



## Martin STEM Foundation Grant Application Guidelines

Martin STEM Foundation  
c/o Chester County Community Foundation  
28 W. Market Street  
West Chester PA 19382  
(610) 696-8211  
[www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)

### Ignite a Passion for Discovery: STEM Starts Early

The Martin STEM Foundation recognizes that curious young individuals who explore the world around them commonly discover an interest in science at a young age. Furthermore, attitudes toward science encountered in early adolescence are a crucial factor in determining youth's future career choices (and success) in science, technology, engineering and math.

The Martin STEM Foundation seeks to encourage excellence and innovation in the scientific, technical and creative problem-solving skills required of tomorrow's world, starting today. The Martin STEM Foundation awards grants to initiatives that support youth involvement and achievements in applied science, technology, engineering and math. A focus on digital tools, computer applications, coding/programming and robotics is emphasized. Evolutionary algorithm, evolutionary design, collaboration and cooperation are also of special interest.

This includes STEM-related activities that take place in clubs, after-school programs, summer camps, competitions, science centers, and museum programs; tutoring at community youth centers; and classroom teacher supplementary resources, training and materials.

- Geographic preference is given to Chester County PA and northern Delaware.
- Proposals are welcome throughout the year. Decisions are made quarterly.
- Grant awards typically range from \$5,000-\$20,000.
- Per IRS regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax-exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification. Applicants cannot be individuals.
- E-mail proposals to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)
- Receipt will be confirmed by e-mail.
- Questions? Please contact Stephenie Stevens at (610) 696-8211 or [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)

Thank you.

## Martin STEM Foundation Grant Application Format

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

Date: November 24, 2025

### Contact Information

Organization Name: <a href="#">Kennett After-School Association/ After-The-Bell</a>	Executive Director: <a href="#">Paola Rosas</a>
Address: <a href="#">P.O. Box 1068, Kennett Square, PA 19348</a>	ED Email: <a href="mailto:afterthebell@kcsd.org">afterthebell@kcsd.org</a>
Phone: <a href="#">610-268-5889</a>	Board Chair: <a href="#">Dr. Rudy Karkosak</a>
Website: <a href="http://www.afterthebell.org">www.afterthebell.org</a>	Primary Contact: <a href="#">Same as ED</a>
Year Incorporated: <a href="#">1998</a>	Primary Email: <a href="#">Same as ED</a>
FEIN: <a href="#">23-2984132</a>	

Have you received grant money from the Chester County Community Foundation in the past?

Yes  No  Not Sure

### Please indicate which of these priorities are embedded in your program:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Digital tools	<input type="checkbox"/> Artificial intelligence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer applications	<input type="checkbox"/> Evolutionary algorithm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer programming & coding	<input type="checkbox"/> Evolutionary design
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Math	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robotics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration & cooperation

### Mission:

#### Mission Statement for After-The-Bell:

*After-The-Bell provides a supervised after-school program of recreational, social, and academic skill-developing activities for Kennett Middle School students. The program is led by community volunteers and provided without charge.*

#### Vision Statement of the Kennett After-School Association:

*All middle school children will have a safe, enriching environment to go to after school.*

### Values:

- *Respect for self and others*
- *Caring relationships with adults*
- *Improved interpersonal & social behaviors*
- *Appreciation for volunteerism*
- *Exploration of varied opportunities*

### Geographic Area Served:

Our geographic area is the Kennett Consolidated School District, which includes the communities of Kennett Square Borough, Kennett Township, New Garden, Landenberg, Toughkenamon, and a portion of East Marlborough.

## Describe the number & type of youth to be served by this program annually

After-The-Bell serves 300-350 middle school students each year. The program is open to all students who reside in the Kennett Consolidated School District, including those who are home-schooled or attend charter schools. It is provided at no cost to any family.

In our 2024-25 program year, 40.6% of ATB students were identified as Economically Disadvantaged, 13% had Special Needs, and 27% lived in homes where Spanish was the primary language. In regard to ethnicity, 50.2% of students were Caucasian, 41.6% were Hispanic, 2% were African American, 1.7% were Asian, and 4.4% were multiethnic.

