

# AIP GRANT APPLICATION COVER SHEET

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## Contact Information

Organization Name: Kennett Library  
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 Website: [www.kennettlibrary.org](http://www.kennettlibrary.org)  
 Year Incorporated: 1896  
 FEIN: 23-1547585

Date: 5/1/2021

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Have you received grant money from the Chester County Community Foundation in the past?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Not Sure X

## **Please indicate which of these AIP Fund priorities are embedded in your program:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Alleviate hunger	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alleviate homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alleviate poverty
<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical well being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Emotional & mental well being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Social well being
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Educate for social intelligence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Educate for academic success		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mindfulness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Creativity & problem solving		

## **Mission:**

The mission of the Kennett Library is to serve as the center for life-long learning and the destination for the discovery of ideas, the joy of reading, and the power of information throughout our service area in Southern Chester County, PA.

## **Geographic Area Served:**

All of Chester County

## **Describe the number & type of children/youth to be served by this program annually:**

2020 figures; birth to 5 yo – 2,304; 6 to 18 yo – 9,005

Projected 2023 figures (year after opening); birth to 5 yo – 2,950; 6 to 18 yo – 11,700

## **Resources:**

\$ 30,000 – perhaps a multi-year grant. How much grant funding do you seek from the AIP Fund?

\$ 18,000,000 \_\_\_\_\_ What is your overall budget for this program?

\$ 962,830.00 \_\_\_\_\_ What is your overall budget for this year?

13.5 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff      1,432 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

20 # of Board Volunteers      7,717 # of Volunteer Hours

## **Top 3-5 funding sources:**

1) The eight municipalities we serve; 2) Commonwealth of PA; 3) Cabot Kjellerup Foundation; 4) Forney Family Foundation

**Grant Amount Requested from the AIP Fund @ Community Foundation** \$30,000 – perhaps over 3 years

**Proposal Summary (3-5 sentences):** The Kennett Library seeks funding for the new Kennett Library and Resource Center scheduled to open late 2022. The current library building was built c.1960, and has outlived its viability several times over. The needs of the community (as evidenced by a Visioning Study) are for a larger, more technologically resourced facility, with parking, classrooms, special spaces for children and their caregivers and for young adults (tweens and teens), a multipurpose space for lectures, etc., more room for the highly successful Adult Literacy Program, and a facility that is fully ADA-compliant.

**Kennett Library**  
AIP Fund Grant Application Narrative  
Grant Application, May 2021

**1-What are you trying to achieve with this program, and how does this resonate with your nonprofit's mission, other programs and track record?**

The Community Challenge and Need

The first Kennett Library (née the Bayard Taylor Library) opened in 1896, and then in 1960 a new facility was built to better support the growth in the region. Since then, however, our population has doubled to almost 50,000, while the library's role has expanded, incorporating many new technology-driven media and learning tools, and adding a plethora of educational, recreational and civic activities, some barely imaginable in 1960. As a result, our current facility is now as overwhelmed as the 1896 building once was.

A recent Visioning Study found community participants calling for an upgraded library with more books, better technology and improved amenities, especially spaces for community gatherings, currently in short supply in our area. However, architectural studies have conclusively determined it impractical to sufficiently expand/update our facilities on our current site. Besides basic lack of space for both materials and activities, the facility's antiquated core systems - utilities, parking, access, storage, etc. - are seriously deficient, often violating modern building codes.

While these severe limitations affect all our patrons, those least advantaged are most impacted. Our area's growing economy and its uniquely diverse culture are very much due to the efforts of our numerous immigrants. Many of these have minimal discretionary funds, depending heavily on the library for free/low-cost educational and recreational material, literacy and citizenship classes, and technology support, plus a safe, comfortable, welcoming place to read, listen, study and meet. Our obsolete facility makes it increasingly difficult for us to provide this population with the crucial support it needs, a serious impediment for promoting social equity throughout the entire community.

Meeting the Challenge

It became clear to the Kennett Library Board of Trustees that a new library had to be built to solve the issues with the current building and site. Negotiations with neighbors for additional space did not bear fruit, so the only solution was to find a new site nearby so current foot traffic patrons could continue to walk to the Library, and to begin a comprehensive community effort to build support for the Project.

