I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date: September 15th 2021

Contact Information
Organization Name: Thorncroft Equestrian Center
Address: 190 Line Road, Malvern, PA 19355
Phone: 610-644-1963
Website: www.thorncroft.org
Year Incorporated: 1969
FEIN: 23-2218431

ED/CEO Name: Tiffany Meyer
ED/CEO Email: tiffany@thorncroft.org
Board Chair Name: Richard Johnston
Board Chair Approval (check here): X
Primary Contact Name: Mikaela Potrako
Primary Contact Email: mikaela@thorncroft.org

Organization Information:
Field(s) of Interest:
___ Arts, Culture & Humanities ___ Environment/Animal Welfare ___ Education
___ X_ Health ___ X_ Human Services ___ Religion

Mission:
Our mission is to develop the physical and emotional well-being of all people regardless of their individual challenges. We are committed to personal growth and education in an equestrian environment of respect, love, and inclusion.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):
For over 52 years, Thorncroft Equestrian Center has proudly served riders of all abilities and specialized needs from southeastern Pennsylvania, primarily the residents of Chester County.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:
Thorncroft uses horsemanship to develop the physical and emotional well-being of our riders in an environment of love and respect, helping them grow and excel in ways never believed possible. 50% of Thorncroft's ridership is comprised of therapeutic students having at least one cognitive, physical, or psychosocial disability. Annually Thorncroft serves over 300 riders and our therapeutic student body represents over 50 different types of specialized needs. Our top three diagnoses categories represented in our therapeutic program are Autism (31%), Psychosocial Disorders (17%) and Neurological Disorders (11%). Additionally, 43% of riders served are under the age of 18.

Annual Budget $ 1,257,350 8 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
___74___ % of budget for program expenses ___14___ # of Board Volunteers
___7___ % of budget for administrative expenses ___103___ # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
___18___ % of budget for fundraising expenses _______3,310___ # of Volunteer Hours
100___ % total

Top 3-5 funding sources:
Goshen Hill Foundation, Herman O. West Foundation, Davenport Family Foundation, Haverford Trust.

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building X or General Operating ____?

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:
___X___ Mission, Vision & Strategy ___Governance & Leadership ___Partnerships & Collaborations
___Fundraising, Development & Marketing ___Technology Other: _______________________

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: $ 5,000

Proposal Summary:
After 52 years, Thorncroft continues to provide a life changing service for over 300 riders per week with cognitive, physical, and psychosocial disabilities. For the individuals we serve, Thorncroft is a place where transformative change happens, and they experience things never thought possible. With a forward-facing perspective and commitment to these individuals, Thorncroft's Board of Directors and senior staff embrace the opportunity to develop a current strategic plan and ensure 50 more years of continued service in our community.

Thorncroft plans to retain an experienced professional in the field of non-profit consulting to facilitate the planning process and develop a strategic plan in tandem with the Board of Directors and key senior staff. Thorncroft plans to undertake this process in the fall of 2021, with the goal of implementing the developed strategic plan by July of 2022. The intended impact of this investment of time and resources is to ensure that our services reflect the needs of our community, to align our actions with that need and lay a strong organizational foundation for future decades of high-quality service.
II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE  
Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

1. Nonprofit’s history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

Established in 1969, Thorncroft Equestrian Center is one of the Premier Therapeutic Equestrian Centers in the United States. Home to approximately 300 riders per week, Thorncroft’s therapeutic and equine assisted activities support the growth of both children and adults with cognitive, emotional, and physical disabilities. Thorncroft helps people grow as individuals and as a community by learning to celebrate the unique abilities of all people through the shared experience of horseback riding. Together, riders of all abilities achieve and learn skills that cannot be provided by traditional educational methods, therapeutic settings, or recreational opportunities available to our community.

Thorncroft began in 1969 with one therapeutic rider, Marge Harry, whose remarkable equestrian journey of growth inspired our Farm to expand the use of horsemanship to help those with specialized needs reach their full potential and promote acceptance and inclusion within the community. Since Marge began at Thorncroft 52 years ago, our Farm has been on the cutting edge of research in hippotherapy and innovative approaches to special education. At Thorncroft, the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial progress is palatable as staff and instructors witness individual accomplishments and hurdles once thought out of reach.

