

**MARJORIE L. AND ARTHUR P. MILLER FUND**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**FUND FOR OPEN SPACE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

Across Chester County, local citizen groups are emerging as stewards of their local land resources while other organizations with an environmental focus are forming as issue groups, non-profit agencies, and municipal land trusts. Other non-profits serve as stewards for important parcels of land being used in creative ways for education and demonstration purposes. Each community has valuable resources that are worthy of being preserved—streams, wetlands, green space, areas important to wildlife, scenic vistas, and areas of historic or community significance.

The Chester County Community Foundation is now accepting applications for the Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Fund. ***One challenge grant of up to \$2,500*** is available each year to support a non-profit organization which provides creative solutions to open space preservation and the wise use of environmental resources. The challenge portion of this grant can be met through such diverse means as new forms of in-kind donations and volunteer support and/or new grant dollars. The Miller grant can be used for the following:

- **The creation of a park, trail, or recreation area**
- **A public or school-based environmental education effort**
- **Research and publication about an important environmental issue**
- **Environmental enhancement and preservation of a significant site**
- **Volunteer and leadership development**
- **A demonstration project with wide-use application**

Successful projects will be those that:

- **Involve collaboration with environmental agencies & organizations**
- **Demonstrate high impact relative to the dollars expended**
- **Are of a lasting nature.**

Programs with a significant educational component are encouraged.

Proposals will be accepted until **Friday, September 13**. Upon review of the initial proposals, a site visit may be conducted of the finalists. The grant will be awarded in November.

Please use the attached Grant Proposal Format to apply for the grant. Please explain how you will meet the challenge component in your grant proposal narrative. Grant applications should be submitted no later than 5:00 P.M., **Friday, September 13** to: [grants@chescofc.org](mailto:grants@chescofc.org). **Subject: Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Fund Grant Application**

For more information, please contact Stephenie Stevens, Grants Director and Outreach Officer at the Chester County Community Foundation at 610-696-0501 or [steph@chescofc.org](mailto:steph@chescofc.org) Thank you!

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**Summary Sheet**

*(One page only) Note: If Philanthropy Network Common Grant Application is used, this Summary Sheet MUST accompany application. Please visit our website at [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) to obtain an electronic version of this application.*

**Date: 9/13/2024**

**Contact Information:**

Organization Name: **Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens**  
Address: **631 Berwyn Baptist Road**  
**Devon, PA 19333**

Contact Name: **Stephanie Kuniholm**  
Contact Title: **Dir. of External Relations**  
Contact E-mail:  
**stephanie@jenkinsarboretum.org**  
Fax: **N/A**  
Year Incorporated: **1976**

Phone: **(610) 647-8870 ext. 121**

Web Address: **www.jenkinsarboretum.org**

***Have you previously received the Miller Grant Award:*** Yes  No

If "Yes", please indicate date and amount of each grant, if any, received from the Foundation:

(1) Year: <b>2022</b>	Amt Rec'd: <b>\$2,000</b>	(2) Year: <b>2021</b>	Amt. Rec'd <b>\$3,000</b>
(3) Year: <b>2019</b>	Amt Rec'd: <b>\$3,000</b>	(4) Year: <b>2007</b>	Amt. Rec'd <b>\$2,000</b>

***Organizational Information:***

Geographic Area Served (*If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County municipalities served*): **Greater Philadelphia Region**

Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served: **Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens welcomes more than 85,000 visitors and 3,000 program participants each year.**

Mission Statement: **Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens celebrates the wonder of plants and place as a destination for education, conservation, and community connection.**

Organization Description: **Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens is grown in partnership with nature. Our gardens elevate plants with high ecological value, celebrating the function and beauty of native species, all while providing critical resources and habitat to local birds, pollinators, and other wildlife. The Arboretum also serves our human visitors, acting as a hub for the community to learn about and explore topics related to ecological horticulture, climate resiliency, and environmental art.**

Annual Budget **\$1,576,448**

**66 %** of budget for program expenses

**17 %** of budget for administrative expenses

**17 %** of budget for fundraising expenses

*100 % total*

**10.5** Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

**21** Board Volunteers

**52** Active Non-Board Volunteers

**20,000** Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: **Bill and Sharon Schwarze, Pamela Joy Jensen, Susan and Mark**

## Mintun, Virginia Cretella Mars Foundation, and Armstrong Foundation

### ***Proposal Information:***

Grant Amount Requested: **\$2,500**

Description of Grant Purpose: **Trail Assessment Initiative**

#### **1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness**

Jenkins Arboretum & Garden stewards 48 acres of woodlands and gardens for the education and enjoyment of our community, as well as the health of our local wildlife and waterways. Open daily with no cost of admission, Jenkins offers endless opportunities for Chester County residents to explore and experience nature in an area of dense suburban development. Through education, demonstration, and collaboration, we inspire our visitors and our community to become champions of a healthier, greener future.

#### **2. Funding request:**

**Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens respectfully seeks a grant of \$2,500 from the Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Fund to support our trails assessment initiative.** With support from the Miller Fund and in collaboration with two experienced trail design consultants, Tahawus Trails and Penn Trails, we will conduct a thorough evaluation of our entire trail system, including existing and proposed new trails. The primary goals of the project are to provide trail assessment for the existing one mile of trails throughout the gardens and to present a conceptual design for an additional one mile of new trails.

Each year, Jenkins invites more than 85,000 visitors to enjoy winding paths through woodland gardens and sunny pollinator plantings. Our trail system has evolved slowly over decades: steps have been removed, paving material was upgraded, and woodchip connector paths were added to give visitors access to new plantings. However, without a cohesive plan for our trail network, many paths are positioned on uneven terrain, intersect at awkward angles, and render certain areas of the garden inaccessible. In nearly 50 years, we have yet to conduct a comprehensive review of how our trails guide visitors through the garden. To help visualize some of the trouble spots in our trail network, we have included images of our existing trails with this proposal.

