

## GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- We **connect people who care with causes that matter, so their philanthropy makes a difference now & forever.**
- We are a **collection of Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds** with **@\$3.5M granted annually** to nonprofits in Chester County & beyond.
- **99%** of our grants are made by our generous Fund Advisors, who make grant decisions all year.

**Proposals submitted by nonprofits are considered for 2 types of grants:**

### Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds (No Deadline)

- ◇ Grants **focus on Chester County** causes & issues, but are not limited to Chester County.
- ◇ Charitable nonprofits working **in all fields of interest** are considered for grant awards. (I.e. arts, culture, & humanities; education; community improvement; environment; religion; health; & human services)
- ◇ **General operating** grants are encouraged. Nonprofits should be specific about their mission, goals, & measurable outcomes.
- ◇ Proposals can be submitted **anytime all year.**
- ◇ Grant decisions are made **intermittently** all year, as Fund Advisors desire.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$7,500.**

### Fund for Chester County Capacity Building Grants (Due 9/15)

- ◇ For eligibility in this grant program, nonprofits must be **located in & serve Chester County.** NPO's with budgets of \$500,000 or less are given preference.
- ◇ The goal of capacity building grantmaking is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the Chester County region,** in areas including:
  - Mission, Vision & Strategy
  - Governance & Leadership
  - Partnerships & Collaborations
  - Operations & Technology
  - Fundraising, Development & Marketing
- ◇ Proposals must be submitted by **September 15** to be eligible for consideration.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$5,000,** with monies distributed by **February.**

- Use this form @ [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)**
- Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments.**
- Proposals are shared electronically and online with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.
- Per IRS Regulations, applicants **must be** charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification & **cannot** be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator **Kevin Baffa** at **(610)-698-8211** or [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org) with any questions.

# I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

*One page only. This page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors.*

*Note: If Philanthropy Network's Common Grant Application is used, CCCF's Summary Sheet MUST accompany application.*

*To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)*

**Date: 11/16/2020**

**Contact Information**

Organization Name: Willistown Conservation Trust	ED/CEO Name: Bonnie Van Alen
Address: 925 Providence Rd, Newtown Square, PA 19073	ED/CEO E-mail: bva@wctrust.org
Phone: 610-353-2562	Board Chair Name: Beth Hucker
Website: www.wctrust.org	Board Chair Approval (check here): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Year Incorporated: 1996	Primary Contact Name: Tripp Way
FEIN: 23-2841453	Primary Contact E-mail: tw@wctrust.org

**Organization Information:**

**Field/s of Interest:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Culture & Humanities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment/Animal Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/> Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion

**Mission:**

The mission of the Willistown Conservation Trust is to preserve and manage the open land, rural character, scenic, recreational, historic, agricultural and natural resources of the Willistown area and nearby communities, and to share these unique resources with people of all ages and backgrounds to inspire, educate and develop a lifelong commitment to the land and the natural world.

**Geographic Area Served** *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):*

Willistown Conservation Trust's (WCT's) program area is located 20 miles west of Philadelphia. It covers over 28,000 acres and is comprised of all of Willistown Township, portions of Malvern Borough, Easttown Township and East Goshen Township. It also includes a small portion of Delaware County. The program area incorporates the headwaters of the Ridley, Crum and Darby Creeks, which are tributaries of the Delaware River and an important water supply to suburban Philadelphia. Our programming and public preserves attract individuals, schools and groups from across Chester County and beyond.

**Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:**

WCT works with state, county and local governments and citizens to preserve open space throughout the region. To date, WCT has accepted the donation of conservation easements on over 70 properties within its program area. In addition, it owns and operates four preserves that are open to the public for hiking, birding and equestrian activities. The Trust has five major program areas: Land Protection, Stewardship, Community Farm, Bird Conservation and Watershed Protection. WCT also provides internships and educational programs for students from public and private schools across the region.

Annual Budget <u>\$2,551,00.00</u>	<u>25</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>70</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>21</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>10</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>200</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>20</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>4600</u> # of Volunteer Hours

*100 % total*

**Top 3-5 funding sources:** In the past year, WCT's largest sources of funding have been gifts from individual donors, restricted programmatic grants and endowment/ investment earnings.

