

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/>
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- ◇ 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 15th 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 to cope 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 15th bi-monthly.
 - ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$2,500-\$10,000**.
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As you are aware, there is ongoing uncertainty around federal and state funding that significantly impacts nonprofit organizations. The Community Foundation is committed to supporting a strong and resilient sector, and we encourage all organizations to be proactive in their planning.

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 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://chescof.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.chescof.org
- Proposals are only accepted electronically. The format is online at <https://chescof.org/receive/apply-for-grants/>
- **E-mail proposals to grants@chescof.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@chescof.org with questions.

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I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit www.chescocf.org

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

Date: October 7, 2025

Contact Information

Organization Name: Chester County History Center
Address: 225 N. High Street, West Chester, PA 19380
Phone: 610-692-4800
Website: <https://mycchc.org/>
Year Incorporated: 1893
FEIN: 23-1371942

ED/CEO Name: Conor Hepp
ED/CEO E-mail: chepp@mycchc.org
Board Chair Name: Holly Stoviak
Board Chair Approval (check here): ☒
Primary Contact Name: Diana Batchelor
Primary Contact E-mail: dbatchelor@mycchc.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

☒	Arts, Culture, Heritage	☒	Education, Library	☐	Environnment, Animals
☐	Health	☐	Human Services	☐	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
☐	Religion	☐	If other, please describe:		

Mission: Since its founding in 1893, Chester County History Center (CCHC) has served as Chester County, Pennsylvania's premier storyteller and historical guardian. As a nonprofit historical and educational institution, CCHC fulfills its mission to **Link the Past to the Present to Inspire the Future** by engaging with, preserving, educating, connecting, and reimagining Chester County's rich heritage alongside our diverse community.

Geographic Area Served: Chester & Delaware Counties

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. (Include Chester County # &/or % served.)

Over 15,000 constituents served every year, including 9,000 students.

Gender: 56% Female | 40% Male | 4% Other

Ethnicity: 20% African American | 10% Asian-American | 49% Caucasian | 11% Hispanic/Latino

5% Native American | 5% Other

Annual Budget \$1,438,670.00

75% of budget for program expenses

15% of budget for administrative expenses

10% of budget for fundraising expenses

100% = total

10 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

15 # of Board Volunteers

84 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

5,116 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

2024-2025 TOP FUNDING SOURCES

Kenneth Emerson	\$81,283.39
John & Holly Stoviak	\$70,000.00
Department of Community and Economic Development	\$37,764.00
Fred Beans Ford Lincoln of West Chester	\$30,000.00
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	\$20,305.00
Philadelphia Funding Collaborative	\$197,630.00
Connelly Foundation	\$20,000.00

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

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

	Contingency Planning		Partnerships, Collaborations		Merger, Closure
	Mission, Vision, Strategy		Board Engagement & Leadership		Marketing, Communication
	Resource Development		Operations		Technology
	If other, please describe:				

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

Proposal Summary: *(a few sentences, please)*

The Chester County History Center (CCHC) seeks the Chester County Community Fund's (CCCF) support for our comprehensive community programming initiative that directly benefits the community both CCCF & CCHC serves. Like CCCF, CCHC is fundamentally committed to serving all members of our community with essential services - in our case, providing accessible educational resources and cultural experiences that strengthen community bonds and enhance quality of life. Our commitment to serve all community members regardless of age, abilities, economic circumstances, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or sexual identity reflects CCCF's own commitment to equity and community service.

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

SEE ATTACHED

2. Funding request

- What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?
 - Why is it important to fund this now?
 - How will results & impact be demonstrated?
- *SEE ATTACHED***
- Additionally, for capacity building grant proposals:
 - How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?
 - How will this impact be demonstrated?
 - 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 proposal/s if applicable.

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
 - Proposals are only accepted electronically: <https://chescocf.org/receive/apply-for-grants/>
 - **Email proposals to** grants@chescocf.org
 - Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments**.
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Capacity building is about empowering nonprofits to do **more good, more effectively, and for the long term**. It strengthens an organization's ability to fulfill its mission, enhance sustainability, and better serve its community.

At its core, capacity building focuses on improving a nonprofit's internal systems, leadership, and resources so that impact can grow and endure.

Traditionally, capacity building has included efforts such as **board and staff leadership development, strategic planning, fundraising, and technology investments** to improve operations and organizational effectiveness.

Today, however, nonprofits face a rapidly changing environment. Shifts in federal policies have resulted in rapid changes at all levels and in new directions. Nonprofits must **"meet the moment" and cope with cutbacks— think differently, shift paradigms and transform how we understand and interact with the world around us...adapt how we plan, lead, fund, and collaborate.**

Capacity building can play a critical role in helping nonprofits adapt and innovate. This may include **funding scenario planning, exploring new revenue models, expanding partnerships, pursuing mergers or strategic alliances**, and other adaptive strategies that strengthen long-term resilience.

Capacity building support can take many forms, tailored to each organization's unique needs. Examples of projects that may be funded include:

- **CONTINGENCY & SCENARIO PLANNING**

Scenario Planning – Financial Modeling & Forecasting

- **PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATIONS**

Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions

- **MERGER, CLOSURE**

These unprecedented times may present the need for a merger or closure of your organization.

