

## 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: Steel City Blues Society  
Address: PO Box 553, Phoenixville PA 19460  
Phone: 215 421 6759  
Website: [www.pvilleblues.org](http://www.pvilleblues.org)  
Year Incorporated: 2010  
FEIN: 27-2136636  
[jrdiguisepp@gmail.com](mailto:jrdiguisepp@gmail.com)

ED/CEO Name: James DiGuiseppe  
ED/CEO E-mail: [jrdiguisepp@gmail.com](mailto:jrdiguisepp@gmail.com)  
Board Chair Name: James DiGuiseppe  
Board Chair Approval (check here):   
Primary Contact Name: James DiGuiseppe  
Primary Contact E-mail:

## Organization Information:

### Field/s of Interest:

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

**Mission: From our love of music and our belief that music is best shared in a community came the founding of The Steel City Blues Society. Our nonprofit organization works to cultivate and preserve the tradition of blues music. Our mission includes helping the youth in our community discover the wonder and joy of music by raising awareness and funding organizations that focus on providing music education to our community.**

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): **The Steel City Blues Society hosts the Annual Phoenixville Blues Festival at Reeves Park in Phoenixville. While most of the 5,000 attendees are local to Phoenixville there are some that travel from out of county to attend.**

**Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: This event has become a cherished tradition, bringing together the community to celebrate the blues while making a positive impact on local charities. This Free festival only works with grants, personal, and corporate donations. ALL money raised goes to run the festival. Any excess funds are donated back to local charities. In the first 11 years, we donated \$100,000 to various local charities! Charities include Crescendo (bringing the joy of music to local children through violin), Barnstone Arts for Kids, PACS, Orion, HealthCare Access to name a few.**

|                  |   |           |                                      |
|------------------|---|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Annual Budget \$ | ___\$40,000_____                        | ___0___   | # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff |
| ___80___         | % of budget for program expenses        | ___5___   | # of Board Volunteers                |
| ___10___         | % of budget for administrative expenses | ___40___  | # of Active Non-Board Volunteers     |
| ___10___         | % of budget for fundraising expenses    | ___250___ | # of Volunteer Hours                 |
| 100              | % total                                 |           |                                      |

**Top 3-5 funding sources: Corporate donations account for 70% of our budget, Personal donations and grant about 15% each.**

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: \$ \_\_\_\$2,500\_\_\_\_\_

**Proposal Summary: My name is Jim DiGuseppe, and I am reaching out to you on behalf of The Steel City Blues Society (501c3), the organizers of the Phoenixville Blues Festival. As a dedicated supporter of the blues and local charities, your past grants have undoubtedly played a significant role in the success of our previous festivals.**

**As you may know, the festival is entirely non-profit and free to the public. To ensure its success, we are reaching out to valued partners like you to consider contributing with a grant. Your generosity will directly contribute to the festival's operational expenses, ensuring a seamless and enjoyable experience for the attendees. We believe that by working together, we can make the 12th Annual Phoenixville Blues Festival an unforgettable experience for both attendees and sponsors alike.**

**Our expenses have increased dramatically since 2010 and more recently since COVID. Everything from band fees, hospitality costs, and Borough expenses are up more than 75% over the last 5 festivals. Any funds provided will be recognized on our website and in our festival booklet.**

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

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

1. **Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness** **The Steel City Blues Society began as an idea in 2010 and has grown into one of the biggest local Blues Festivals! Maintaining our mission of providing a FREE festival has become more of a challenge, comparable for-profit festivals would charge a \$50-\$100 admission for the talented performers we select. However, we have held to our mission and have been able to support, through volunteers, this free festival. In fact, we donate on average, about \$10,000 a year back to local charities. We are very proud of the work performed by a select few core volunteer members and those that volunteer the day of to assist with all that needs to happen to make the festival work!**

### 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

**Any Grant money provided will be greatly appreciated and directly applied to our many expenses. Our expenses include Borough Fees, Bands, Sound Management, Insurance, Hospitality, Porta Potties, T Shirts, Lighting/Tents, Hotel, Supplies, Advertising, Trash services and cleaning items. While the festival is about 6 months away the budgeting requires funds as soon as possible. Many of the expenses present themselves well before the festival. The 5,000 attendees and 100,000 annual website hits during the year support the quality and value we provide. We strive to not just be another blues festival but solicit national and local acts many of which do not typically play for a free festival. We gauge success by the number of attendees and ultimately how much money we raise and subsequently donate to local charities.**

- *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 **attached**
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations **attached**
3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available **2023 filing**
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date **budget attached**
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. **This is our 12<sup>th</sup> year and we have worked out the kinks through sheer redundancy! While we do not have a formal plan, we did create a “How to run a Blues Festival” guideline to make sure cover all of the necessary tasks.**

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(610) 696-8211 [grants@chescof.org](mailto:grants@chescof.org) with questions.





## 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