

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

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Contingency Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partnerships, Collaborations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Merger, Closure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mission, Vision, Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Engagement & Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marketing, Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resource Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	If other, please describe:				

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$_5,000

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

Since 1989, Canine Partners for Life (CPL) has been partnering service and companion dogs with people who have various physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities, or who are in other situations of need, to provide them the opportunity to live a more independent life. CPL is committed to forming successful, lasting partnerships that grow and change throughout the challenges that come with living with a disability. The programs that ensure this mission is achieved, like the CPL Breeding Program, the Community and Prison Puppy Raising Programs, Advanced Dog Training Program, Team Training, and Graduate Support Program, are critical to the overall success of these partnerships. General operating support will ensure that these programs continue to develop and succeed, ultimately increasing the independence of individuals with disabilities.

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

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?

- 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**.
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- 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**.
 - 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 Kevin Baffa, Grants Administrator or Stephenie Stevens, Grants Officer at **(610) 696-8211** or grants@chescocf.org with any questions.

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



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@chescocf.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 ###

Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

History: Founded in 1989, the mission of Canine Partners for Life (CPL) is to increase the independence and quality of life of individuals with physical, developmental, and cognitive disabilities or who are in other

situations of need by providing professionally trained service and companion dogs. CPL serves clients with conditions such as muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, narcolepsy, ALS, autism, cardiac syncope, stroke, Downs Syndrome, and seizure disorders. As one of the first service dog organizations in the world to be accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI), CPL is a highly respected leader in the assistance dog industry and continues to meet the highest standards in the industry.

Goals: CPL places service and companion dogs. Service dogs benefit adults and children who have mobility impairments and balance disorders, seizures, and cardiac disorders. They are trained to perform specific tasks for their partners. Companion dogs are placed with individuals with disabilities who would benefit from the support of a well-trained dog within the home but do not require assistance in public. Facility companion dogs are placed in medical facilities, courthouses, or nursing homes, and typically work with individuals who have medical conditions or are victims of abuse or trauma. All of these dogs play a vital role in the lives of their partners by providing unconditional love and support. Each year, CPL places approximately 15 to 20 service and companion dogs, trains 60 to 80 dogs, and supports over 150 active teams. The objective of these partnerships is to enhance the quality of life of the clients through high-quality service dog partnerships. Each step of the program is designed with this purpose in mind. CPL's Breeding Program, Puppy Raising Programs, and Advanced Training Program are designed to create and prepare healthy, well-trained dogs to effectively assist individuals with disabilities anywhere they need to go. Team Training and Graduate Support Programs are designed to educate graduates on proper service dog care, etiquette, training, safety, and support.

Key achievements and Distinctiveness: Since its inception in 1989, CPL has placed more than 800 service and companion dogs nationwide. CPL stands out among other organizations for its innovation. For example, in 2006, CPL placed the first cardiac alert dog in the world. CPL is one of the few service dog providers to place full-service dogs with children as young as 12 years old, one of the first service dog organizations to establish a Prison Puppy Raising Program and remains one of the only service dog organizations that builds balance and support harnesses in-house. For several years, CPL has earned GuideStar's Platinum Seal of Transparency and Charity Navigator's 4-star ratings for demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency. This is the highest possible rating for both charity rating groups and represents CPL's adherence to sector best practices and execution of the mission in a financially efficient way.

Funding Request

a. Description of key initiatives

Each CPL dog goes through a two-to two-and-a-half-year, comprehensive, and customized training program to meet the specific needs of its human partner. CPL breeds puppies, works with local rescues and professional breeders, and participates in the Assistance Dogs International (ADI) breeding program. From 8 weeks to 6 months of age, puppies live in volunteer homes where they are socialized and learn basic obedience skills. At 6 months of age, the puppies are partnered with inmates at one of the 6 prisons that are a part of the life-changing Prison Puppy Raising Program. As the puppies are provided with the training and structure that they require, the inmates are given the opportunity to give back to the community, learn new skills, and experience the puppies' unconditional love.