Contact chaya@chescof.org to confidentially discuss funding to assist in the planning or initial steps.

- **MISSION, VISION, STRATEGY**

Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning – Strategic Restructuring – Coping With Cutbacks

- **BOARD ENGAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP**

Board Recruitment – Board Engagement – Increasing Networks & Community Support - Leadership Development – Executive Transition & Succession Planning

- **MARKETING, COMMUNICATION**

Nonprofit Business Messaging & Storytelling – Re-branding – Marketing Planning & Re-Positioning – Crisis Communications Planning

- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development

- **TECHNOLOGY, OPERATIONS**

Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements

###

I. History, Goals, & Distinctiveness, and Key Achievements

Since its founding in 1893, Chester County History Center (CCHC) has served as Chester County, Pennsylvania's premier storyteller and historical guardian. As a nonprofit historical and educational institution, CCHC fulfills its mission to **Link the Past to the Present to Inspire the Future** by engaging with, preserving, educating, connecting, and reimagining Chester County's rich heritage alongside our diverse community. CCHC safeguards three centuries of history through its comprehensive collections: archival documents, photographs, and newspapers in the research library and photo archives, alongside significant artifacts in the museum.

CCHC is committed to offering educational programs and events through a historical lens that are accessible and available to all community members and to serving and supporting the diverse community of Greater Philadelphia and beyond including, but not limited to, people of all ages, abilities, economic circumstances, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or sexual identity.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 25, 2025: History Maker Awards

HISTORY LIVED, PRESERVED, UNEARTHED: A Chester County Revolutionary War Story

Those who call Chester County home know the ground beneath our feet holds centuries of secrets, whispers of lives lived and battles fought. The echoes of the Revolutionary War still reverberate in our lands and buildings, reminding us of the sacrifices made to forge our nation. Ray Bentley and Jim Moore, with their passion for history, Chester County, and their unwavering curiosity, led an excavation that brought to light Revolutionary War cannons hidden for centuries. The History Maker Awards celebrated these connected stories of history lived, preserved, and unearthed.

JUNE 2025: Juneteenth & Pride Celebrations

CCHC partnered with the West Chester NAACP and Voices Underground to welcome a panel of prominent women to explore the theme: *African American Women: Community, Arts & Culture*. This moderated conversation welcomed Dr. Felicia Bell, Dr. Imani Roach, and Patricia Wilson Aden to speak about the role and impact of the African American community – particularly women – in our communities, our art, and our culture. Additionally, we held the second edition of *Rustin: A Day of Film*. This evening of short-films highlights stories and productions that are African American and LGBTQ-centered. As part of the Juneteenth Celebrations, the History Center held walking tours in West Chester focused on the Underground Railroad and African American history.

JULY 26, 2025: Lafayette's Ball: An Immersive, Historic Experience

Lafayette's Ball celebrated the Marquis de Lafayette, hero of the American Revolution and a great friend to George Washington, and commemorated his return to Chester County in 1825. After visiting the fields of the Battle of Brandywine the morning of July 26, 1825, the Marquis and his entourage traveled to West Chester, where they participated in a parade through the town, and stopped just east of the Friends Meeting to visit the troops. The Chester County History Center paid homage to the original dinner, which Lafayette enjoyed in 1825.

SEPTEMBER 2025 – JANUARY 2026: *The Bias Inside Us*, Traveling Exhibit in partnership with the Smithsonian

The Bias Inside Us – an exhibition and community engagement project from the Smithsonian – is an exploration of the science and consequences of implicit bias and an opportunity to learn how to challenge bias in the world through awareness of one's own bias. The Smithsonian Institution awarded CCHC as the only venue in PA to host the exhibition.

NOVEMBER 2025: Revolutionary War-era Cannon Heritage Center (Capital Project)

The Chester County History Center (CCHC) will begin the construction of an outdoor Heritage Center focused on our community's rich Revolutionary War history. The centerpiece of this space will be a historically significant

Revolutionary War-era naval cannon, rediscovered after being buried for centuries. This unique project aims to create a dynamic and engaging free display that will provide community members with a unique opportunity to explore our nation's past and its relevance to today.

DECEMBER 2025: Season of Lights Festival

Chester County's vibrant community brings together a multitude of cultures, traditions, and heritages. In December, the Chester County History Center will share a spirit of unity and togetherness with *Season of Lights*, a celebration for all community members to share in the warmth of the holiday season. Each corner of the festival, to be held in CCHC's galleries, will come alive by representing the customs and traditions of various communities that call Chester County home.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

APRIL 2024: History Maker Awards - People in Medicine

The History Center recognized individuals who have significantly contributed to the medical field in Chester County. Anne Preston was the historical figure recognized with a History Maker award alongside Dr. Diana Kane as a modern history maker. CCHC also recognized the impactful kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Franny Abbott, Chester County philanthropists who have generously supported both the medical field and historical preservation of Chester County.

