

## 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** 2/27/2025

**Contact Information**

Organization Name: Kennett Area Community Service  
 Address: 136 W. Cedar Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348  
 Phone: 610-925-3556  
 Website: [www.kacsimpact.org](http://www.kacsimpact.org)  
 Year Incorporated: 1954  
 FEIN: 23-2215441

ED/CEO Name: Leah Reynolds  
 ED/CEO E-mail: [leah@kacsimpact.org](mailto:leah@kacsimpact.org)  
 Board Chair Name: Ana Amarante-Craig  
 Board Chair Approval (check here):   
 Primary Contact Name: Leah Reynolds  
 Primary Contact E-mail: [leah@kacsimpact.org](mailto:leah@kacsimpact.org)

**Organization Information:**

**Field/s of Interest:**

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

**Mission:** KACS' mission is to strengthen our community in southern Chester County through food, housing, crisis services and education. Our vision is a community without poverty where everyone can live well.

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

Our geographic target area includes residents of the 22 municipalities that make up Southern Chester County.

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

KACS served 6,511 unduplicated individuals in our most recent full fiscal year (10/1/23-9/30/24). The population we serve is predominantly Hispanic (88%), with smaller numbers of Non-Hispanic White (8%) and Black (3%) individuals (1% are Biracial or Other). 100% are low-income, and more than two-thirds have household incomes below the Federal Poverty Level. We serve people of all ages and offer special programs to benefit low-income seniors, whether living in communities or isolated at home. For many of the Hispanic residents we serve, public benefits such as SNAP are not available, so the safety net food and services they receive at KACS are truly life-sustaining.

<b>Annual Budget</b> <u>\$4,654,152</u>	<u>17</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>83</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>15</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>13</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>190</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>4</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>10,000</u>	# of Volunteer Hours
<i>100 % total</i>		

**Top 3-5 funding sources:**

GSK Impact Award, \$50,000, Unrestricted  
United Way of Southern Chester County, \$158,880, Food Cupboard and Social Services  
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), \$41,948, Food Cupboard  
Chester County Department of Community Development, \$120,000, Social Services  
Union Street Gallery \$60,000, Unrestricted

**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 Neil Joines Fund:** \$ 7,500 \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposal Summary:** KACS is requesting general operating support to help us meet urgent basic needs in southern Chester County. High inflation and cost of living increases have resulted in more households struggling to afford housing and sufficient food. KACS works to meet these needs and ensure that no one in our community experiences hunger or homelessness. At the same time, we are investing in several innovative programs intended to foster longer-term positive impact on the people we serve, including a New Housing Initiative (to proactively create more affordable housing options in our service area) and an expanded Getting Ahead program (with additional Staying Ahead and Financial Empowerment modules). Finally, we are currently conducting a major fundraising campaign to support the building of a new home for KACS on Cypress Street. This site will allow us room for our current programs to adapt to rising demand, provide space for Getting Ahead education and enhanced partner collaborations, and take an even more central leading community role in southern Chester County. We appreciate the Joines Fund’s consideration of support for KACS at this critical time.

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

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

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

KACS has served southern Chester County for more than 70 years, starting by collecting holiday food baskets for low-income families in Kennett Square. Today, our best-known programs provide food and housing assistance to low-income families. However, KACS is developing additional programs intended to help families build long-term financial stability and solve systemic problems causing poverty in its service area. These include Getting Ahead, an educational program designed to help low-income individuals permanently rise out of poverty, and our New Housing Initiative, a program intended to permanently increase the stock of affordable housing options in our service area so that families of all income levels can live and work here. Our short-term goal is to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry or homeless. Our longer-term goal is to address systemic poverty by working with all community stakeholders to reduce the barriers to economic stability.

### 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**
  
- *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.*

For Kennett Area Community Service (KACS), our Food Cupboard is the heart of our work. The Kennett Food Cupboard provides food and essential staples each month to food insecure households. We are open four days a week, and families may come to choose 5-7 days' worth of food for their family. Our site offers a supermarket-type layout, and clients choose their own items from an array of options in all food groups. This summer, in response to higher emergency food need in our community, we began opening our doors on Fridays to offer supplemental food to give people access to enough food to get them through the weekend. At the same time, this strategy enables us to keep our produce supplies moving through our inventory and into the hands of our participants as quickly as possible, maintaining optimal freshness and minimizing waste.

KACS has special programs ensuring that our community's seniors have access to quality food, partnering with low-income senior living center Luther House and low-income housing center Red Clay Manor to bring healthy food to residents there. Our KACS on Wheels program delivers food to homebound seniors living independently. We also maintain six Little Free Pantries

across our service area, stocked by volunteers and residents, where people can donate what they can and take what they need.

