

CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date: October 3, 2025

Contact Information

Organization Name: The Brandywine Valley Chorale
Address: 703 Pheasant Run, Kennett Sq., PA, 19348
Phone: 610-347-0623
Website: thebvc.org
Year Incorporated: 2007
FEIN: 26-0471069

ED/CEO Name: Ruth Russell
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Board Chair Name: Ruth Russell
Board Chair Approval (check here): ☒
Primary Contact Name: Larry Porter
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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: Foster and share the art of choral music as well as to serve our community through:

- The pursuit of musical excellence in a wide variety of repertoire and performance opportunities
- The promotion of music education
- Cultural and charitable outreach; and
- Health and social benefits of participating in a choral community

Geographic Area Served: Primarily Chester County

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: Those who enjoy music, music students, retirement communities, choral members, other musicians in the community. Estimated annual total: 2500

Annual Budget \$ 43000	0.25	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
96 % of budget for program expenses	10	# of Board Volunteers
% of budget for administrative expenses	75	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
4 % of budget for fundraising expenses	9000	# of Volunteer Hours
100 % total		

Top 3-5 funding sources: Joines Fund, a fund of Chester County Community Foundation; Presser Foundation; CCRES; Bartlett & Company

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building ☐ or General Operating ☒?

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 3000

Proposal Summary:

Funding is requested to support our 2025-2026 concert season. We are planning to build on our past successes in support of the community with an exciting 18th year concert series. We will be celebrating America's 250th anniversary at our Spring Concert. Your grant would support expenses required to fund the planned instrumentation and concert programming.

CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

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

The Brandywine Valley Chorale (BVC) was founded in June 2007 by a group of Brandywine Valley musicians, supporters of the arts, and friends to add the art and beauty of choral music to the fine arts repertoire that is available in our area. Over the years since its creation, the BVC has grown into one of the premiere choral organizations with more than 70 members. The BVC has provided a diversity of programming from well-known classical works, such as Bach's "Magnificat", to more contemporary works by Rutter, Lauridsen, Forrest, Todd, Arnesen and others. The repertoire has included Regional and World premieres, as well as commissioned pieces by local and well-known composers. Emphasis at the performances has been to provide educational opportunities for both the singing participants and the audience members.

We have sponsored internships for university music students to participate with the Chorale as section leaders. The BVC regularly collaborates with guest soloists, instrumentalists and partner choruses.

Achievements/memorable performances that should be highlighted include:

- Performance of Donald McCullough's "Holocaust Cantata". This program honored the memory of those who were lost in the Holocaust. The music was a compilation of songs based on melodies and text written by prisoners in the concentration camps.
- Pennsylvania premiere performance of Kim Arnesen's "Christmas Alleluias" and a world premiere of "Cradle of God", a new work commissioned for the BVC to celebrate its 10 year anniversary.
- Performance of Dan Forrest's "Jubilate Deo" with full orchestra and the Unionville High School Chorale
- Performance of Beethoven's Ninth with the Kennett Symphony
- Pennsylvania premiere performance of Dan Forrest's "Lux: The Dawn from on High" with full orchestra and Unionville High School choirs. This performance focused on the topic of suicide awareness and prevention. This was a moving experience involving a choir of 120 voices and an orchestra of 23 area musicians.
- Performance of "Remembrance and Hope" with a theme centering on the Covid-19 pandemic. The concert featured two Requiems, "Requiem" by Faure and "Requiem for the Living" by Dan Forrest. The Faure piece focused on asking for the eternal rest and consolation for those who have passed (Remembrance). The Forrest piece asking for the eternal rest and mercy for the living (Hope). We were joined in the concert by the Unionville High School Chorale and a chamber orchestra of 18 area musicians.
- Performance of Karl Jenkin's "The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace" with orchestra and the Unionville High School Chorale. This was a powerful and moving work that reflects on the horror and futility of war while presenting hope for a more peaceful future. This performance involved more than 100 voices and an orchestra of 16 area musicians
- Performance of UK composer Will Todd's "Passion Music". In addition, a commissioned work for the BVC by Mr. Todd, "O Magnum Mysterium" was premiered during the concert. He performed with us on stage as our guest jazz pianist. We were joined in concert by the Unionville High School Chorale, the Kennett High School Chamber Choir, and the Pequea Valley High School Chamber Singers. For the concert, we had more than 150 singers, a jazz ensemble and a guest gospel soloist. As part of the educational experience, Mr. Todd provided a master class for the students and BVC members during his time with us.
- Performance of "Requiem in D Minor, K.626" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and "Illuminare" by Elaine Hagenberg in collaboration with the Chester County Choral Society. We were also joined in the concert by the Unionville High School Chamber Choir. For the concert, we had more than 180 singers, 4 guest soloists, and an orchestra of 29 area musicians. The performance was enthusiastically received by a record audience.

As part of its commitment to the community, the Chorale has performed many free outreach concerts in a number of venues, including Jenner's Pond, Kendall Crosslands, Traditions, Longwood Gardens, and Brandywine River Museum.

As summarized in our mission statement, our overarching goals include:

- Pursuit of musical excellence in a diversity of repertoire and performance opportunities
- Promotion of music education
- Cultural and charitable outreach

The BVC has been fortunate over its history to have the wonderful and growing support of area businesses, organizations and individuals who make our expression of choral art possible.

2. **Funding Request**

We are planning to build upon the past success and growth of the Chorale. Funding is requested to support our 2025-2026 concert season. A grant of \$3000 would play a truly critical role in support of our efforts to fund the expenses required for the planned instrumentation and concert programming.

Planned activities for this concert season include:

- December 6, 2025—Our holiday concert will feature one of the most beloved choral works of all time, Handel’s “Messiah”. We will be performing the Christmas portion of the work, as well as the “Hallelujah Chorus”. The program will also feature “Magnificat”, a major work from contemporary composer, Dale Trumbore. Trumbore’s piece is a unique response to another traditional and beloved text set by other composers. The event will also include our traditional carol sing-along. We will be joined by an orchestra of area musicians for this concert. The concert will take place at the Unionville High School.
- May 2, 2026 – Our spring concert honors America’s 250th anniversary by focusing on works by acclaimed American composers. The music explores the concept of love of one another and of the natural world. The program will feature Jake Runestad’s “The Hope of Loving” and John Corigliano’s “Fern Hill”. We will also perform several other pieces by a variety of contemporary composers, including works by Dominick DiOrio, Alex Berko, Dan Messe, and Elaine Hagenberg. We will be joined by an orchestra of area musicians for the concert. The concert will take place at the Unionville High School.

We believe that the music repertoire reflected in this year’s programming supports our mission and should reach, interest and impact members of our diverse community in the Greater Kennett Area and Chester County.