JUNE 2024: Rustin Day of Film

The History Center hosted its first *Rustin: Day of Film* in honor of Bayard Rustin, celebrating the stories and storytellers that elevate the African American and LGBTQ+ experiences. The History Center welcomed guests to a 90-minute block of short films curated by the West Chester Film Festival, partners of the event. June is a special month to celebrate the powerful story of Bayard Rustin, the West Chester native and openly gay Black civil rights leader who dedicated his life to a quest for racial equality, and who serves as the inspiration for this *Day of Film*.

JUNE 2024: The Brandywine Singers - Considering Matthew Shepard Oratorio

CCHC presented a collaborative production with The Brandywine Singers of *Considering Matthew Shepard Oratorio* by Craig Hella Johnson for choir and chamber instruments. This three-part fusion oratorio spoke with a fresh and bold voice, incorporating a variety of musical styles seamlessly woven into a unified whole. Johnson set a wide range of poetic and soulful texts by poets including Hildegard Von Bingen, Leslea Newman, Michael Dennis Browne, and Rumi. The performance welcomed 24 singers and 8 musicians.

SEPTEMBER 2024: Becoming Chester County en Español

CCHC continues efforts to meet the needs of the diverse community of Chester County. CCHC translated its main exhibit guide, *Becoming Chester County*, into Spanish. This guide is available in printed format, and the History Center is working on audio formats for students, teachers, community partners, and the public.

SEPTEMBER 2024: Signature Quilts Exhibit

Creating identity and memory with quilts was the focus of the *Signature Quilts* exhibit at CCHC. Two dozen quilts, most from the mid-1800s, with extensive inscriptions will be on view. Examples included recent acquisitions exhibited for the first time, along with quilts not on view for more than 30 years. Whether they are called friendship quilts, signature quilts, or album quilts, these bed coverings document for us today the individuals who might otherwise be lost to memory because they are not necessarily recorded in the public record.

2024: Campaign! Exhibit

Presidential campaigns have been historically high energy and high drama. The CCHC museum has a large collection of campaign memorabilia from the early 1800s through the early 2021s. This exhibit focused on about 125 years, from the 1840s through 1970.

DECEMBER 2024: Season of Lights Festival

In December 2024, the Chester County History Center shared a spirit of unity and togetherness with the inaugural Season of Lights, a celebration for all community members to share in the warmth of the holiday season. The festival

displayed the rich culture of Chester County's diverse population. CCHC welcomed 27 community partners, organizations, corporate friends, and individuals who took part in the event and displayed their traditions, culture, and heritage.

II. Funding request

Chester County History Center reaches more than 24,000 individuals annually through exhibitions, educational programs, community events, and research services. This growth reflects both our success and our challenge. Community demand for our programs continues to expand. Increased impact requires increased operational capacity, yet our resources have not kept pace with this welcomed and exponential growth in community need. This expansion reflects genuine community need: teachers seeking curriculum support their schools cannot provide; families seeking affordable cultural experiences that connect them to their community; researchers documenting local history before it's lost; and organizations exploring difficult conversations about identity and social change.

While grateful for project-specific grants that enable individual programs and events, we recognize these restricted funds cannot address the fundamental operational needs that make all of our work possible. Our professional staff brings exceptional expertise, and competitive compensation for this level of talent requires unrestricted operating funds that allow us to retain these professionals. Before any program reaches the public, substantial work occurs behind the scenes: researching content, developing educational materials, training volunteers, marketing to audiences, coordinating logistics, and evaluating outcomes. This essential program development work typically falls outside the scope of project-specific funding, yet without it, no program can succeed.

The challenge we face is straightforward: community demand for our services has grown significantly faster than our operational capacity to meet it. Chester County History Center is in need of general operations funding. Unrestricted funding is an investment in something more fundamental than any single program or event; it is an investment in our capacity to serve our community consistently, professionally, and sustainably over time. General operating support provides the flexible, unrestricted funding that enables us to maintain the infrastructure making quality programming possible, compensate the professional expertise ensuring educational effectiveness, and sustain the organizational stability allowing long-term planning and relationship building. This foundational support enables us to be responsive stewards of our community's trust, expanding our capacity to serve the growing number of students, families, researchers, and community members who depend on our work. We invite Chester County Community Foundation and the generous funds it represents to invest in our capacity to meet this unprecedented community demand and help us sustain the operational foundation that makes our educational programs and community service possible.

EXPECTED PROJECT RESULTS - QUANTIFIED IMPACT

- Total Community Impact: 24,000+ individuals reached annually
- 9,000+ K-12 students engaged through school visits, traveling trunks, outreach programs, and other educational programs
- 4,000 museum visitors accessing exhibits, research facilities, and collections
- 3,500 attendees at major events (History Maker Awards, Juneteenth & Pride, Season of Lights)
- 3,000+ virtual program participants through our Speaker Series and online educational content
- 1,800 individuals (500 families) served through Access Family Memberships, providing free admission to families with economic barriers
- 1,500+ participants in walking tours exploring local Underground Railroad, architecture, and community history
- 800+ attendees at *True Crime on Trial* and other regular programs
- 400 researchers utilizing our archives and library collections
- 1,000+ volunteers and community partners engaged in programs and events