Thorncroft’s mainstreamed approach to equestrian education, plays a critical role in the service of our mission and greater impact on the community. The integration of therapeutic and recreational riding, quickly yet unassumingly, promotes acceptance rather than rejection of those with special needs. The environment of inclusion, collaboration, and respect generated by people of all abilities working together in the pursuit of a shared passion is one of Thorncroft Equestrian Center’s major accomplishments. Together our riders learn leadership and interpersonal skills that cannot be provided by special needs school or programs. Rather than evaluating an individual based on their limitations, Thorncroft’s program begins by celebrating what makes a person unique. In many traditional therapeutic settings, people are identified by their diagnosis. Inherently this focuses the therapeutic energy on this issue rather than the total person. Thorncroft’s innovative philosophy addresses a rider's journey of personal growth and well-being by using horses to eliminate barriers to success. This approach promotes creativity and critical thinking to unlock a person’s full potential rather than “fixing” or “healing” or “supressing” what makes them different. The shared goals and experiences of both our therapeutic and recreational riders working together to grow as equestrians further cultivates Thorncroft’s culture of inclusion. Thorncroft is one of very few therapeutic riding centers in the community and is unique in its mainstreamed approach to riding education. We are proud to offer a mainstreamed environment at Thorncroft which fosters growth and inclusion in our community in a manner not found in other educational or therapeutic settings.

2. Funding request

- Description of key initiatives
  Thorncroft’s key initiative is to develop and implement a strategic plan. This process will begin by retaining an experienced consultant to guide and facilitate the strategic planning process. The consultant will work in tandem with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Board of Directors, and stakeholders. The individuals involved in the steering committee have decades of experience with Thorncroft and represent the critical aspects of the organization. The Committee and Consultants will gather community feedback from key stakeholders to build the strategic plan. Following the development of the plan, the consultants and committee will create a detailed tactical plan for execution. This will allow Thorncroft to monitor the progress and success of the strategic plan over the coming years. Progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis and formally at 6mo and 12mo intervals by the consultants.

- Specific needs & issues to be addressed
  The changing needs of our community during COVID19 makes it prudent to reflect as an organization and develop collective direction to ensure effective service of Thorncroft’s mission. The COVID19 Pandemic exacerbated mental, physical, and cognitive health concerns while making community supports and resources inaccessible. From an educational lens, school age individuals were isolated from peers and faced the challenges of learning remotely. Schools with limited resources before the pandemic struggled further to support students with IEPs in a virtual learning environment. Individuals with physical challenges declined as gyms, physical therapy offices and recreational opportunities were either suspended or created an increased risk. Individuals with cognitive challenges such as autism, dementia and learning disabilities, struggled with the social isolation, remote learning environments and suspension of enriching activities. People with and without special needs
suffered from the anxiety of becoming ill, the isolation from social interaction, dysfunctional family/living situations, grief of lost loved ones, and stress caused by financial hardship. Veterans managing PTSD and other combat related injuries became further distanced from their circles of support. First responders in our community directly experienced this community wide stress as they, on the frontlines, witnessed an increase in violent crimes, domestic abuse, suicide, and substance abuse crises.

The needs of our community are changing with unprecedented speed and magnitude as are the resources available. Thorncroft must seize this opportunity to reflect on the relevancy of our mission, the changing needs of our community and the efficacy of our programing with respect to existing community resources.

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

The effects of COVID19 increased the demand on existing community resources making Thorncroft’s program even more vital to collectively supporting our suffering community. Funding this Strategic Planning Initiative now is critical to ensure Thorncroft’s mission and service aligns with the rapidly changing needs of our riders and is complementary of other community resources. Furthermore, Thorncroft does not currently have a strategic plan. Recently, Thorncroft entered the next chapter of our organizational life cycle after an executive leadership and founder transition. A strategic plan is needed to facilitate a successful transition and solidify a strong, clear, and unified future for the Farm. Thorncroft is presented with an opportune moment to evaluate both the internal and external aspects of our organization and move into the next 50 year of service to Chester County with relevance and strength.