At approximately 14 months of age, the dogs return to CPL to begin their advanced training. During this time, the trainers begin the partnering process. Trainers meet with each client and customize the skills of the dogs to meet their future partner's needs. This process coalesces at Team Training, the two-week period during which the newly matched teams work onsite at CPL. Team Training includes skills development, lectures, community access trips, and teaching the dog's recipient how to work with, care for, and grow their bond with their canine partner.

Graduation takes place on the last day of Team Training, celebrating the client's and dog's accomplishments and their new partnership. CPL is committed to serving their teams throughout the life of

the partnership with its Graduate Support Program. Graduate support ensures the well-being of the client and the dog by providing opportunities for follow-ups and a supportive community for the partnership to thrive.

b. Specific needs & issues to be addressed

As this grant is for General Operations, funding will be allocated to support all of the core programs: Breeding, Whelping, Community Puppy Raising and Prison Puppy Raising, Advanced Training, Team Training, and Graduate Support. It costs more than \$32,000 to breed, whelp, train, place, and provide lifetime support to each service and companion dog placed by CPL at no cost to the client. CPL's service and companion dogs are highly sought after; most successors have a wait of less than two years, but new clients who need an alert dog have an average wait of 5 years, and those who need a mobility assistance dog wait between 4-5 years. This grant would help CPL increase the number of dogs in the program while maintaining the highest standards and quality, thereby reducing the wait time.

c. Why it is important to fund this now

As the rate of disability increases, the need for service dogs grows. 28% of adults in the United States have a disability. Childhood disability continues to increase, with the prevalence of developmental disabilities in children ages 3–17 increasing from 7.4% to 8.56% from 2019-2021. There is an urgent need to ensure that these individuals are receiving the support they need to achieve their goals and live fulfilling lives. CPL clients have found that their disabilities severely restrict their ability to perform activities of daily living and to participate meaningfully in society. Service dogs provide support for children and adults with disabilities to engage in society, feeling safer and more confident.

d. How impact & results will be demonstrated

While CPL prefers to focus on the quality of its service and companion dog teams rather than the quantity trained, the success of the program is measured in a variety of ways: by the number of puppies entering our program, the number of dogs who graduate, the number of applicants who complete Team Training, the longevity of partnerships, and the number of graduates who return for a successor dog. The success of specific programs, such as the in-house breeding program and Prison Puppy Raising Program, is measured by the number of graduating dogs who come from those programs.

Success can also be measured by the rating clients receive on the CPL Certification Evaluation. CPL strives to certify and graduate 100% of participants in each Team Training class. Teams are required to recertify every 1-2 years for the life of their partnership, allowing CPL to identify possible training needs and identify new challenges. Success is measured in longevity, the number of years a team is actively working together. To improve the longevity of partnerships, the Program Team developed a formal evaluation procedure to measure a dog's mental and physical ability for service work. They conduct this evaluation with each dog prior to matching them with an applicant.

In addition to regular communication with the Director of Program and Client Services, clients submit written reports to CPL every six months regarding the health of the dog and activities of the team. CPL is also beginning to collect data from clients to quantitatively measure the ways that service dogs help them.

Most importantly, however, CPL's impact is measured through the increased independence that their clients experience. Service and companion dogs enable clients to live life more fully and pursue their personal and professional goals, and facility dogs provide comfort and support to individuals during some of their most difficult times. Barney was placed with the Montgomery County District Attorney's office in fall 2024 to provide comfort to witnesses and victims of crime. The DA office shared:

“Barney has brought immeasurable joy, comfort, and strength to our staff, victims, witnesses, and the broader community. Barney brightens the days of everyone he meets. His ability to connect with people across all walks of life has been both inspiring and healing. Most importantly, Barney has made a profound difference for victims and witnesses involved in some of the most difficult cases we handle - homicide, domestic violence,

and child abuse cases. His gentle demeanor, comforting presence, and even his playful ball-fetching have eased anxiety during interviews and courtroom proceedings. By sitting quietly at their side, Barney gives victims and family members strength in their most vulnerable moments. Barney's impact cannot be overstated, and our community is stronger because of the work you do and the dogs you provide."