


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.

Capacity Building: Coping with Cutbacks

No deadline.
Proposals accepted anytime.
Reviewed 15th bi-monthly.

- ◇ 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**.

- ◇ 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**.

 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@chescofcf.org with questions.



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

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



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

Contact Information

Organization Name: Kennett Education Foundation
 Address: PO Box 849, Kennett Square, PA 19348
 Phone: 610-308-7326
 Website: www.kennetteducationfoundation.org
 Year Incorporated: 2001
 FEIN: 23-3070339

ED/CEO Name: Susan Gaughan (president)
 ED/CEO E-mail: sgaughan95@verizon.net
 Board Chair Name: See president above
 Board Chair Approval (check here):
 Primary Contact Name: Grace Jennings
 Primary Contact E-mail: graceamyers1@gmail.com

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

<input 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 type="checkbox"/>	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	If other, please describe:			

Mission: Kennett Education Foundation (“KEF”) is a community-based, non-profit foundation committed to supporting and enriching the educational experience in the Kennett Consolidated School District (the “KCSD”). KEF was founded in 2001 by Kennett Square community members, many of them KCSD alumni. We strive to support our diverse student body, teachers, and staff with grants, scholarships, technology, and creative programs that enhance the educational experience at KCSD.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Kennett Consolidated School District (includes, without limitation, Kennett Square, Borough of Kennett Square, New Garden Township, and a portion of East Marlborough Township)

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. (Include Chester County # &/or % served.) The KCSD serves approximately 3,800 children in Chester County, almost half of whom are Hispanic, creating a rich multicultural population of students. Nearly a fifth of KCSD’s students are English language learners, and nearly half are economically disadvantaged. KEF supports these students, their families, and the administrators and teachers who help these students succeed. KEF therefore also aids the county as a whole, including the digital literacy coalition and local community centers.

Annual Budget \$ 225,648 (2025) 0 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
79.8 % of budget for program expenses 21 # of Board Volunteers
14.6 % of budget for administrative expenses 8 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
5.6 % of budget for fundraising expenses # of Volunteer Hours
 100% = total

Top 3-5 funding sources: Our top funding sources in descending order are (1) General and scholarship donations, (2) Fundraising (particularly the annual spring soiree event), (3) sponsorship and (4) foundation grants.

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
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<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: \$ 10,000

Proposal Summary: *(a few sentences, please):* KEF requires operating funds to support our mission of enhancing the educational experience in the Kennett Consolidated School District. KEF has no paid staff and relies entirely on volunteers, with operating costs of approximately \$35,000 for accounting expenses subscriptions, bookkeeping/Quickbooks, website maintenance, bank charges, insurance, marketing expenses and donor management, all contributing to more effective fundraising. We rely on fundraising (mainly donations, events and grants) to fund our operating costs and the cost of our programming. ***The CCCF grant will offset our operating costs so that we may continue to maintain our level of support for KCSD through our grant, scholarship and teacher recognition programs.***

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

Kennett Education Foundation (“KEF”) is a community-based, non-profit foundation committed to supporting and enriching the educational experience in the Kennett Consolidated School District (the “KCSD”). KEF was founded in 2001 by Kennett Square community members, many of them KCSD alumni. We strive to support our diverse student body, teachers, and staff with grants, scholarships, technology, and creative programs that enhance the educational experience at KCSD. This involves:

- Providing grants to teachers for innovative projects that are not in the district budget.
- Providing grants to support the various needs of students of diverse economic backgrounds.
- Giving scholarships and awards to exceptional students with financial need or who make extraordinary contributions to their schools. Also includes funding the STEPS Scholarship which covers the tuition to a trade or technical school for one graduating senior each year.
- Promoting creative programs and methods in the classroom.
- Supporting teacher recognition programs to show appreciation for the hard work our teachers are doing every day.
- Holding fundraisers, soliciting grants, and encouraging annual planned donations and memorial gifts.
- Increasing community involvement with our schools by families and businesses.

