

# 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 10/2/24**

## Contact Information

Organization Name: Delaware Museum of Nature and Science ED/CEO Name: Halsey Spruance  
Address: 4840 Kennett Pike, Wilmington, DE 19807 ED/CEO E-mail: [hspruance@delmns.org](mailto:hspruance@delmns.org)  
Phone: 302-658-9111 Board Chair Name: Eda Ross Montgomery, Ph.D.  
Website: [www.delmns.org](http://www.delmns.org) Board Chair Approval (check here):   
Year Incorporated: 1957 Primary Contact Name: Rebecca Stansell  
FEIN: 51-0083535 Primary Contact E-mail: [rstansell@delmns.org](mailto:rstansell@delmns.org)

## Organization Information:

### Field/s of Interest:

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

**Mission:** To ignite a life-long passion for exploring, discovering, and valuing nature and science.

### Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

We serve all of Delaware, Chester County, PA; and parts of Maryland and New Jersey

### Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

We serve approximately 90,000 individuals annually. Our main audience is children from ages two to twelve. We reach nearly 20,000 students through educational programming and efforts with at least 30% of children served coming from low-to-moderate income households.

Annual Budget \$ <u>2,973,387</u>	<u>26</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>77</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>18</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>17</u> % of budget for administrative expenses		# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>6</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses		# of Volunteer Hours
<small>100 % total</small>		

### 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:** \$ \$3,500

**Proposal Summary:** To support hands-on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) programming for young people in the Brandywine Valley and beyond, including disadvantaged children.

## Grant Narrative, Delaware Museum of Nature and Science

### 1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

Formerly the Delaware Museum of Natural History, the Delaware Museum of Nature and Science was founded in 1957 and open to the public since 1972. Nestled in the natural beauty of the Brandywine Valley, our mission is to ignite a life-long passion for exploring, discovering, and valuing nature and science. We serve over 90,000 individuals annually with over 11,000 of them from Chester County, PA.

The museum completed a major metamorphosis to its galleries and public spaces and reopened in May 2022. These renovations brought the museum into the modern age with a focus on interactivity and personal discovery.

Our goals, as per our current strategic plan, include

- Improving our financial stability
- Delivering impactful experiences for our guests and community
- Strengthening our scientific collections
- Cultivating partnerships in the community

What makes us distinct is our dedication to interactivity and discovery. It is uncommon for a museum of our smaller size to have interpretation staff available on the exhibit floor. But, by doing so, we make visits more personal, educational, and rewarding. We also have two areas dedicated to learning by action - the Nature Nook and the Discovery Gallery. The Nature Nook is a whimsical area for our youngest guests to play and learn basic science and nature concepts. The Discovery Gallery invites visitors to touch, experiment, and learn with interactive, rotating exhibits that teach STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math) concepts.

### 2. Funding request

We respectfully request \$3,500 to support educational programming at the museum.

#### Description of key educational program initiatives

Onsite Discovery Tours and off-site Mobile Museums.

- Served over 2,500 guests from Chester County schools in the past 12 months

- Designed for care centers, schools, and groups, tailored to age
- Provide about 2 hours of interactive STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math) education that meets Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards
- At least 30% of participants qualify for free or reduced lunch

#### Summer and School Day Off camps

- Camp themes range from fun with dinosaurs for our youngest guests, to STEAM-focused workshops for older participants

#### Professional development for educators

- The museum is the only provider of Quality Assured professional development programs for early childhood educators in science topics.
- Limited grant funding is available for educators of our most vulnerable populations, like Children and Families First and Head Start Programs, to attend at no cost to them.

#### Other Programs

- We host the Delaware Chapter of Teen Science Café
- We host the Wilmington chapter of Nerd Nite for adults
- Early childhood naturalist programming
- Educational birthday parties
- Student-led STEAM events for underserved audiences

### **Specific needs & issues to be addressed**

Students in our region are falling behind in the sciences. Many opportunities for higher education and lucrative employment require STEAM skills. To help our youth succeed in school and life, we inspire a love of learning through a variety of interactive educational programming. The main programs are on-site Discovery tours and off-site Mobile Museums. These programs provide 1-2 hours of STEAM education and meet Next Generation Science Standards. Between 30-45% of students served by these programs are underserved, as defined by eligibility for free-or-reduced lunch or SNAP benefits.

Topics include Amazing Animal Adaptations, How It's Made, Earth's Place in Space, and Oceans. Students are able to explore different topics through hands-on activities, interaction with educational animals, and practicing critical thinking. These programs are designed to be engaging, enhance classroom curriculum, and help the children learn something new.

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

There is a gap in STEAM opportunities for some of the most vulnerable children in our community while some of the most lucrative jobs are in science and engineering. The U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services states "Children who live in poverty ... and children with disabilities have fewer opportunities to engage in STEM learning activities than their peers." It is

imperative that children, no matter their economic status, receive enrichment to help lay the basic foundation for a successful school career.

If funded, this request will help support educational programming for children in the region regardless of household income. By inspiring young minds to pursue topics like science, math, or engineering, we're helping to increase their opportunities as they grow.

### How impact & results will be demonstrated

We measure success through number of classes reached, educator satisfaction, and students learning something new. We send surveys to teachers and students before and after the program to measure what students have learned. Educator surveys provide feedback on relevance, how valuable they found the program, and how engaged the students were in the activities.



Children learn from their older peers during a student-designed STEAM education day at the museum.



Young participants at a care center look at preserved bug and arachnid specimens during a mobile museum program.