

## GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES as of 10.1.25

### Direct Service Programs & General Operations

No deadline for DAF proposals.  
Deadlines announced thru the year  
for Directed Funds.

- ◇ Grants **focus on Chester County** causes & issues; but are not limited to Chester County.
- ◇ Charitable nonprofits working in **all fields of interest** are considered, such as:
  - Arts, Culture, Heritage
  - Education, Libraries
  - Environment, Animals
  - Health
  - Human Services
  - Social Justice, Civic Engagement
- ◇ **General operating** grants are encouraged. Clear, succinct, compelling descriptions are appreciated: mission, aims, results & impact.
- ◇ Nonprofits with **higher GuideStar ratings** receive stronger consideration. Update yours for free at <https://www.guidestar.org/>
- ◇ Proposals can be submitted **anytime all year**.
- ◇ Grant decisions are made **intermittently** all year, as Fund Advisors desire.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$2,500-\$10,000**.



### Capacity Building: Coping with Cutbacks

No deadline.  
Proposals accepted anytime.  
Reviewed 15<sup>th</sup> bi-monthly.

- ◇ Nonprofits must be **located in & primarily serve Chester County**.
- ◇ Nonprofit annual **budget** must be **\$1M or less**.
- ◇ The goal of capacity building grants is to **strengthen organizational ability to effectively achieve mission and become more sustainable** over time. Priority will be given to proposals that help nonprofits shift their paradigms with challenges and changes. Areas of focus include:
  - **Scenario & Contingency Planning**
  - **Financial Modeling**
  - **Partnerships, Collaborations**
  - **Merger**
  - **Closure**
  - **Resource Development, Revenue Diversification**
  - Mission, Vision, Strategy
  - Board Engagement, Leadership
  - Marketing & Communication
  - Operations
  - Technology
- ◇ Proposals can be submitted **anytime all year**.
- ◇ Proposals are reviewed the 15<sup>th</sup> bi-monthly.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$2,500-\$10,000**.

**As you are aware, there is ongoing uncertainty around federal funding for nonprofits. The Community Foundation is committed to supporting all organizations to be prepared.**

**We strongly encourage every nonprofit to engage in scenario planning, examine cash flow projections and assess funding risks. We have seen nonprofits explore a variety of pathways forward, such as adapting program design, reducing or merging operations and significantly diversifying revenue streams.**

Please contact Kevin Baffa, Grant Administrator or Stephenie Stevens, Grant Officer at (610) 696-8211 or [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org) with questions.

*Connecting people who care with causes that matter,  
so their philanthropy makes a difference, now & forever.*



## HOW ARE GRANT DECISIONS MADE AT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION?

The Chester County Community Foundation **connects people who care with causes that matter**, so philanthropy makes a difference **now & forever**. With **400+ charitable funds** housed under one umbrella, a single proposal provides multiple pathways for nonprofits to be considered for funding. Nonprofits are encouraged to submit proposals **throughout the year**. Grant funds are awarded from multiple funding pools:

### 1. GRANTS FROM CCCF DONOR ADVISED FUNDS (DAFS)

- **Families and individuals** establish Donor Advised Funds—endowed charitable funds invested to provide a perpetual stream of earnings to fund nonprofit grants.
- Most DAF grants support **direct service programs and general operations**.
- DAF grant decisions are made independently by donors, sometimes with guidance from Community Foundation staff, and are awarded on a **rolling basis throughout the year**.

### 2. GRANTS FROM CCCF DESIGNATED ENTRUSTED FUNDS

- CCCF Designated Entrusted Funds are stewarded by volunteer grant panels and Community Foundation staff.
- We accept **Operating & Program Grants proposals year-round**; and from time-to-time issue special, focused Calls for Proposals as new funding becomes available.
- We accept **Capacity Building Grant Proposals year-round**; and from time-to-time issue Calls for Capacity Building Proposals as new funding becomes available. Capacity building grants are intended to strengthen the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of nonprofits serving Chester County.
- Grant panels review proposals and deliberate **monthly**.

## DUE DILIGENCE

The Community Foundation is committed to making thoughtful, informed grantmaking decisions. To do so, our staff, donors, and grant panel volunteers:

- Review organizational and financial data via **GuideStar** (<https://www.guidestar.org>) and IRS Form 990.
- Review all submitted proposals, which are **publicly available** at <https://chescofcf.org/receive/find-active-grants/>.
- Conduct site visits, community research, and online research to better understand mission and impact.