As detailed in our latest strategic plan, we are committed to improving accessibility and safety across our site. Currently, our trail system presents challenges for visitors and can be difficult to navigate. We aim for this assessment to provide expert recommendations that will enhance both safety and accessibility for our visitors while preserving the unique gardens and natural resources that define our space. The assessment will offer guidance on refining our existing trails and propose a plan to extend our network by an additional mile, opening up previously inaccessible areas of the gardens.

The new mile of trail proposed will include a path that winds through a section of the garden that runs along Berwyn Baptist Road, just below the John J. Willaman Education Center. We have been planting a collection of highly fragrant, ornamental, native deciduous azaleas under a soaring canopy of mature oak trees. Although the gardens have been developed in this area

over the past several years, we have not yet had the opportunity to lay a trail for visitor access. Working with Tahawus Trails and Penn Trails will give us a plan for creating access to this wonderful section of the Arboretum that has been hiding in plain sight for many years and will nearly double the length of our trail network within the section of garden currently open to the public. Please view the attached map to see the section of garden that would be made accessible, along with pictures of some plants featured in that area.

#### **A. Specific Chester County needs and issues addressed**

Jenkins offers a safe and welcoming sanctuary where Chester County residents can connect with both the landscape and one another. By improving our existing trail system and adding an additional mile of pathways, we will expand access to the natural world and allow visitors to fully appreciate the vibrant, forested landscapes that make our county so special. This enhancement will enable guests to explore over two miles of trails, doubling the current length of paths.

Chester County is one of the fastest-growing areas in the state, as highlighted by recent US Census Bureau data. In this rapidly developing, densely suburban setting, Jenkins provides a vital link to natural landscapes, outdoor recreation, and the numerous health benefits associated with time spent in nature.

Furthermore, Jenkins provides all of these experiences at no cost, every day of the year. We invite residents of Chester County and beyond to explore our trails and gardens, regardless of their socioeconomic background. By enhancing and expanding our trail system, Jenkins will offer even more recreational opportunities to all residents and visitors of the area, free of an admission fee. The financial support of individual donors and foundations, like the Miller Fund, is critical in providing this free access to a thriving woodland landscape.

#### **B. Organizational impact (for general operating proposals)**

The proposed trails assessment initiative has the potential to significantly enhance both our site and the visitor experience. Although often underestimated, a carefully planned trail system is essential for ensuring a rewarding visit to Jenkins. Effective trails provide stability, accessibility, and safety. After years of incremental improvements, our trail system now requires a thorough review to optimize how paths navigate our steep slopes, direct visitors, and connect different areas of the garden. A well-designed trail plan will enable us to open new sections of the garden, facilitate easier navigation, and ensure safer travel throughout the Arboretum.

Completing a trail assessment will also aid us in the completion of our Strategic Plan 2023-2027, specifically our goals to ensure that the gardens are inviting, create more opportunities for visitor engagement, and increase accessibility.

#### **C. Overall strategies to implement the organization's mission (or project)**

In 2023, Jenkins adopted a new mission statement: *Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens celebrates the wonder of plants and place as a destination for education, conservation, and community connection.* Completing the trails assessment project will significantly advance our ability to

realize this mission by expanding opportunities for education, conservation, and community engagement. Improved accessibility and enhanced connectivity through our trail system will enable visitors to engage more profoundly with the gardens and fully embrace our mission.

#### **D. Why it is important to fund this now**

Each year, Jenkins experiences a growing number of visitors to the gardens. In 2023 alone, Jenkins saw a massive increase in visitation as we welcomed 26% more guests than we had in 2022. Our community increasingly depends on our space for recreation, exercise, education, and rejuvenation. With this rise in visitation comes greater wear and tear on our amenities and facilities, including our trail system. The proposed trail assessment initiative will provide valuable insights into how best to expand or enhance our trails, ensuring we effectively manage increased use while preserving the health of our plants and landscape. Additionally, developing a new mile of trail will open up a previously inaccessible section of the garden, helping to maintain the unique and tranquil feeling of having the space to oneself. As visitation continues to grow, it is crucial to plan for an improved trail system that can accommodate our many guests.

#### **E. How do you intend to meet the challenge component of this grant?**

We plan to address the challenge component of this grant through a combination of volunteer efforts and in-kind contributions. Jenkins will benefit from the support of a civil engineer who is a dedicated advocate for this project. This expert has already generously donated numerous hours and is committed to increasing his involvement over the next year. Furthermore, he has pledged a financial contribution to bolster our efforts. Our staff, supported by our devoted volunteer team, will implement the recommendations outlined in the assessment.

### **3. Timetable, with anticipated outcomes and their relevance to the nonprofit's mission**

Jenkins has obtained a proposal from Tahawus Trails and is ready to begin work on the trail assessment immediately. Work will begin with a kickoff meeting to forge relationships between Jenkins' team and the trail consultants, followed by an assessment of documentation of trails and maps of Jenkins' site. A two-day site visit will then be scheduled for the crew from Tahawus Trails to do a thorough assessment of the trail network through the gardens as well as an evaluation of the proposed new trail. A report will then be prepared which will include: the findings from the site assessment, recommendations for trail improvements to existing trails, preliminary conceptual designs for new trails, including major work items and structures, and cost estimates for next steps.

### **4. How impact and results will be demonstrated**

The work of this project will result in a report that includes a thorough assessment of existing trails and plans for a new section of trail. We would be honored to discuss the findings of this report with the Millers once complete and would love to give them a tour of the new trail space as described in the assessment report.