board Chair Name: Holly Brown
Phone: 610-356-2787	Grant Proposal Contact Name: Debra Danese
Website: https://uptownwestchester.org/	Grant Proposal Contact E-mail: debra@uptownwestchester.org
EIN: 45-3707844	Grant \$ Amount Requested: \$50,000.00
Year Founded: 2011	

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: Debra Danese	Date: 10/22/2020
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Nonprofit Field/s of Interest

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arts, Culture & Historic Preservation	<input checked="" 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	\$935,000.	\$ 1,900,000.
Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff	4	# 4
# Board Volunteers	20	# 20
# Committee Volunteers	3	# 3
# Active Direct Service Volunteers	1	# 50
Annual Volunteer Hours	15	# 3,300

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other significant funders: Whitford Charitable Foundation, Arts Aid PHL			<input type="checkbox"/> ChesCo Dept Human Svcs

Narrative: In a few concise paragraphs, please explain:

1. Mission Uptown! Entertainment Alliance (Uptown) operates the Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center as a home for live performance, film, and education.

Uptown! strives to be accessible and inclusive to the diverse demographics of its community. The venue is a cultural hub for families and individuals to engage in music, art, dance, drama, film, lectures, education, and live performances year-round.

2. What geographic area is served? (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)

Uptown! serves primarily Chester County.

3. What population is served? How have your service numbers been impacted by COVID? Our patrons represent an economically diverse and age-diverse demographic. Our Community Ticket Program provides free or low -cost tickets to those who would otherwise miss out on enjoying live shows due to social, economic, medical, or other restrictive circumstances. Uptown! also awards needs-based scholarships to students in its West Chester Studio program, allowing them to attend theater education classes.

The arts enhance community connection and cohesion. Our community has come to rely on us for enrichment, entertainment, and education. The result is an improved quality of life where diverse live performances are occurring within the community, not just at distant venues in Philadelphia, New York or Wilmington.

In 2019, Uptown hosted over 28,000 guests to our events. Our closure in March meant we could no longer provide a space that brought our neighbors together for live theatre experiences. We were forced to cancel 59 shows, refund 1,100 tickets, and halt all classes and rentals until circumstances changed.

We put in place COVID-19 safety practices and were able to offer summer camps with limited attendance. We have recently resumed our theatre classes at a reduced capacity thus impacting the number of students able to participate.

4. What has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?

Venue shutdowns from COVID-19 required us to cease presenting all live performances until further notice. The closure immediately cut off our principal source of revenue, which comes from live programming, rentals and classes. With 72% of our annual operating budget stemming from ticket sales, the shutdown has created severe monetary strain. Even as restrictions are beginning to lift, capacity limitations remain in place for the foreseeable future making in-person performances economically unfeasible.

As a performing arts venue, we are likely facing extended disruptions to our operations. From March - September of 2020, we experienced a \$215,00 revenue loss. The projected revenue loss from now to March 2021 is \$640,000 and we have experienced a \$30,000 loss in ticket refunds.

In response to closing, we began providing performances through Facebook Live to maintain contact with our patrons and with the community. These performances were free with the option to donate. We also took steps to pivot to livestream programming to offer content during and after the shutdown. To generate revenue while also supporting other organizations, we created a movie series with 10% of the proceeds going to the filmmaker's choice. Additionally, we established two fundraising efforts. "Raise UP! the Curtain" is a \$500,000 campaign to sustain our operations until we can open again. "Get UP! and Walk" allows our community to show their support for Uptown with a donation toward the purchase of an Uptown! t-shirt, which helped extend our visibility on social media.

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?

Funding received would be used for:

Innovative Technology-

Livestream Equipment: This is needed to pivot to virtual programming so that we can begin to offer content to patrons and generate income from ticket sales. **\$12,000**

Third Party Contractors for Livestream Videography: Funds requested would offset the cost of our contracted services with Valley Creek Productions. They will provide necessary videography with remote cameras for our three currently scheduled shows. \$9,600

ZOOM Subscription: This video and tele-conferencing platform would allow our theatre education program to offer more virtual classes for those families who are not yet ready to participate in in-person learning. \$199/year

Ticket Processing Fee Costs: We anticipate offering two livestream performances per month with an average of 60 tickets sold for each. Funds would be used to negate the projected cost of our ticketing fees for 6 months. \$720

Infrastructure Improvements-

iWave Systems: This system would provide overall safety for public health needed to re-open by actively purifying the supply air. \$8,000

Plexiglass Barriers: These barriers would be installed in the theatre, box office, and bar area to reinforce physical distancing and reduce droplet transmission. \$2,000

COVID-19 Signage: These would be clearly posted inside and outside of our venue to communicate our safety guidelines and expectations to guests. They would include wall signs and distancing markers on the floor throughout the venue. \$1,310

Operating Costs related to Cleaning:

SD90 Plus: This surface cleaning solution uses spray technology to kill bacteria and microorganisms and would be applied throughout our entire building. This product is non-chemical, non-toxic and environmentally safe. It is being used in hospitals and universities to reduce the spread of COVID-19. \$3,750

Expanded Cleaning Services: These services would ensure our venue is complying with CDC guidelines and provide a sanitized environment for public gatherings. \$12,000/6 months

Re-designed Marketing:

Givesmart: This virtual fundraising software provides an easier and more effective way for donors to support our mission during and after the economic crisis resulting from the pandemic closure. \$2,645

Print and Postage: We plan to expand our mail-outs to better communicate with our more mature patrons who are unfamiliar with accessing event postings online and through social media. This demographic is particularly isolated due to COVID-19. Keeping them connected to our theatre community upholds our mission of civic responsibility. \$1,975

Marketing Relaunch: Funds received would offset the cost to our Marketing Firm for a planned relaunch of our branding. This new branding would show the community that we continued to strive to build on our reputation of presenting world-class programming even during our shutdown. \$14,000

The total anticipated cost to offset COVID-19 related services and safely resume in-person programs is \$68,199.

While we can not control when Uptown! will be able to open for live performances, we must ready ourselves to return to vibrancy when that day comes. The funds used will restructure the impact Uptown! has on the community by once again offering them a collective and cultural experience. We will continue to build that community through in-person and live stream offerings to broaden the accessibility and reach of our programs.

We have demonstrated resilience during the pandemic through our shift to fundraising, live streaming, and education. The next step is to bring back together the community that relied on us for social interaction and engaging programming. Without implementing the use of innovative systems such as the iWave and SD90, our most vulnerable and highest attending patrons cannot attend live shows. To better reach and serve all of our patrons, it will be necessary to re-think and re-brand our marketing, resulting in a more robust strategy with more effective reach and results.

Venues such as ours are revenue- generators for our neighboring restaurants, retail, and hotels, providing significant economic benefit. Our re-opening helps local businesses flourish, while providing the lifeline of communication and community that live entertainment provides.

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?

We are requesting funding in the amount of \$50,000 to offset the \$68,199 expense of restructuring our services and complying with COVID-19 public health requirements. This represents 3% of our annual operating budget.

We rely on ticket sales and venue rentals for approximately 72% of our annual income. We have been fundraising to help make up for those lost revenues, but without that effort, we would be facing an estimated deficit of \$250,000.

We would begin to use funds immediately to prepare for virtual programming and an anticipated re-opening to the public.

Please e-mail all materials as a word.doc and/or pdf to grants@chescofc.org:

This Innovation & Resiliency Fund Grant Request 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://chescofc.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.chescofc.org
grants@chescofc.org 610.696.8211