### Resources

\$10,000 How much grant funding do you seek via this proposal?

\$237,873 What is your overall budget for this program?

\$Same What is your overall budget for this year? (After-The-Bell is our only program.)

1 F/T, 5 P/T # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

14 # of Board Volunteers

116 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers (64 Adults, 1 College Student, and 52 High School Students)

2,784 # of Volunteer Hours

### Top 3-5 funding sources:

The following are grant awards we have received to date for our 2025-26 program year:

Hamilton Family Charitable Trust - \$25,000

United Way of Southern Chester County - \$19,540

CCRES - \$10,000

Applestone Foundation - \$8,750

Longwood Rotary Foundation - \$4,000

### Proposal Summary (3-5 sentences)

We are requesting funding to support our commitment to provide unique and relevant STEM activities that could potentially lead to career trajectories for many of the middle school students that we serve.

After-The-Bell was created by a caring group of people from the Episcopal Church of the Advent in Kennett Square in 1998 to keep adolescent students safe after school. While keeping students safe will always be our primary goal, we have come to realize that we have the ability to introduce students to new skills and interests in a variety of emerging and relevant genres. In particular, we believe that introducing students to STEM-related concepts and applications during the impressionable middle school years could excite passions that could change their futures.

In the fall, winter, and spring of 2024-25, we provided 11 unique STEM activities for our students during the three cycles. In our recently concluded Fall 2025 Cycle, we offered eight STEM activities, and we plan to offer many more in our Winter 2026 and Spring 2026 cycles. (We will describe some of these activities further below.) We hope you will determine that our dedication to providing a robust roster of STEM activities for our students is worthy of your funding consideration.

## Martin STEM Foundation Grant Application Narrative

*Please describe briefly, 2 pages maximum.*

### **1-What are you trying to achieve with this program, and how does this resonate with your nonprofit's mission, other programs and track record?**

After-The-Bell welcomes all students who reside in the Kennett Consolidated School District into the program. However, we are mindful that a significant percentage of these students face challenges that could impede their academic advancement. These include food insecurity, language barriers, housing issues, and, more recently, fear and stress caused by political and social issues that have personally impacted many families in the Kennett area.

While education may not be the panacea that solves every problem, we believe that introducing middle school students to relevant, viable, and potentially lucrative career trajectories in fields they may have never considered can give them hope for brighter futures. Over the years, we have been able to show students what it might be like to pursue careers in engineering, aviation, computer coding, animal care, forensics, conservation and sustainability, drone piloting, nutrition, ecosystems, and dozens more.

We have been extremely fortunate to have partnered with wonderful organizations that share our mission and our desire to introduce adolescent students to all that is possible in our evolving world. These include 4-H Penn State Extension, the Delaware Nature Society, the Stroud Water Research Center, New Garden Flying Field, The Land Conservancy, the Delaware Museum of Nature and Science, the Kennett Trails Alliance, and the Red Clay Alliance.

With the support of these organizations and the generosity of hundreds of volunteers who have donated their time to share their expertise in STEM-related fields, these are just some of the activities we have been able to provide to our students within the last year:

*4-H Veterinary Science* – With the help of 4-H Penn State Extension, students learn about the veterinary science profession. The activity offers hands-on opportunities to study the health and anatomy of animals, better understand animal-human interactions, and experience how to care for animals.

*Giving Garden* – Working with the faculty of Kennett Middle School, our students plant seeds to grow vegetables and herbs that are distributed to families in need in the Kennett area. Our students love getting their hands dirty and then watching what they have planted grow into a source of food for local families.

*Math & Munchies* - As part of our commitment to support our students' academic success, this activity was created to help students better understand math in an environment that is both fun and delicious.

*Intro to Engineering* - A hands-on activity where students work in teams to design, build, and test out creations using everyday materials. The activity focuses on problem-solving, team-building, and imagination.

*Future Aviators* – Students travel to New Garden Airfield to learn about aviation and the basics of flight. They each spend time in flight simulators and build their own rockets to launch into the sky.