Food prices have increased by 24% since 2020 (U.S. Department of Agriculture). This dramatic increase translates directly to higher need for food support at the community level. In the fiscal year KACS just completed (10/1/23-9/30/24), we experienced a record high in Food Cupboard usage, higher even than during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. In fiscal 2019, our Food Cupboard served 2,431 unduplicated individuals. This shot up to 4,986 in fiscal 2020, then gradually abated. In fiscal 2024, it reached a high of 5,985 individuals served.

At the same time, housing costs have risen just as quickly. In Kennett Square, the average rent is \$1,818 (Apartments.com). At the time of this writing, there were only 21 available apartments in Kennett Square, only six of which were offered at a rate below \$1,818. For low-income households, these rents are extremely difficult to afford, and in many cases families must dedicate much more than the recommended 30% maximum of household income to housing costs. Even a rent at the lowest level available, \$1,350, requires an annual rent of more than \$16,000, necessitating an annual household income of almost \$50,000.

KACS offers several services intended to help families access affordable housing and prevent homelessness. Our staff provide case management, rental assistance, security deposit assistance, utility assistance, emergency hotel stays and crisis services. During the pandemic, KACS saw the number of people coming to us for assistance with housing needs increase by 50%, despite the federal moratorium on evictions. Because we serve a high number of Latino immigrants, many of our community members did not feel protected by this moratorium, nor did they have access to unemployment benefits, SNAP, stimulus payments, and other benefits that helped others to stay afloat through the pandemic. Despite the pandemic's decline, inflation and skyrocketing housing costs have caused demand for our housing services to rise sharply. The federal eviction moratorium has ended and families who cannot afford housing are now at real risk of homelessness. Our staff work intensively with every household to determine their needs and the best way to help them stay in stable housing that they will be able to sustain.

In May 2023, KACS was designated a Community Housing Development Organization, a status that makes us eligible for funding to play a larger role in homelessness prevention in southern Chester County. Our plan is to develop a portfolio of properties that KACS purchases and renovates to provide to our community as permanent affordable housing for low-income families. We expect to launch the program this fall with a donated property in Avondale and add an additional 1-2 properties each year. Over time, we expect to own and manage a number of properties that will help us make a long-term impact on the affordable housing landscape in our service area.

KACS also offers community members the opportunity to benefit from an intensive program called Getting Ahead, which is intended to equip individuals to permanently move out of poverty to stability and self-sufficiency. The Getting Ahead program ensures that the short-term support KACS offers with food security and housing is paired with a longer-term approach to changing lives and ending generational poverty. In 2024, we will be adding new components to strengthen this program and create lasting changes in the lives of participants, including an ongoing Staying Ahead monthly group and Financial Empowerment education.

KACS is proud to be a community resource and a hub for other local service organizations. As a leader of the local Southern Chester County Opportunity Network (SCCON), we collaborate with a wide range of community stakeholders to discuss and solve community problems. This year, we will be taking over the leadership of the Kennett Arts Festival from the Kennett Library. This year's event, to be held on September 20-21, will be an exciting opportunity to build bridges with even more of our neighbors.

We are working to accomplish some exciting things in the coming years. KACS is developing plans to secure a new location on Cypress Street in Kennett Square that will empower us make an even bigger impact on local hunger, homelessness and poverty. Our current building is far too small for our needs and has been plagued with fire and flood issues. The time is right for us to move to a new home that sets us up for future growth.

The new location that KACS is planning will be a major step forward for the well-being of lower-income families in our community. The larger space will enable us to expand our existing services, including food and housing assistance, as well as have dedicated space for Getting Ahead sessions. It will also include room for several community partners. We are building in space for much-needed services such as laundry and shower facilities for community residents who are not stably housed. A Campaign Committee, Campaign Finance Committee, and New Building Committee are all in place and meeting regularly to plan our new home and ensure that we raise sufficient funds for its outfitting and maintenance.

Through our combined services, KACS currently provides our service area with \$2.4 million of value annually to local residents. With a larger facility that will empower us to serve more people with additional partnerships and food distribution facilities, we will be poised to make an even bigger positive impact on our community. Your support at this pivotal time is an investment in the health and stability of southern Chester County.

KACS uses the CaseBuddy data system to track participant data across all of our programs. Our Director of Programs is responsible for assuring the quality of the data and for generating regular reports for both senior staff and Board. The Board of Directors' monthly report includes extensive data on our programs, including the number of unduplicated individuals receiving each of our services, the need for and utilization of various food supplies, and participant demographics. These figures are presented alongside the figures from the same month in the previous year for comparison, allowing us to track food prices and demand.

Our goals for 2025 are to:

- Provide at least 5,500 low-income individuals with healthy food to prevent hunger and malnutrition in our community.
- Serve at least 1,400 individuals with emergency assistance and housing services to prevent homelessness and strengthen household stability.
- Implement our New Housing Initiative with at least one additional housing unit to develop as permanent affordable housing.
- Provide at least 60 individuals with Getting Ahead education, offering Staying Ahead and financial literacy education to offer ongoing support for our participants' success.