



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.** **Only electronic grant applications** are 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 located and providing services in Chester County

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 located in Chester County, PA
- 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. Religious entities with social & human service outreach programs must provide 501 (c) (3).
- 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.chescocf.org



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

Contact Information

Nonprofit Org Name: West Chester Univ. Foundation	ED/CEO Name: Christopher Mominey
Address: 202 Carter Drive	ED/CEO E-mail: cmominey@wcufoundation.org
City, State Zip: West Chester, PA 19382	Board Chair Name: John Baker
Phone: 610-430-4157	Grant Proposal Contact Name: Helen Hammerschmidt
Website: wcufoundation.org	Grant Proposal Contact E-mail: hhammerschmidt@wcufoundation.org
EIN: 23-3054174	Grant \$ Amount Requested: \$50,000
Year Founded: 2000	

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: Helen Hammerschmidt	Date: 10/26/2020
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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Services

Figures	Current	PRE-COVID (as of 1/1/20)
Annual Operating Budget	\$ 1,993,000	\$ 4,734,000
Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff	# 30	# 40.5
# Board Volunteers	# 25	# 26
# Committee Volunteers	# 10	# 10
# Active Direct Service Volunteers	# 57	# 87
Annual Volunteer Hours	# 50	# 144

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 checked="" 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
Other significant funders:			<input type="checkbox"/> ChesCo Dept Human Svcs

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

1. Mission

The West Chester University Foundation (“Foundation”) engages donors and other partners to drive student success. We secure funding that helps West Chester University students thrive, lead and grow. We fund scholarships, resources, and programs that support students so they can reach their full potential. While WCU is our sole beneficiary, the Foundation was established as an independent 501(c)(3) governed by its own Board of Trustees. University Student Housing (USH) is a 501(c)(3) subsidiary of the Foundation, governed by a Board of Managers, that manages six on-campus communities. As a subsidiary of our Foundation, USH helps us support the mission of West Chester University by providing residence services that allow WCU to meet the needs and expectations of a growing student body.

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

The WCU Foundation serves West Chester University, located in West Chester, PA. The majority of its students (70%) live primarily in Chester County and surrounding counties.

3. What population is served? How have your service numbers been impacted by COVID?

The Foundation raises funds from donors and community partners for scholarships and programs that support the 17,719 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at WCU. One-quarter of WCU students are Pell-grant eligible, meaning they lack the ability to afford a college education. Further, WCU is home to more than 50 homeless students who receive free housing, educational and social service support through WCU's Promise Program. Typically, these students receive additional food and services during the week between Christmas and New Year's Day thanks to donations solicited by the Foundation. Operation S.N.O.W. (Student Needs Over the Winter) typically covers 1-2 weeks. This year, however, with campus closing due to COVID from November 20 – January 22, 2021, those 50 Promise Program students plus another 100-150 who are not able to return home during break, are reliant on resources that must be stretched over a much longer (8 week) period.

The need for financial support has grown since the pandemic hit with students facing unexpected housing and technology costs coupled with job and internship losses. The Foundation must continue to fundraise to meet these challenges and ensure that students can continue their education. USH, a subsidiary of the WCU Foundation, services 2,962 WCU students annually. With COVID-19, USH is currently serving approximately 270 students this academic year. Typically, USH generates approximately \$32 million in revenue each year; however, with fewer students living on campus, USH anticipates \$3 million in revenue, a 90% reduction.

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

COVID-19 has impacted the WCU Foundation and USH significantly in a number of ways, not the least of which is the impact to WCU Foundation's operating budget, which is supported by student housing leases from USH. With annual revenue reduced by 90% and facing additional costs of added security and increased sanitation protocols, the WCU Foundation and USH were forced to lay off more than 25% of their staff and freeze hiring and salary increases for remaining employees. With the recent announcement that the university would continue remote learning for the spring semester as well, prospects for further layoffs and reduction in services increase. Because of our status as an independent, tax-exempt institution, we were not eligible to receive federal CARES Act funding.