**Please note: In compliance with IRS regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations; funding cannot be awarded to individuals.**

## TO APPLY

- To learn more, visit [www.chescofcf.org](http://www.chescofcf.org)
- Proposals are only accepted electronically. The format is online at <https://chescofcf.org/receive/apply-for-grants/>
- **E-mail proposals to [grants@chescofcf.org](mailto:grants@chescofcf.org)**
- Proposals are considered “complete” when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments**. Budgets and financials are important. Please include them.
- Proposals are shared electronically and on-line with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.

Please contact Kevin Baffa, Grants Administrator or Stephenie Stevens, Grants Officer at **(610) 696-8211** or [grants@chescofcf.org](mailto:grants@chescofcf.org) with questions.

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## I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)

This page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors + posted online.

Date

### Contact Information

Organization Name: Arts Holding Hands and Hearts (AHHAH) ED/CEO Name: Jan Michener  
Address: 110 East State St, Kennett Square PA 19348 ED/CEO E-mail: [jan@artsholdinghandsandhearts.com](mailto:jan@artsholdinghandsandhearts.com)  
Phone: 484-883-2367 Board Chair Name: Matt Wrabley  
Website: [www.ahhah.org](http://www.ahhah.org) Board Chair Approval (check here): ☒  
Year Incorporated: 2013 Primary Contact Name: Jan Michener  
FEIN: 46-2698782 Primary Contact E-mail: See above

### Organization Information:

#### Field/s of Interest:

|                                     |                         |                                     |                            |                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Arts, Culture, Heritage | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Education, Library         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Environment, Animals             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Health                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Human Services             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Social Justice, Civic Engagement |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Religion                |                                     | If other, please describe: |                                     |                                  |

**Mission:** AHHAH's mission is to build equity and justice by empowering youth, strengthening families, and mobilizing communities through arts, literacy, and mindfulness.

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): We serve all of Chester County, but we are primarily focused on Coatesville and Kennett.

**Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served.** (Include Chester County # &/or % served.) AHHAH works with underserved and at-risk youth in Chester County (100%), serving approximately 11,000 annually through direct programming. We currently have over 10,000 children aged 0-5 participating in our Chester County Imagination Library (CCIL) program and hundreds of youth impacted by the juvenile justice system in our Restorative Justice programs.

**Annual Budget** \$583,900 \_\_\_\_\_ 1.5 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff  
\_\_\_\_\_ 86 % of budget for program expenses \_\_\_\_\_ 7 # of Board Volunteers  
\_\_\_\_\_ 8 % of budget for administrative expenses \_\_\_\_\_ 35 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers  
\_\_\_\_\_ 6 % of budget for fundraising expenses \_\_\_\_\_ 2,300 # of Volunteer Hours  
100% = total

**Top 3-5 funding sources:** Foundations, government grants, individual donors, program income, fundraising

**This grant proposal is for:** ☒ Direct Service Programs & General Operating &/or ☐ Capacity Building

**Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation:** \$10,000

**Proposal Summary:** (a few sentences, please) AHHAH requests general operating funds to support at-risk youth in Chester County with literacy and restorative justice programming. One of our primary goals is to address the impact of trauma and Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) to help improve emotional resilience and provide pathways to productive, fulfilling futures.

## II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information in 1-3 pages. Please be brief.*

### 1. Nonprofit's overall aims, key initiatives, key achievements & distinctiveness

Since our founding in 2013, Arts Holding Hands and Hearts (AHHAH) has been guided by the vision that every child in Chester County should have the tools, opportunities, and support they need to reach their highest potential. AHHAH began by offering trauma-sensitive yoga and expressive arts to youth in detention and, seeing that more than 40% of detained youth were from Coatesville, made the community our home base, with the goal of reducing the systemic flow of children into the juvenile justice system.

Today, AHHAH delivers interconnected programs across two core areas: Youth Literacy and Restorative Justice. The focus on these programming areas creates a trauma-informed continuum of support that addresses both the educational and social-emotional needs of at-risk youth. AHHAH's literacy programs address the academic gap for children living in poverty and help lay the foundation for school readiness and long-term academic success. Our largest and most successful literacy program, the Chester County Imagination Library (CCIL), has over 10,000 active child registrations and will distribute over 120,000 books this year. Our Restorative Justice programs, including SUSO, filmmaking, and expressive arts, provide youth impacted by trauma and the juvenile justice system with safe spaces to share their stories, heal, and work toward positive futures.