**Is this grant proposal for:** Capacity Building \_\_\_ or General Operating  X  ?

**If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:**

\_\_\_ Mission, Vision & Strategy \_\_\_ Governance & Leadership \_\_\_ Partnerships & Collaborations

\_\_\_ Fundraising, Development & Marketing \_\_\_ Technology Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation:**  \$2,000 - \$7,500

**Proposal Summary:**

WCT seeks operating support that will enable it to continue its efforts to preserve open space in Chester County by working with community members to place conservation easements on their properties and by purchasing critical parcels that would otherwise be sold for development. Additional funding will also support WCT's burgeoning programs in land protection, sustainable agriculture, bird conservation, stewardship/ habitat restoration and watershed protection. The following represent ways in which WCT's programs will continue to benefit the community:

- Provide healthy, nutritious food to local families and food cupboards
- Contribute to global research on migratory and resident bird populations
- Increase our understanding of sustainable farming and its impact on biodiversity
- Educate the next generation of conservationists through field trips, internships and service learning opportunities
- Provide field sites for university classes and research
- Demonstrate and promote ecologically beneficial land management practices and provide support to local landowners wanting to improve habitat on their own properties.
- Monitor the health of our three headwater streams: the Upper Ridley, Crum and Darby Creeks to identify and address threats to stream health.

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

### 1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

Land conservation has been underway in the Willistown area of Chester County for nearly 30 years. Willistown Conservation Trust's (WCT) predecessor, the Willistown Area Conservation Program, was formed in 1979 as a satellite program of the Brandywine Conservancy. In 1996, WCT became an independent, community-based land trust and in 2008 was one of the first to receive formal accreditation from the national Land Trust Alliance. Jeanne B. Van Alen, a founding member of the Willistown Conservation Trust, has been President and Executive Director since its inception.

In the face of intense development pressure, WCT's board members and staff have worked with the community and local landowners to protect vulnerable land and other ecologically important areas. To date, over 7,200 acres have been preserved in the Willistown area. The Trust owns and maintains four preserves open to the public year round. In addition, the Willistown Conservation Trust has five core program areas: Land Conservation, Habitat Restoration, Community Farm, Bird Conservation and Watershed Protection.

Willistown Conservation Trust has become a model for others in the land trust, conservation and sustainable agriculture communities—demonstrating the untapped potential of preserved land for sustainable food production and community engagement. It has also become a dynamic “outdoor classroom” for schools throughout the region and a site for university research projects and field courses. Through its educational programs for school children, college internships, landowner workshops, and a variety of volunteer opportunities WCT has nurtured a strong conservation ethic within the community.

WCT's goals are as follows: (1) to preserve an additional 4,000 acres of undeveloped land; (2) to restore and manage critical wildlife habitat; (3) to educate the public about conservation and the benefits of local, sustainable food production; and (4) to promote environmentally responsible stewardship of private properties.

### 2. Funding Request

#### a. Description of Key Initiatives

Land Conservation: Although 7,200 acres in the Willistown area have been preserved over the past 33 years, 4,000 critical acres remain vulnerable to development. Under existing zoning, more than 2,500 new homes could be built on these acres, eliminating open space and critical wildlife habitat that exists today. WCT's land protection staff identifies strategic properties, works with landowners, prepares proposals and negotiates agreements to protect those lands (easements).

Sustainable Farming and Agroecology: Rushton Farm demonstrates how preserved land can produce healthy, nutritious food for the community while maintaining and enhancing its ecological value. Modeled on the principles of agroecology, Rushton Farm is designed to minimize negative environmental impacts and maximize habitat. WCT hosts annual field days at Rushton to educate land trusts, conservation organizations, farmers and landowners about the wise use of preserved land for food production, research and community engagement. This year, WCT's 6-acre Rushton Farm produced

27,000 pounds of sustainably farmed produce for its CSA members and an additional 3,000 pounds for donation to local food banks.

