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.

**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

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

Date

Contact Information
Organization Name: Tick Tock Early Learning Center
ED/CEO Name: Karen Ammon
Address: 1694 Baltimore Pike, Avondale, PA 19311
ED/CEO E-mail: Karen@TickTockELC.org
Phone: 610-268-8134
Board Chair Name: Patrick Manahan
Website: www.ticktockelc.org
Board Chair Approval (check here): [X]
Year Incorporated: 1694
Primary Contact Name: Karen Ammon
FEIN: 23-1646698
Primary Contact E-mail: karen@ticktockelc.org

Organization Information:
Field/s of Interest:

- [X] Arts, Culture & Humanities
- [ ] Environment/Animal Welfare
- [X] Education
- [ ] Human Services
- [ ] Religion

Mission: Tick Tock Early Learning Center prepares children from working families for school and life in a loving environment at affordable rates.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Southern Chester County (Kennett Consolidated School District and Avon Grove School District, serving the following communities: Avondale, Chatham, Kennett Square, West Grove, Landenburg, Toughkenamon, Lincoln University, Oxford)

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: Tick Tock serves up to 98 students from 12 months through 14 years. Ninety-Eight percent of our students come from low-income families and 72% are from Spanish speaking families, many with little or no English language skills.

Annual Budget $1,228,269

- [88] % of budget for program expenses
- [10] % of budget for administrative expenses
- [2*] % of budget for fundraising expenses

18 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
14 # of Board Volunteers
30+ # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
100’s # of Volunteer Hours

*This year’s fundraising expenses and income are less than previous years as we are unable to hold our annual golf outing to the fullest capacity due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Top 3-5 funding sources:
Child Care Works – Pennsylvania state subsidized child care
Child and Adult Care Food Program – Pennsylvania state subsidized food program
Client tuition fees
Annual Fundraisers
Grants and Foundations
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: $7,500

Proposal Summary:
Tick Tock Early Learning Center is seeking general operating support. We are currently understaffed due to employee shortages and thus not at full capacity. We are seeking funding to help enable us to find and maintain qualified employees and return to full capacity so that we can continue to provide affordable, high quality early childhood education and care in a COVID-19 safe setting to our community.
II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE
Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

1. Nonprofit’s history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness
Tick Tock Early Learning Center was founded in 1964 by a group of women who saw a need in their community and were determined to fill it. What began as one preschool classroom of seven children has grown over the last 56 years hand in hand with its community. Today we serve over 130 children, ages 12 months to 14 years, annually in six full-time classrooms and a before and after school program for our elementary and middle school age children.

Our Center is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm year round during the school year and for our summer camp program. We assist working families by providing high quality, reliable, and affordable educational child care. Tick Tock’s rates are determined on a sliding scale based on income and family size which means hard-working families have access to excellent child care and preschool services that help prepare their children for success in school and beyond.

Our Center is licensed and inspected by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, inspected and certified by the Chester County Health Department, and reviewed and designated as a STAR 4 Program by the state of Pennsylvania’s Keystone STARS Quality Assurance Initiative — the highest rating possible. Only 5-6% of programs achieve a STAR 4 designation and almost all are private, for-profit, or corporate centers (many of which have now closed due to Covid). Tick Tock’s achievement is a point of pride in our community.

We prepare our preschool children to succeed in kindergarten and throughout their school career by teaching basic skills with an emphasis on school readiness in an English language immersion program. We present theme-related activities in a stimulating hands-on learning environment linked to the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards. Our curriculum, Funshine Express, is designed to foster growth across all the domains of child development including cognitive, social-emotional, daily living, language, and gross and fine motor skills. Specifically, our program activities include literacy, math, science, art, music, water play, and dramatic and imaginative play. Our facility offers classroom computers, a literacy center, state of the art STEM curriculum, and multiple safe and engaging outdoor play yards. We provide a Homework Assist Program and tutoring for our before and after school students (kindergarten through eighth grade) that support and extend their elementary and middle school curriculum.

In addition to helping families navigate local community support partners, we hold special support events such as free vision screening, two free dental health clinics, Back-To-School Night, two parent/teacher conferences, a family social event, and we distribute monthly “backpacks” of food provided by the Kennett Food Cupboard.

Our programing also includes providing healthy and nutritious breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack for students and staff, cooked on site. On average days we are serving between 175-200 meals at the center. This is mostly funded through a government program called the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Due to our commitment to provide these homemade meals, as opposed to processed or prepackaged meals, having staff to cook and clean, and offering fresh fruits and vegetables, Tick Tock spends more than we are reimbursed for on a yearly basis. Recognizing the importance of nutrition in young children and starting healthy habits young, we no longer serve high sugar foods. Instead we are more focus on whole grains, fruits, vegetables and lean healthy proteins.

In a non-Covid year, our eleven-week Summer Camp is one of the few licensed, local, low-cost options for parents while public school is not in session. Our Summer Camp program includes several field trips to local sites of interest such as the Brandywine Art Museum, The Land Conservancy’s Bucktoe Creek Preserve, and the Delaware Museum of Natural History. We host many visits from local educators and entertainers from nearby museums, nature centers, art and music collectives, science programs, and more. Special events
include holiday parties, picnics, carnivals, parades, themed weeks, sports exploration, and a talent show! The students deserve a summer filled with exciting learning experiences, time to day dream, read a good book, frolic with friends, and a chance to make memories that will last a lifetime. We help children maintain academic gains but give them time to relax and recharge so they may begin the next school year refreshed and ready to learn.

We are dedicated to the acceptance and celebration of children and families from all cultures, diverse abilities, and a spectrum of financial circumstances. We strive to meet the needs of each unique individual child that enters our care and offer an environment filled with joy, warmth, and affection where children may thrive.

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

The hardships of Covid and reoccurring outbreaks continue to have a significant impact on Tick Tock and the child care industry as a whole. Many centers in our area and across the state have closed permanently leaving parents without adequate childcare; without adequate childcare, parents can’t work. These current economic realities make our mission all the more critical to our community.

When Governor Wolf lifted the stay at home order last June, Tick Tock reopened its doors within a week. Since then our staff has been working under almost overwhelming Covid conditions - health screenings, cohorts, quarantining, mask wearing, and contactless pick up/drop off outside the building. We initiated new sanitation and kitchen procedures and even meal preparation and service had to be revamped. Last fall, when the new school year started remotely for our school age children, we formulated a plan to keep 30 school age children enrolled at the center full time. The mechanics of this remote learning with laptops, headphones, and hotspots was a new challenge to the students and staff. We responded with innovation and resilience and successfully offered our parents a safe place for their children to learn.

Since the introduction of the vaccine some things at the Center have been able to get back to normal; however, our current budget is showing a significant deficit this year, as our operating costs have increased over the past year due to Covid-related expenses and inflation. The country is facing a labor shortage in part due to decreased availability of childcare, and consequently, the cost of care is increasing due to wage pressures and the ability of working families to afford quality child care is decreasing. Women in particular have dropped out of the workforce at stunning rates and economists are dubbing this the great “SHEcession.” As Covid restrictions lessen and Tick Tock can move back towards full capacity we are subject to these wage pressures and finding and retaining the staffing we need will continue to add significantly to our operating costs. We expect federal and state dollars will help balance our current budget but much of that was tied to one-time programs and we do not except to receive those dollars again, even as our costs continue to rise. We have and continue to apply for any and all government funds available, including the American Rescue Plan, however, annual grants and fundraisers remain a critical source of our funding as we navigate the challenges of these current labor shortages and the continuing effects of the pandemic.

Finding affordable, quality care and early learning options should never be a burden that prevents a parent from being able to work. The services Tick Tock provides have a direct impact on this issue and on our local economy, and our tuition sliding scale and the many supports we provide to our families are not found in for-profit centers. The generosity of our community and organizations like Chester County Community Foundation allows Tick Tock to keep parents working, children learning, and our community thriving.
2021 Priorities:

1: **Keep children and employees healthy and return to full capacity.** As Covid variants continue to spread we continue to adhere to current CDC and local health department recommendations. All of our staff who are able to be have been vaccinated. Everyone in the Center over aged two continues to wear a mask inside the building and we still maintain strict control over those entering. We are also continuing to serve lunches within the classrooms to avoid unnecessary exposure between cohorts. This requires educational staff to use part of their time adhering to Covid protocols and serving lunch, which results in overtime wages, increased operating costs, and staffing shortages. These staffing shortages have resulted in decreased capacity in our classrooms, despite a long waiting list of families. Tick Tock’s employee retention rate far exceeds industry norms and over the past year we have shown that our staff can safely and effectively provide our services. Hiring more staff will allow us to return to full capacity and offer childcare to more families in our community.

2: **Obtain available Federal and State funding related to COVID 19 and the current childcare crisis.** Like any other business, our ability to serve our community is based on income. We rely on parent fees, government programs, foundations, fundraisers, and private donations to provide high quality educational child care to working families at affordable rates. Increased operating expenses due to Covid, inflation, and wage pressure along with decreased capacity make obtaining these funds even more critical. To date we have applied for all available federal, state, and local grants, including the American Rescue Plan, and will continue to do so while also advocating within the state and our regulating agencies for more overall funding for childcare. This goal will be measured by actual dollars earned through federal, state and local funding.

3: **As a result of their participation in our curriculum and program activities, children enrolled full time at Tick Tock Early Learning Center will make measurable progress across the 9 domains of the PA Early Learning Standards.** As noted above, Tick Tock reopened one week after the stay at home order was lifted. Adherence to Covid protocols such as social distancing, maintaining and isolating small cohorts, and educational staff multitasking has impacted our teaching time. Our long time staff members have been flexible, innovative, and resilient and found ways to insure we continued our standard of excellence in education necessary to retain our STAR 4 rating. This success is measured by the Work Sampling and Ounce (WSS/O) assessment tool, which is a curriculum embedded performance assessment tool teachers use to assess their students’ developmental stages. In addition, the students will improve their English language fluency through our language immersion program.
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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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**

- **TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS**