

## GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- The Chester County Community Foundation **connects people who care with the causes that matter**, so their philanthropy makes a difference **now & forever**.
- We are **a collection of Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds** with **\$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 9/13)

- ◇ For eligibility in this grant program, nonprofits must be **located in & serve Chester County**.
- ◇ Nonprofits **budgets** must be **\$500,000 or less**.
- ◇ The goal of capacity building grants is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the region**, see page 4 for more details on the areas including:
  - Mission, Vision & Strategy
  - Governance & Leadership
  - Partnerships & Collaborations
  - Operations & Technology
  - Fundraising, Development & Marketing
- ◇ Proposals submitted between **July 1 - Sept. 13** are 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

## Contact Information

Organization Name: Dr. Raymond A. Fischer  
Address: 125 Bell Tower Lane  
Phone: (717) 947-0075  
Website: [www.oxfordeducationalfoundation.org](http://www.oxfordeducationalfoundation.org)  
Year Incorporated: 1994  
FEIN: 23-2774066

ED/CEO Name: Dr. Raymond A. Fischer  
Email: [rfischer@oxfordeducationalfoundation.org](mailto:rfischer@oxfordeducationalfoundation.org)  
Board Chair Name: Steve Roberts  
Board Chair Approval (check here):   
Primary Contact Name: Dr. Ray A. Fischer  
Primary Contact E-mail: same as above

## Organization Information:

### Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities       Environment/Animal Welfare       Education  
 Health       Human Services       Religion

**Mission:** The mission of the Oxford Educational Foundation is to enhance the quality of education in the Oxford Area School District (six public schools) by providing a mentoring, tutoring and classroom volunteer program for the students. The Foundation also supports professional grants for the faculty that encourage the development of innovative programs but do not replace instructional materials supplied by the school district.

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): The Oxford Educational Foundation serves students in the six Oxford Area School District's schools in southern Chester County.

**Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:** The Oxford Educational Foundation with approximately 110 volunteers serves approximately 600 students (22-23) in the Oxford Area School District in a mentoring, tutoring and classroom volunteer program. In addition, the OEF provides competitive professional grants for faculty that will fund innovative programs. In 2022-23 sixteen faculty members received professional grants that ranged between \$250 and \$1500. The impact of these grants affected approximately 4,212 students.

**Annual Budget** \$ 217,431

74% of budget for program expenses  
22 % of budget for administrative expenses  
4% of budget for fundraising expenses

100 % total

1 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff  
15 # of Board Volunteers  
110# of Active Non-Board Volunteers  
3265 # of Volunteer Hours

## Top 3-5 funding sources:

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

## **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: \$1500**

**Proposal Summary:** The Oxford Educational Foundation OEF according to its current strategic plan under the Fund Development Focus is interested in crafting a Development Plan. We find this best to consult with a professional who has knowledge with this topic. The professional would work in collaboration with our Ways and Means Committee and Executive Director. We believe that by crafting a Development Plan has the potential to impact OEF's fund raising capacity and thereby increase OEF's fiscal sustainability.

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

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

### CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FUND FOR CHESTER COUNTY CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE 2023

#### **Oxford Educational Foundation Organizational History**

The Oxford Educational Foundation (OEF) is a private non-profit community organization founded approximately 29 years ago for the purpose of assisting the Oxford Area School District. The OASD, with almost 4,000 students, is located in southeast Pennsylvania within commuting distance of cities such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Lancaster, Wilmington and Newark. As a result, this quiet, rural region with a diverse population continues to grow.

The mission of the OEF is to enhance the quality of education in the Oxford Area School District. By generating financial support to maximize the use of community volunteers/mentors in the schools and by providing professional grants to staff for innovative programs, the OEF strives to contribute to the success of Oxford students.

The OEF came to life in October of 1994 after a year of diligent work spearheaded by John Pittenger, then a resident of West Nottingham Township and former Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of PA. Well connected to important political and legal networks, “Pitt”, as he was known to his friends, knew how to get things done.

The seed that germinated into the OEF was planted a year earlier at a Hershey, PA educational leadership conference hosted by the PA Association of School Administrators (PASA) and the PA School Boards Association (PSBA). Richard Winchester, then a school board member of the Oxford Area School District and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Lincoln University, attended these mid-week sessions.

The workshop that caught Winchester’s special attention was entitled “Making an Education Foundation Work for You” – the ABC’s of how to begin and operate an educational foundation in your school district. Presented by Dr. Margaret Kuypers and George Plosa, administrators in the Hatboro-Horsham School District, this seminar covered most of the nuts and bolts.

The presenters described the origins of the public school foundation movement in places like Wisconsin and Minnesota, and explained the many ways non-profit foundations could generate support for the schools. They could, of course, attract money for special purposes, but they could also recruit parents, alumni, and retired citizens as mentors, tutors and role models, especially for children at risk.

These themes resonated with Winchester. The father of two daughters who graduated from Oxford in 1983 and 1984, he was also an educator at Lincoln University and anxious to improve the educational pipeline. Fired up by this experience at Hershey, Winchester returned to Oxford and looked for allies who might help with the birthing process.

Colleagues on the school board, Nancy Andress, Bob Domzalski and Phil Leyman were early recruits. Oxford alumni and community activists, people like James Gordon, Kathy Elters, Pam Donnelly, Etha McDowell, Rowena Jenkins, and Denise Fritsch, also signed on. Together with Pitt, Winchester and Charles Lewis, the business administrator of the Oxford Area School District, these were the people who formed the “steering committee” for the OEF.

Meeting regularly from late fall 1993 through the summer of 1994, this group, under the leadership of Pitt, found others in the community to help with the labor. School superintendent Robert Meckes, assistant superintendent, Ray Fischer, former school board member Steve Roberts, and alumni Jim McLeod and Jim Herr were among them. Perhaps most importantly, Pitt persuaded Randy Sebastian, an Oxford alumnus who Pitt mentored during his high school years and steered into Harvard Law School, to lend his professional talent pro bono.

A partner in the firm MacElree, Harvey, Gallagher, Featherman and Sebastian, Randy guided the steering committee through the maze of paperwork. Between January and September 1994, OEF By-Laws, Mission Statement, Articles of Incorporation, PA Charter as a Non-Profit Corporation, IRS 501.c.3 status, and membership application were all approved. Finally, in October 1994, the steering committee went out of existence and the first annual meeting of the OEF membership elected its first Board of Directors.

The first directors elected to three-year terms were Jim Herr, Jim McLeod and John Pittenger, for two-year terms—Kathy Elters, Robert Strong, Pam Donnelly and for a one-year term Vanessa Phipps, Randy Sebastian, and Dick Winchester. These nine in the incoming weeks would appoint another six directors as stipulated by the By-Laws. Among these were Carrie Ellen Underwood, an Oxford senior. After her graduation in June 1995, she was replaced by Nile Alford, a rising junior. The other appointed directors were: Denise Fritsch, Carl Fretz, Ray Fischer, Rowena Jenkins and John H. Ware IV.

In January 1995, the Board of Directors, now at a full complement of 15, elected officers John Pittenger, President, Jim McLeod, Vice President, Denise Fritsch, Secretary and Charles Lewis was appointed as Treasurer. A generous contribution

from the Oxford Area Educational Association and a gift from John and Marion Ware established a financial foundation for the fledgling OEF.

In its first three years, with John Pittenger as President, the Foundation formed its board committee structure, hired a Volunteer Coordinator to recruit volunteers and mentors in the schools, purchased a satellite dish for use by the schools, assisted the High School in its organization of a Career Day, attended alumni reunions, and provided an OASD and OEF bi-annual joint publication of the Oxford School News.

As the year 2012 began, the Oxford Educational Foundation was the recipient of an anonymous \$1 million gift. The gift would assist the school district in expanding its educational mission and strategic plan over the next five years. It would be used to increase technology use, update curriculum resources, provide professional development for staff, replace equipment in the music department, sponsor summer art and music academies and to refurbish each school media center with books, e-books, etc. The donors expressed great enthusiasm in being able to support the important work being done in the Oxford Schools, as well as great confidence in the leadership and staff of the OEF and the OASD to successfully implement the initiatives undertaken by this donation.

In December 2012, the OEF initiated a self-assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses of the Foundation, as well as to focus on any needs. After several months, it was concluded that an Executive Director would be able to address those needs, strengthen the organization and help provide more support to the Oxford Area School District. The Board voted unanimously to appoint to this position Dr. Ray Fischer, recently retired Superintendent of Schools and charter member of the OEF.

Recently, the OEF Board of Directors began looking for new ways to support the efforts of the school district. They are currently working to expand a list of experts who can enhance education by volunteering to be guest speakers or e-mail pen pals. Entitled "OEF CAREs" (OEF Community Adults as Resources for Education) the program allows connections to be made between careers and classrooms, which in turn will expand students' thinking beyond its four walls.

The current members of the OEF Board of Directors bring backgrounds rich in engineering, business, farming, banking and education, all of which help to meet the goals of the OEF. Investing in education is a vital part of the community. The OEF invites you to join in this mission in the Oxford Area School District so that we can continue to be "Oxford Proud".

## **Goals of the OEF according to its Strategic Plan**

**Focus Area #1** Increase Awareness **Goal:** Increase awareness by creating and compelling message that is delivered through diverse strategies to a community wide audience.

**Focus Area #2** Increase Revenue **Goal:** Build a sustainable, diverse revenue stream in a proactive manner.

**Focus Area #3** Increase Volunteerism in the OASD. **Goal:** Increase volunteer participation and utilize their talents in support of the Foundation's mission.

**Focus Area #4** increase board participation. **Goal:** Develop an active and engaged board whose members are diverse across geography, ethnicity, and age along with a leadership component to cultivate a "waiting list" of potential new board members.

## **Key Achievements**

With a strong foundation the OEF continues to build on its key achievements/accomplishments over the past 29 years by:

- Creating an Oxford Alumni data base
- Providing an Annual Report and Newsletters
- Setting up an Endowment Fund (to date, totals are over approximately \$800,000)
- Entered a relationship with the Chester County Community Foundation for training and to house about half of our Endowment funds.
- Providing teacher professional grants (since 2001, supporting innovation in the classroom with over \$306,000 in grants to professional staff)
- Strengthening mentor/tutor/volunteer program by providing over 100 volunteers
- Instituted an annual building grant to an OASD school(s) in memory of John C. Pittenger, first OEF President 1994-97
- Establishing the Randy Sebastian Volunteer Person of the Year Award in memory of Randy Sebastian
- Organizing an annual Oxford Area Education Association and Oxford Educational Foundation Breakfast (RSVP Award is awarded at this event)
- Creating an Oxford Educational Foundation website, Facebook page and (X) twitter account
- Received PA Tax Exempt status in March 2017. Renewed in 2021
- Being recognized as an Educational Improvement Organization through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, which assists in the funding of AP Chemistry Project REEL, Early College Academy, Chesapeake Bay Program, Band to Orchestra Program (Strings) and Professional Grants for STEM educators.

- Organizing a mentor, tutor, student annual picnic
- Collaborated with alumni and community members to establish scholarships for graduating seniors.
- Acting as a catalyst to connect sources of funding with special needs and projects.
- Implemented a constituent data base with Little Green Light
- Updated OEF By-laws
- Updated OEF website
- Hired a p/t Executive Director

### **Distinctiveness regarding the OEF**

#### **Mentoring, Tutoring and Classroom Volunteers**

The Mentoring and Tutoring Program serves students at the Oxford Area School District. Mentoring is provided for students who have been identified as at-risk by school counselors and teachers. Volunteer mentors meet one-on-one with at risk students weekly, either during the school day, or immediately after school. Mentoring addresses the social and educational needs across the curriculum, to improve the academic performance of the student. The volunteer tutors work one-on-one, or with small groups of students, to master the material covered in class. In elementary schools, some tutors work with every student in a class to review new material or to read, and other tutors work with the Response to Intervention students. Tutoring in the high school is provided for students whose teachers and school counselors have identified as needing additional assistance in a particular subject, and the sessions are typically one hour per week. The tutors communicate regularly with the teacher and follow the approved school curriculum. This year we have been collaborating with the Lighthouse in providing volunteers for the after-school program, specifically during Homework Help.

#### **Professional Grants for Faculty**

The OEF provides professional grants ranging from \$250 to \$1500 to the faculty of the OASD. This program was established to stimulate innovative ideas. to enhance a teacher's classroom activities. These fresh new ideas and program pilots, when tied to the educational goals of the school district, are often key catalysts for student improvement and achievement. Proposals are accepted four times during the school year. These proposals are reviewed by the building administrator and district administration to ensure that they coordinate with the curriculum. They are then reviewed by the OEF Special Projects Committee to assess how it supports the mission of the Foundation, the number of students to be served, and whether it can be replicated by other teachers. In addition, the Foundation receives a proposal from each school building on an innovative project they are working on or would like to initiate. This grant is called the John C. Pittenger grant, named after its founder and first president. In the past, grants were given for creating Butterfly Gardens, STEM and STEAM Classrooms, Breakout Kits in grades 1 and 2 and for the program on anti-bullying called Rachel's Challenge. Most recently, Forensic Kits to Penn's Grove Middle School to be inserted in their science curriculum.

#### **Leaving a Legacy Endowment**

In the spring of 2017, the Board of Directors of the OEF decided that a portion of the accumulated endowment funds would be placed with the Chester County Community Foundation. This decision was part of the overall Leaving a Legacy program to grow the endowment. The Board wanted all potential donors to know that the funds would be professionally managed. An additional part of the arrangement was the ability of the CCCF to provide ongoing assistance to the OEF to expand their role as a nonprofit organization. Beth Briglia, the now retired Vice President of Philanthropy Services, met numerous times with the OEF Ways and Means Committee and during several community roundtables during 2018 and 2019. Beth continues to meet with the OEF Board to share how each Board member can play a part in growing the Foundation and the Endowment. As of June 30, 2023, the OEF has approximately \$866,000 in their Leaving a Legacy Endowment Program. The goal is one million dollars by 2026.

## **2. Funding Request**

### **Description of Key Initiative**

#### **Crafting of an OEF Development Plan**

**Specific Needs and Issues to be addressed.**

The OEF is interested in crafting a Development Plan. This would be in line with one of our actions in the Fund Development Focus area in our Strategic Plan

### **C. Capacity Building Grant Proposals:**

#### **How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?**

As the organization continues to grow, we aim to have a professional Development Plan as we move forward. We believe that this plan could assist us that will continue to build relationships. In addition, it can involve strategic targeting of prospective donors, clear and impactful communications, and strong internal structures that support philanthropy. We continue to discuss sustainability and feel this plan in tandem with our strategic plan would position the OEF well into the future.

#### **Why is important to fund now**

In order for the OEF to sustain itself in the future we feel that a well-crafted Development Plan would be of great value. The plan would assist us in analyzing our internal and external environments. We would reflect on our current fundraising goals, any budget gaps in our programming, list of past and planned giving events and an inventory of our social media and marketing analysis. It would also have the Foundation consider the current economic climate, trending social issues, and any competition from other non-profits in our field of education.

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

The impact of a Development Plan will be measured by a well-managed funding stream that will sustain the OEF's mission in the years to come. We will be able to evaluate our progress by reviewing donor retention rates, the number of new donors to the organization and fundraising activities.

#### **Description of the expected activities: timeline and costs to implement the initiative**

The OEF is interested in hiring a consultant firm to work in collaboration with our Ways and Means Committee and Executive Director to craft a Development Plan. Please see consultant's proposal.