Bird and Wildlife Conservation and Research: Originally established to monitor the impact of small-scale agriculture on biodiversity within the Rushton Preserve, WCT's Bird Conservation Program has grown rapidly. Since its inception in 2009, WCT's licensed bird banders have collected data that is shared through the USGS's North American Bird Banding Lab, the Institute for Bird Populations, and Project OwlNet. It has also become a highly effective and widely popular program for educating students and visitors about the impact of protecting open space on birds and other wildlife. Our banding station at Rushton Woods Preserve has banded 100 different species and over 15,000 different birds. In addition, WCT is heavily involved in the Northeast Motus Collaboration. Motus, which is latin for movement, is a bird tracking system using satellite towers to track the movement of migratory birds. The Trust's work in the partnership has led to the addition of over 100 new towers.

Habitat Restoration and Land Management: Land management on our four public Preserves is predicated on maximizing biodiversity, improving environmental outcomes and promoting learning. Each of our preserves has diverse habitats, which include grasslands, woodlands, wetlands and agricultural fields, making them ideal locations to explore and model best practices. Increasingly our Preserves are attracting researchers interested in studying the unique interaction between natural and cultivated lands and the impact of sustainable farming, as well as water quality. Their findings inform conservation science and help build empirical support for practices modeled at our Preserves. The Preserves are open to the public 365 days a year, offering an opportunity for recreation and respite in nature for our local communities.

5) Rushton Conservation Center & Environmental Education: In 2019 WCT opened the doors to the newly built Rushton Conservation Center. WCT welcomes hundreds of students each year to experience science in action at our Rushton Woods Preserve and Conservation Center. Educational programs provide students and community members with curriculum enrichment designed to cultivate interest in science, ecology, conservation, sustainable farming and watershed protection. Our goal is to establish an early and lasting connection between young people and nature. We are a Field Study Site for the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University and we are an outdoor classroom for the University of Pennsylvania's Masters of Environmental Studies programs.

6) Watershed Protection: The Watershed Protection Program at Willistown Conservation Trust was established in 2017 and focuses on water quality within more than 190 stream miles within the Trust's focal area including the headwaters of the Ridley, Crum and Darby Creeks. The goal of the Trust's Watershed Protection Program is to ensure the long-term health of these streams through monitoring, restoration, public education, and best management practices. Studying local waterways educates and informs our land conservation initiatives to ensure that the water which flows beyond our boundaries is the highest possible quality for our downstream neighbors.

**b. Specific needs and issues to be addressed**

WCT requests operating support that will help sustain its innovative programs that preserve open space, connect people to the land and demonstrate the benefits of preserving our natural resources.

**c. Why it is important to fund this now**

WCT's programming has grown significantly to meet public demand and to establish a strong foundation of community support for land conservation. Much of this expansion has been undertaken with existing

staff and financial resources. Funding for our annual operating budget is imperative to continue preserving more land in Willistown and create programming to educate our community and beyond about the importance of conservation.

**d. How impact and results will be demonstrated**

WCT will continue to gauge its impact by tracking key indicators, including the following:

- number of acres preserved through easement or purchase;
- number of people reached with educational programming,
- number of pounds of fresh, sustainably grown food produced for the Rushton CSA and donated to local food banks;
- number birds banded at the Rushton Woods Banding Station
- monitoring the health and cleanliness of our streams and waterways

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

### 1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

### 2. Funding request

- Description of key initiatives
- Specific needs & issues to be addressed
- Why it is important to fund this now
- How impact & results will be demonstrated
  
- For capacity building grant proposals:
  - How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?
  - How will this impact be measured?
  - Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.

## III. ATTACHMENTS

*E-mail or mail this support information*

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

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so their legacies make a difference.*

## WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

**Capacity building helps bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, in order to more effectively & efficiently fulfill its mission.**

Capacity building may include (but is not limited to) projects which address:

- **MISSION, VISION & STRATEGY**  
Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning - Financial Planning
- **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**  
Board Development - Executive Transition/Succession Planning - Leadership Development - Staff Training & Professional Development
- **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS**  
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions - Strategic Restructuring
- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING**  
Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development - Marketing, Branding & Communications
- **TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS**  
Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements