

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 ###



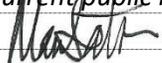


**Chester County Nonprofit
Innovation & Resiliency Fund
Grant Request Form**

Contact Information

Nonprofit Org Name: The Barn at Spring Brook Farm	ED/CEO Name: Nan Latona
Address: 360 Locust Grove Road	ED/CEO E-mail: nan.latona@springbrook-farm.org
City, State Zip: West Chester, PA 19096	Board Chair Name: Sharon Cichocki
Phone: 610-793-1037	Grant Proposal Contact Name: Nan Latona
Website: www.springbrook-farm.org	Grant Proposal Contact E-mail: nan.latona@springbrook-farm.org
EIN: 20-3417567	Grant \$ Amount Requested: \$24,000
Year Founded: 2005	

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: 	Date: November 3, 2020
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Nonprofit Field/s of Interest

Arts, Culture & Historic Preservation		Education		Health
Community Development	X	Environment & Animal Welfare	X	Human Services

Figures	Current	PRE-COVID (as of 1/1/20)
Annual Operating Budget	\$ 306,189	\$ 367,619
Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff	3	# 3
# Board Volunteers	12	# 14
# Committee Volunteers	36	# 36
# Active Direct Service Volunteers	2-5 per week	# 35 per week
Annual Volunteer Hours	60 per week since March	# 8,995 (2019)

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.

ChesCo Comm Fdn	Brandywine Health Fdtn	United Way ChesCo	ChesCo Dept Comm Devel
ChesCo Fund/W&Girls	Phoenixville Comm Health Fdtn	United Way S ChesCo	ChesCo Dept Health
Other significant funders:			ChesCo Dept Human Svcs

Narrative: In a few concise paragraphs, please explain:

- Mission** The mission of The Barn is to enrich the lives of children with disabilities through animal assisted activities.
- What geographic area is served?** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served) All of Chester County and surrounding areas
- What population is served? How have your service numbers been impacted by COVID?** The Barn serves children with disabilities ages 2 – 12. The table that follows documents the number of children served through our “in-person” programming and alternative virtual programs.

Program	# Children served pre-COVID	# Children served through alternative programs (since COVID)
<u>Individual Program</u> (a highly personalized hour-long activity session delivered weekly in two 12-week session and one 6-week session; 1:1 child/volunteer ratio)	30 children per week x 24 weeks (spring & fall) plus 3 children x 6 weeks (summer) 738 program placements total	15 children per week since September 1, 2020
<u>Camp Geronimo</u> (6-week day camp for children with disabilities ages 6 - 12; 1:1 child/volunteer ratio)	16 children per week x 6 weeks 96 program placements total	11 children served via a one-week <i>Special Summer Session</i> delivered through Zoom plus 46 children through <i>Family Barn Visits</i>
<u>Educational Field Trips</u> (limited by our township to 12 field trips annually)	≈15 children per month x 12 months ≈180 (unique) children per year	≈ 200 children participated through pre-recorded and live Zoom <i>Field Trips</i> (March-present)
<u>Socialization Events</u> (mini-festival type events held quarterly for area children with disabilities and their families)	≈60 children per quarter per year ≈240 program placements per year	57 children participated in <i>Socialization Events</i> via Zoom

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

Upon the outbreak of COVID-19, The Barn suspended all programs to keep our children, parents, staff, and volunteers safe, and to strategize a plan to adapt our programming for when we could re-open. We immediately developed and delivered several virtual and tele-intervention programs for our children to maintain interaction with our animals, natural spaces and skilled volunteers, while enabling us to retain the relationships we have with the families we serve. Here are a few examples of our reimagined programs and response to the pandemic:

- *Story Time*—our first virtual program, Story Time has been occurring every Friday at 1:00pm via Facebook Live since the start of the pandemic. It features a Barn staff member or volunteer reading and discussing animal themed books. (1,655 engagements on Facebook, March – October 30)
- *Spring Brook Spotlight*--a virtual program highlighted interesting features of Spring Brook Farm, The Barn’s animals and our neighbors such as Baily’s Dairy and Northbrook Market was presented via Facebook or FB Live. (1,136 engagements on Facebook, June – October 30)
- *Zoom with the Animals*--an interactive exchange between participating children and a facilitator highlighting different Barn animals and related games, weekly during the summer months; monthly September - present. (≈50 children participated, June – October 30)
- We piloted a virtual *Special Summer Session* in August (our approach to a virtual camp). This program was attended by 10 children and delivered daily via Zoom so they could see and interact with each other. Each day was a little different and featured a variety of activities such as games, music therapy, animal yoga, dance and crafts. Participating children received an activity box filled with everything they needed to engage in the upcoming week’s activities. Due to this program’s success, we will be repeating at least one similar session before the end of the year.

To prepare for when we could reopen, a team of volunteer pediatric nurse practitioner students from the University of Pennsylvania worked with us to create a comprehensive health, safety, and cleaning protocols. When Chester County entered the “Green Phase”, we launched a *Family Barn Visit* program as an alternative for our “in-person” *Individual*

Programs. This enabled us to serve one child at a time while using an adult family member as the child’s hands-on support while our Program Manager coached the child through activities from a safe distance of 6'. We started with one child a day while we became accustomed to sanitization protocols and then increased to 2 – 3 per day, allocating time to clean between clients.

For now, there is a “new normal” at The Barn but, on the bright side, even when things return to the “old normal,” we will have successfully created an array of virtual programming we can offer to children whose health is too compromised to participate in our regular “in-person” programs. We are currently conducting our fall *Individual Programs* using the Family Barn Visit model (adult household member serving as the "hands-on" support for the child) and serving three children a day: weekdays 2pm-6pm; one child per hour with 30 minutes between each for cleaning. Our Program Manager with a trained Occupational Therapy student guides the child through activities that address the goals of their Barn Activity Plan—an individualized plan that outlines activities that address each child’s abilities and goals. We are registering in 4 week "blocks" rather than our usual 12-week sessions, September – November, due to the uncertainty of the pandemic.

Unable to host visiting classrooms from area schools for in-person *Educational Field Trips*, we are currently offering a pre-recorded digital field trip shot on a cellphone to teachers to share with their classes, as well as a live version using Zoom, should teachers prefer a more immersive experience for their students. If there is a silver lining to this pandemic, it’s that we learned we have the potential to serve more children with disabilities than ever before, through live and pre-recorded virtual programming.

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?

The Barn is seeking funding for the cost of a professionally produced **Barn Video Library** in order to continue the impact of our animal-assisted programs during any ongoing COVID-19 restrictions while also increasing our outreach to additional children with disabilities throughout Chester County. While we know that there is no real substitute for in-person goal-oriented interaction with our animals and experienced interns and volunteers, the COVID-19 restrictions spurred our small staff to think out of the box in order to continue to provide meaningful and fun activities for our children. With limited technology onsite, The Barn pivoted to provide successful virtual tours of The Barn and in the community, story times and other activities that kept our children connected to the animals they have come to love. This connection was/is vitally important to continuing the progress the children have made in their communication skills, task management and self-esteem.

Throughout the last seven months, our participating children were able to continue to see some of their friends (animals and other children), maintain their confidence and most importantly have a great time participating virtually. Our virtual programs also gave continued hope to the parents that their children could still participate in The Barn activities. Now it is time for The Barn to take what we have learned during the pandemic and supplement our programming so that going forward in “the new normal” we will have additional tools to provide impactful programming for the children allowing them to continue their progress while, if necessary, remaining safe at home. And, using videos we will be able to reach additional families who can benefit from learning about The Barn and the documented successes we have had in advancing the progress of children with a wide-variety of disabilities.

Funding will specifically cover the cost of producing and marketing a video library to include:

Field Trip Video- a recorded version of our in-person field trip aimed at children, including a hay ride, activities with the animals, a visit to our Outdoor Learning Center, and more. This video will be distributed to area schools and teachers serving the needs of children with disabilities and will include a companion Learning Guide. It is our intention to have this video lead teachers to next participate in a live experience delivered via Zoom for a more immersive experience.

Animal-Assisted Activity Video- this video will include activities popular during our in-person Individual Programs, such as grooming, exercising, and feeding our animals and will be distributed to area schools and teachers serving the needs of children with disabilities. It will also Learning Guide with activities to complement the content of the video.

Barn Informational Video- this video will emphasize our programs, facilities, and animals as a means of attracting new volunteers, families, and funders. It will answer the question, "What is The Barn at Spring Brook Farm?" It will be distributed to individuals and organizations throughout our catchment area (primarily Chester County) and will be housed on our website and Facebook page.

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?

We are requesting a total of \$24,000 for the Barn Video Library which will be will be expended upon receipt through May, 2021.

Timeline for the Project (contingent upon the date funding is awarded, availability/schedule of the video production company, and weather)

January-March, 2021

- Research and identify target schools, hospitals, and contacts in the Greater Philadelphia Region for distribution of the Field Trip and Animal-Assisted Activity videos and Learning Guides
- Create content for and design the Learning Guides
- Develop feedback surveys to include any demographic information we seek to acquire including the number of children who viewed the video, effectiveness of Learning Guide, suggestions for improvement, interest in a follow-up live Zoom field trip; etc.

March-June, 2021

- Shoot and edit videos (approximately 50 hours total per video- 150 hours total; weather contingent)
- Prepare and distribute press releases announcing the project and availability dates
- Contact target recipients to confirm interest (ongoing)
- Send the videos and Learning Guides to target recipients (ongoing)
- Distribute feedback survey (ongoing)
- Collect and analyze feedback (ongoing)
- Make changes/updates in Learning Guides as needed (annually)

Project Budget

Description	Cost per	Total Cost
Video production & editing	\$5,000	\$15,000
Marketing Support: Researching target recipients Distributing video and Learning Guide Collecting & analyzing feedback		\$5,000
Press release creation & distribution		\$500
Design of Learning Guides		\$750
Design of Feedback Surveys		\$250
Administration		\$2,500
	TOTAL	\$24,000

In conclusion, regardless of whether our onsite programs operate at full or partial capacity (or at all, for that matter, should we be forced to suspend programs due to the pandemic in the future), we must still have the resources to maintain our facilities and feed and care for our animals which are essential to our mission.

We have been exploring ways to increase the use of technology and social media in order to augment our programming and increase the number of children we can reach since the pandemic. With the loss of revenue through cancellation of in-person fundraising events and not being able to operate at full capacity, seeking grant funding to continue our plans for virtual programming is even more imperative. It is our hope that the Foundation will look favorably upon our request and choose to partner with us to move our programming forward into a “new normal” that will advance our mission.