2. Funding Request: Needs, Importance, Results & Impact

What We Do: Methods, Results and Impact

(i) Grants

Our public school district includes six schools: three elementary schools, a kindergarten center, a middle school and a high school. Our grants offer opportunities for schools to fund new or existing programs that are not otherwise within the often limited public school district budget. Teachers and students have the opportunity to pilot programs that depart from past programs, and new programs have the additional benefit of aiding the district in determining what programs should be sustained. Our grants fall into four categories:

- *Promising Grants* are awarded to teachers who have innovative ideas to improve student achievement. These grants encourage teachers to bring their experience, learning and creativity directly to students. Grants have gone to classrooms for music, art, language, STEM and non-academic extended learning programs.
- *Proven Practices Grants* are awarded to teachers who have shown success with a pilot project and help them continue the effort.
- *SMART Grants* are awarded to students who show extraordinary initiative in implementing pilot efforts. The initials stand for “Students and Mentors Applying Resources Together”, and these grants embody the acronym.
- *Mini Grants* are available to KCSD staff at a maximum award of \$300 per grant and serve as a “catch-all” category. They have provided, for example, alternative seating and work stations for restless students who find it hard to sit still at traditional school desks.

Since the inception of our Grants Program, we have awarded over \$685,000 in grants. In 2025, we spent over \$44,000 on grants: 6 promising grants, 5 proven grants, 5 SMART grants, and 12 mini grants. Grants are offered year-round and applications can be submitted at any time by completing an application on our website. Highlights from past grants include:

Kennett Middle School - Thread Shed where students can “shop” for clothing and personal items in a confidential and positive environment.

Greenwood Elementary - Hydroponics Plant Table - A SMART grant in which 3 elementary students built a STEM project from scratch.

Kennett High School - A grant enabled students to attend a Model UN conference.

New Garden Elementary - STEM bins filled with science, math, and technology items to enhance learning and understanding of STEM.

Across the district, we have provided books highlighting disabilities and diversity and physical education supplies to encourage both engagement with and success in academics.

In our wider community, we supported the Digital Literacy Coalition in Southern Chester County which helps increase awareness and access to online programs, including for parent and family instruction and assistance, with the goal of closing the digital divide.

We were also able to expand our mission into the community during the pandemic and gave our first Community Grant to The Garage, a non-profit in Chester County that provides a safe space for students to study and learn outside of school hours, which funded a remote learning pod.

(ii) Scholarship and Awards

This year, KEF plans to award over \$70,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors. These high school recipients are chosen according to our guidelines by the autonomous high school scholarship committee. In addition to these scholarships, in 2019, we began annually to award the Steps to Success Scholarship to a high school graduate who plans to pursue an associate’s degree or career certificate from a community college. These funds can be used toward the expenses of tuition, fees, learning supplies and books.

(iii) Teacher Recognition

In 2024, we launched KEF Kudos, our teacher recognition program driven by online submissions by parents, students and peers. KEF Kudos celebrates our teachers and staff, with over 195 submissions to date.

Funding Request: Needs and Importance

This year, we are budgeting to fund \$49,750 in grants to educators and students, and we are projecting to award over \$70,000 in scholarships for graduating seniors. The Steps to Success Scholarship awarded in 2026 will be an additional \$12,000 commitment to fully fund an associate’s degree or career certificate at a community college or trade school to a student who may have otherwise not achieved higher education.

KEF requires operating funds to support our mission of enhancing the educational experience in the Kennett Consolidated School District. KEF has no paid staff and relies entirely on volunteers, with operating costs of approximately \$41,000 for accounting expenses subscriptions, bookkeeping/Quickbooks, website maintenance, bank charges, insurance, marketing expenses, direct mail giving campaigns, and donor

management. The website, marketing and donor management expenses allow us to promote brand awareness and events, maintain a web and social media presence and update and expand our donor database, all contributing to more effective fundraising.

Our goal this year will be to maintain our current level of grant and scholarship award funding, to apply for grants, to broaden our base of donors through digital outreach and to hold fundraising events to whatever extent possible. We hold KEF's largest fundraiser, Spring Soiree, in the springtime of each year.

Evaluation: How We Evaluate the Impact of Programs.

At the end of each year we evaluate each of our programs using the following criteria:

We assess the added value of a program. Events or efforts that have been unsuccessful are discontinued; those that work are broadened and improved.

We review the number and kinds of grants we have awarded and evaluate the outcome of our pilot programs. The biggest sign of success is when a grant is adopted by the school board and becomes a lasting feature at our schools.

We assess the progress of students who have received scholarships, making sure they have met the criteria for the award, and helping them meet those they are struggling to fulfill.

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
 3. Most recent **annual report**
 4. Audited or reviewed recent **financial statement**
 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/>
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