**How impact & results will be demonstrated**

Successful results will be demonstrated through the development and implementation of a Strategic Plan and subsequent growth as an organization and high-quality service of Thorncroft’s mission. These results will be demonstrated through...

- A strong organizational culture oriented in a shared direction
- Organizational financial sustainability and stability
- Quality, mission-oriented service that is relevant and impactful to our constituents

**For capacity building grant proposals:**

- **How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?**
  
  The investment of time and resources into the health of our organization through the creation and implementation of a strategic plan will undoubtedly have a profound impact for years to come. We anticipate that this process will...
  
  - Improve the quality of the services Thorncroft provides
  - Align our mission with the current needs of our community
  - Develop a cohesive organizational culture with a shared, clear sense of direction
  - Inspire donor confidence and increase Thorncroft’s competitiveness for funding opportunities
  - Improve board/staff relationship and collaboration
  - Increase accountability for measures of impact

- **How will this impact be measured?**

  To measure the success of the strategic planning process on the service of our mission, the progress of the riders in the Thorncroft Therapeutic Horsemanship Program is documented quarterly by instructors in accordance with PATH Int. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) standards. Additionally, Thorncroft plans to implement a self-reported functional gains survey in the Fall of 2021 to quantify the qualitative information we currently receive from parents and riders. This tool is being developed with the help of researchers from the Children’s Hospital of Pennsylvania. Riders and/or caregivers will complete this survey upon entry into the program establishing a baseline and then annually for the tenure of their involvement within the program. We expect to see favorable results from these two measures of impact if the strategic planning process improves the quality of Thorncroft’s services and addresses with the changing needs of the community. From an administrative perspective the successful implementation of the strategic plan will be reviewed at 6- and 12-month benchmarks.

- **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.**
To achieve our goal of developing and implementing an organizational strategic plan, Thorncroft will begin by assembling a strategic planning steering committee and hiring an external consultant. The Thorncroft Board of Directors and senior leadership wish to retain Sylvia and Carter Associates to facilitate this important initiative. In addition, the firm’s extensive expertise in the areas of nonprofit strategic planning and fund development, Ms. Carter also has extensive experience within our unique industry having served on the Board of Directors for a fellow therapeutic riding center in Chester County. Thorncroft understands the importance of a strategic planning process that is honest, self-reflective, and unbiased. Therefore, we plan to invest in the most comprehensive involvement from the external consultants to achieve high quality results from this initiative. The comprehensive partnership we intend to enter with Sylvia & Carter Associates will be a $10,000 investment in the successful future of Thorncroft. We estimate the entire strategic planning process will require approximately $12,250 which will include, consultant fees, administrative hours, and other miscellaneous resources. The contents and activities are included in the chart below along with the expenses associated with each step.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Anticipated Expense</th>
<th>Estimated Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation of Steering Committee</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>September 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board and Senior Staff Retreat</td>
<td>$500 (staff hours and educational resources, location)</td>
<td>October/November 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of External Consultant</td>
<td>$10,000 (Consultant fee)</td>
<td>January 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather Community and Constituent Feedback</td>
<td>n/a (included in consultant fee)</td>
<td>January-March 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Directors Meeting to Review Mission, Vision, SWOT and Feedback</td>
<td>$250 (reflects approx. dedicated senior salaried staff hours)</td>
<td>April 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the Strategic Plan</td>
<td>$1,000 (reflects approx. dedicated senior salaried staff hours)</td>
<td>April 2022-July 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Tactical Goal Achievement Plan</td>
<td>n/a (included in consultant fee)</td>
<td>July 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Month Implementation Progress Review</td>
<td>$250 (reflects approx. dedicated senior salaried staff hours)</td>
<td>January 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Month Implementation Progress Review</td>
<td>$250 (reflects approx. dedicated senior salaried staff hours)</td>
<td>July 2023</td>
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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.

- Use this form @ www.chescof.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- Email proposals to grants@chescof.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.