*Explore KMS Ecosystems* - Through a partnership with the Red Clay Alliance, students create art inspired by nature. They also learn about the natural environment surrounding Kennett Middle School, including bird and animal habitats, water resources, and all manner of flora and fauna.

### **2-How will you discern the impact and results of this program?**

We are extremely proud of the STEM-related opportunities we have been able to offer students over the years and look forward to introducing new activities exploring emerging STEM fields in the years to come. This is only possible through our efforts to maintain After-The-Bell as a thriving program where students feel safe, have fun, and have the chance to engage in meaningful activities.

To continually enhance the success of After-The-Bell, we establish a series of goals at the beginning of each program year designed to address challenges, build on our accomplishments, and ensure that the program remains worthwhile and relevant to the students we serve. At the end of the year, we determine the success of our efforts regarding each goal. The following were some of the key goals and the outcomes we realized in 2024-25:

1. **Goal** – As always, our primary goal is to offer a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment for middle school students to engage in meaningful activities after school.

**Outcome** – 2024-25 proved to be a complicated year for many of our After-The-Bell students, and our final numbers were impacted by these complications. Our Fall 2024 Cycle was extremely successful, with a large number of enthusiastic students in attendance. However, national political and social changes that occurred in January directly impacted our attendance, specifically pertaining to students from migrant families. Many migrant students opted not to attend due to these concerns, leading to a 16% decline in our population as compared to the previous year.

2. **Goal** – A primary goal for the year is the compilation of a comprehensive strategic plan designed to provide a roadmap for the organization during the next five years.

**Outcome** – The *After-The-Bell 2025-30 Strategic Plan* was completed and posted on our website on July 1, 2025. The plan was written based on significant input from a variety of constituent and in-house focus groups, and was divided into the following sections: *Meeting The Needs of Adolescent Students, Program Enhancements, Volunteer Commitment, Program Leadership, Community Connections, and Financial Preparedness*. (A link to this plan is included in the email accompanying this grant application.)

3. **Goal** – A preliminary finding from the focus groups that occurred in 2023-24 was the need to reimagine and enhance our academic support activities. We plan to convene a working group to consider rebranding and redesigning these important activities.

**Outcome** – A Subcommittee of the KASA Board of Directors, entitled the *Student Support Committee*, was created and began meeting in 2024-25. The Committee is exploring ways to bolster our efforts to help struggling students via a new Homework Club and the introduction of new academic-related activities that are fun and yet helpful to students.

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

For more than a quarter century, After-The-Bell has been a safe haven for middle school students to have fun with friends after school, while learning new skills and discovering new passions. Many people in the Kennett Square area are facing difficult times right now, and we feel that continuing to offer a welcoming environment for adolescent students that prioritizes academic growth is more important than ever.

There is no question that our work has become more challenging. As we described in the Outcome of Goal No. 1 above, some migrant students have expressed concerns about social and political issues that may be impacting their families. This led to a decrease in the number of migrant students attending After-The-Bell in the Winter and Spring of 2025. Our executive director, who herself is an immigrant, took the time to reassure these families that we will keep their children safe and continue to offer them a positive, fun, and meaningful experience, without fear or stress. Happily, many migrant students returned to After-The-Bell this fall. Based on what has occurred over the last year, we feel that the work we do to provide adolescent students with a place where they can gather with friends in a safe and joyful environment is vital.

While we have never requested or received government funding for After-The-Bell, we know that many of our neighboring organizations are experiencing the loss of government funding. This certainly places additional burdens on the generous private funders that have supported organizations like After-The-Bell. Our joint resolve will help us to face these challenges as a community while we ensure that the families we serve will know that we will continue to meet their needs.

### III. ATTACHMENTS

#### *E-mail this support information*

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report and financial statement, audited if available
4. Organizational operating budget, with actual results for prior FY and current FYTD
5. If multi-year funding is requested, detailed project budget for full program
6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

- E-mail proposals are strongly encouraged to [grants@chescofcf.org](mailto:grants@chescofcf.org)
  - Receipt will be confirmed by e-mail.
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