The Project includes building and outfitting a new facility, to be called the Kennett Library and Resource Center, designed to fully support the library's key roles in the community, while addressing the community's most pressing unmet needs. To do so, the new facility will be highly flexible and sustainable, able to accommodate the likely social and technological changes and challenges both our community and libraries in general will be facing in the coming decades.

We believe that the AIP Fund will be especially interested in the level of attention paid to space, furnishings, and equipment for children and young adults. We have attached a listing of the technology items as a part of this proposal, along with pricing so you can see the impact your gift will have. We have commitments for some of the items already. We will be happy to send full project specifics.

Libraries are also upgrading themselves to become active workforce development centers, helping individuals and small businesses acquire new skills and contacts, which can have a big impact on an area's economic growth and well-being.

The 2017 Visioning Study pointed out, "Library science continues to search for new resource technologies, always facing the obstacles of older buildings for which these technologies were never anticipated. The only constancy about technology is that it probably won't resemble what it replaces. This is a basic truth that all buildings face, but is magnified in libraries, given their mission."

Given this reality, the Study respondents prioritized what to them were the most important roles of the library in the community. They also provided the five most desired features for any new facility:

- a substantially larger building
- more and free parking
- larger print and digital collections
- need for a far more accessible building (i.e. one where everyone can easily enter and navigate)
- need for state-of-the-art community meeting and study spaces.

More specifically, we expect the new facility to allow the library to substantially increase its impact on the community in the following areas:

- Promoting Literacy
- Providing Resources
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity
- Community Investment

## **2-How you will discern the impact and results of this program?**

### Measurements of Success

We will consider the new Kennett Library and Resource Center a success when it is built and opened to the public, and when the metrics we have projected for increases in visitation, circulation, use of classrooms and meeting rooms, live and remote connections, and the increase in circulation of items designated for at-risk populations are met.

Our project's most impactful projected Outcomes by impact category are:

Promoting Literacy: Visitation will increase 30% from 110,545 per year to 144,000 in 2023. Items circulated will increase 40%, from 178,076 in 2019 to 249,000 in 2023. Also, 400 more students and adults will visit the new library per week to use the classrooms and meeting rooms. We use library foot traffic and the number of meetings held in classrooms and auditorium to track these Outcomes.

Providing Resources: During 2023, additional meeting room access and new technology capacity will enable unlimited new live and remote connections allowing distance learning for 200 additional programs. Further, the improved free Wi-Fi connection inside and outside on the Library grounds will double Wi-Fi sessions to 24,000, while inside computer sessions will increase by 30% to 10,100 sessions annually for a total of all sessions of 34,100.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity: By 2024 we anticipate a 10% increase in the circulation of specified library materials which have been designated for at-risk populations plus a 10% increase in library programs for at-risk populations. Further, we will prioritize meeting space availability to community nonprofits that serve these at-risk populations.

Community Investment: In keeping with Chester County's Strategic Plan, building the new library in Kennett Square strengthens the urban center, while promoting land preservation in the neighboring townships. By 2023, the projected increase in the number of local and non-local visitors to the library is anticipated to contribute to \$1.89 million in visitor spending. To underline this point, a recent study found that each \$1 invested in libraries overall contributes \$5 to the local economy.

## **3-Why is it important to fund this now?**

Our constituents – the residents of the one Borough and seven townships served by the Kennett Library - deserve and need an up-to-date facility so that they can continue to prosper and grow in the many ways that a library can make possible. Our current facility limits their options. And as we noted, the building is too small, is non-ADA compliant, is landlocked preventing expansion, and has a slowly deteriorating infrastructure. By most measures, we are ten years past the point of needing a new library. The Board, assisted by many community leaders and volunteers, has made impressive headway on fundraising goals. There is a real momentum towards the goal of \$18M, with a combination of municipal, state, county, foundation, corporate, and individual donors, and the project will need the efforts of all community members to help make this happen. If not now, then when?