Back in late April and May, the Foundation made adjustments to our office space to comply with CDC and PA Department of Health recommendations for mitigating the spread of COVID. We invested in Plexiglas dividers, enhanced sanitation protocols and technology applications that monitored employees' health if/when they needed to come to the office. For its part, USH remains committed to providing the safest possible environment for those students currently living on campus and prepare for those who will move in when the campus reopens. It has drastically ramped up its security and sanitation protocols, hiring round-the-clock security guards to monitor comings and goings of students and additional janitorial staff to clean apartments. Further, USH is exploring innovative technology that would provide leasing services virtually, allowing for social distancing during move-in/out, meetings with residence staff and for package pickups.

Despite everything, both the Foundation and USH rose quickly to the challenges facing WCU students by redirecting corporate sponsorship dollars linked to cancelled spring events (gala, speaker series, etc.) to a Student Emergency Aid Fund (SEAF). More than \$140,000 was raised from community partners and individuals that helped 145 students

cover unexpected moving costs, fill technology gaps and supplement lost income. Over the past six months, we have continued to look for ways to deliver quality educational programming in a virtual environment, soliciting corporate sponsors to continue their support and applying for funding for programs that support the most vulnerable students living on and near campus. In March, we leveraged a relationship with a technology vendor to secure 26 laptops for Promise Program students when everything switched overnight to online learning. When the Uptown Loop shuttle service that made stops on campus and at local grocery stores was cancelled due to COVID, we developed an on-demand food access program in partnership with Lyft for students who do not have cars so they can get to a grocery store safely and affordably. Further, the Foundation is actively pursuing funding opportunities from local and national foundations to support basic need-related programs like the Resource (Food) Pantry and the Promise Program for our homeless and low-income students. Finally, the Foundation is soliciting sponsorships for virtual programming that engage students and the community to support the continuation of these valuable programs during the COVID shutdown.

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 from the Chester County Nonprofit Innovation & Resiliency Fund would improve fundraising efforts for students deeply impacted by COVID-19, allow students to return to campus when the university deems it safe to do so, reopen building amenities not currently available to students, provide resources for continuing remote work, and allow for a safe environment for those who wish to return to the workplace. Examples of how these funds would be used include:

- Purchase and installation of acrylic partitions to surround the open workstations, no-touch hand sanitizer dispensers, PPE for employees and guests, bulk wipe dispensers and additional no-touch towel dispensers to allow for more frequent hand washing and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
- Subscribe to an online survey provider to facilitate self-screening of employees for symptoms prior to entering the workplace. This was used when we first returned to on-site work, and will be used if screening is required of exposed employees due to a positive case of COVID on-site.
- Convert servers to a cloud-based SharePoint site and migrate documents from our on premise servers to the cloud. The prolonged and mandated work from home environment has prompted us to look at more efficient ways to access documents remotely and combat cybersecurity threats.
- Upgrade laptops to support increased used of virtual platforms (Zoom, Microsoft Teams) that require technical specifications not currently supported.
- Implement new and innovative technology that would allow students to sign up for move-in/out timeslots, schedule a time to meet with a staff member, and schedule a time to pick up a package. The leasing module would allow students the ability to sign up for a general waitlist or get on a waitlist for a specific building/suite style, thereby putting most of the leasing functions in the students hands virtually. This would allow us to social distance and reduce density in our six communities during peak times.

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?

The WCU Foundation seeks \$50,000 to offset the costs associated with COVID-19 for itself and its subsidiary, USH, to support new and innovative technology that would improve its ability to ensure student success through effective fundraising and eventually allow students to return to campus safely. It would also provide the infrastructure and protocols necessary to protect students currently living on campus and employees' ability to return safely to the workplace. This amount represents 2.5% of our 2020-2021 annual operating budget. If awarded these funds, the Foundation would implement plans immediately with the expectation that all funds would be utilized within weeks.

The short-term impact would be the strengthening of safety protocols for current students/staff and increased productivity for Foundation staff who are forced to work from home. Longer term, these funds would support the safe return to campus for hundreds if not thousands of students and support the financial recovery of the WCU Foundation and USH.

Please e-mail all materials as a word.doc and/or pdf to grants@chescocf.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. This grant form is 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
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West Chester, PA 19382

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grants@chescocf.org 610.696.8211