AHHAH is distinct in its holistic approach, tackling the "cradle to prison pipeline" with both proactive (literacy and early childhood enrichment) and reactive (restorative justice and trauma-informed healing) strategies. This dual focus on prevention and intervention positions AHHAH as a unique leader in Chester County's efforts to break cycles of poverty, trauma, and incarceration.

### 2. Funding request

- **What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?**

AHHAH addresses two interconnected challenges facing at-risk Chester County youth – educational inequities and trauma resulting from poverty and systemic disadvantage.

In the Coatesville Area School District, over 34% of students are reading below grade level. Studies show that children who fall behind in literacy experience reduced graduation rates and dramatically higher risks of entering the juvenile justice system. AHHAH's Youth Literacy programs (including the Chester County Imagination Library, Pop-Up Lending Libraries, and other pre-K literacy initiatives) directly address this gap by providing free books, promoting early language development, and fostering a love of reading for more than 10,000 children.

Coatesville also has the highest level of poverty in the county and disproportionately high rates of violence, both contributing to childhood trauma and increased involvement in the juvenile justice system. AHHAH's Restorative Justice programs (SUSO, filmmaking, and expressive arts programming) create trauma-informed spaces where youth can process trauma, build resiliency, and develop positive pathways forward. In our Restorative Justice programs, 75% of participants identify as BIPOC, and 95% live with a disability.

Working cohesively, these programs target the root causes and impacts of trauma and inequity, ensuring that vulnerable children in Chester County are given the tools, resources, and support they need to succeed.

- **Why is it important to fund this now?**

This work is more urgent than ever. In Coatesville, children are disproportionately impacted by poverty, systemic racism, and violence. With teen pregnancy rates high, over 1/3 of students reading below grade level, and more than 40% of incarcerated youth countywide coming from Coatesville, the cycle of poverty and incarceration begins early.

At the same time, families are facing mounting economic hardship as rising costs of housing, food, and other basic essentials stretch already fragile household budgets. Children from low-income families fall farther behind academically and emotionally, with these pressures exacerbating the educational gap, increasing stress, and heightening the risk of youth entering the juvenile justice system.

Funding AHHAH now ensures that more children in Coatesville and neighboring at-risk communities can be reached with educational resources, early literacy programs, and trauma-informed interventions. Every investment in AHHAH disrupts the "cradle to prison pipeline" and creates opportunities for youth to build confidence, resiliency, and brighter futures.

- **How will results & impact be demonstrated?**

Across our two programming areas, AHHAH demonstrates results and impact in the following ways:

#### *Youth Literacy*

Goal: At-risk youth will experience improved early childhood development and long-term academic success, laying the foundation for stronger educational outcomes and equity across Chester County.

#### Outcomes:

- Over 10,500 youth will be engaged in literacy programs in 2025.
- 120,000+ books will be distributed through CCIL.
- CCIL will achieve enrollment increases in targeted at-risk communities, including Coatesville, Kennett, Oxford, and Avon Grove.

Outcomes will be measured through monthly CCIL reports.

#### *Restorative Justice*

Goal: Chester County youth involved with or impacted by the juvenile justice system will experience increased resilience, leadership, and long-term well-being.

#### Outcomes:

- Engagement of 15-20 Chester County youth on probation through our Filmmaking program.
- Engagement of 40+ at-risk school-aged girls in Coatesville through SUSO.
- Engagement of hundreds of youth through other Restorative Justice initiatives in partnership with the Chester County Youth Center.

Outcomes will be measured through:

- Attendance, retention, and participation levels.
- The quality of student projects (such as the Invisible No More documentary) and demonstration of creative and emotional growth.
- Participant surveys and feedback from Chester County Juvenile Probation documenting positive changes in resiliency, communication, and self-expression.
- Tracking future plans of participants after program completion, providing a marker of long-term impact.

We also measure the impact of our programs (specifically Restorative Justice) through the individual stories and successes of the youth it serves.

### III. ATTACHMENTS

*Email this support information. If it is on your website, please provide the URL.*

1. Copy of **501 (c) (3)** federal tax-exempt letter
  2. List of **Board** of Directors, with their affiliations **URL:**
  3. Most recent **annual report URL:**
  4. Audited or reviewed recent **financial statement URL:**
  5. Itemized **organizational operating budget** with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
  6. If capacity building initiative, **itemized budget** (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
  7. Current **strategic plan**. If your nonprofit does **not** have a current strategic plan, **explain why**.
- Visit our website to learn more at [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)
  - Proposals are only accepted electronically: <https://chescocf.org/receive/apply-for-grants/>
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