



JONAS C., MARIAN D., & ROBERT H. ERB CHARITABLE FUND REQUEST FOR GRANT PROPOSALS

The Chester County Community Foundation accepts applications from selected nonprofit charitable causes for the **Jonas C., Marian D., & Robert H. Erb Charitable Fund**, a fund of the Chester County Community Foundation.

Proposals are due by Friday, March 13, 2026. Upon review of the initial proposals, a site visit may be conducted of the finalists. Grants will be awarded in the fall. Grant awards typically range from \$50,000 - \$100,000.

Please use the attached Grant Proposal Format to apply for a grant.

Grant applications should be submitted electronically by Friday, March 13, 2026 to grants@chescof.org. The e-mail heading should read: Grant Proposal Submission- Erb Charitable Fund

Please note that all grant applications will be available electronically on the Chester County Community Foundation's website for additional consideration for grant funding by the Community Foundation's Donor Advised Fund Advisors.

Questions? Please contact:
Stephenie Stevens, Grants Director & Outreach Officer
Chester County Community Foundation
28 West Market Street
West Chester, PA 19382
www.chesdcocf.org
Steph@chescof.org
(610) 696-8211





JONAS C., MARIAN D., & ROBERT H. ERB CHARITABLE FUND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

I. SUMMARY SHEET

(One page only. This page will be shared with Grant Committee Members.)

Date: 3/12/2026

Contact Information:

Organization Name: Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library

Address: 1700 Markley Street, Suite 116, Norristown, PA 19401

Phone: 610-278-5100

Web Address: www.mcnpl.org

Year Incorporated: 1796

Contact Name: Karen J. DeAngelo

Contact Title: Executive Director and District Administrator

Contact E-mail: kdeangelo@mclinc.org

Has your nonprofit previously applied to the Community Foundation: Yes ___ No X

Field/s of Interest:

X Arts, Culture and Humanities ___ Environment/Animal Welfare ___ Health
___ Human Services X Education ___ Religion

Organizational Information:

Geographic Area Served:

Norristown and greater Montgomery County

Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served:

As the District Library Center for Montgomery County, Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library (MCNPL) directly serves more than 336,000 Montgomery County residents in 31 municipalities, including 66,000 residents in the Norristown area, where the library is located. Last year MCNPL served over 103,000 cardholders, circulated almost a million items, and hosted more than 43,000 residents for programs. As the District Center for Pennsylvania's third-largest county, MCNPL coordinates services for more than 875,000 Montgomery County residents. Its network includes 34 library locations, five delivery vans, three bookmobiles, Books by Mail, extensive technology resources, and numerous community partnerships.

Mission Statement:

The Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library, a gateway to lifelong learning, provides access to resources that inform, educate, entertain, and enrich people's lives.

Organization Description:

Annual Budget \$7,406,955	94	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
91.95 % of budget for program expenses	10	# of Board Volunteers
8 % of budget for administrative expenses	124	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
.05 % of budget for fundraising expenses	2,577	# of Volunteer Hours
100 % total		

Top 3-5 funding sources:

- Montgomery County
- State of Pennsylvania
- Local municipalities
- Individual contributions

Proposal Information:

Grant Amount Requested:

\$100,000

Summary Description of Grant Purpose:

Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library respectfully requests funds for the Literacy Access Expansion Project. This project will increase equitable access to education, technology, and community resources by expanding programs and services aligned with the five PA Forward literacies—Basic, Civic/Social, Digital, Health, and Financial Literacy—throughout Montgomery County. This initiative will extend library services by deploying mobile learning tools, technology resources, and targeted outreach that meet residents where they live, work, and gather.

Key project components include the installation of a Lending Library Kiosk and Drop Box and the use of a Bookworm Vending Machine to expand access to books and promote reading; portable lecterns to support civic engagement programs across community sites; Wi-Fi hotspots to increase digital access; and a Charlie Cart mobile teaching kitchen to deliver hands-on health and nutrition education. The project will also support an Outreach Project Coordinator who will build partnerships and expand programming through a new business, nonprofit, and adult education hub at the library, while RFID technology will improve the management and circulation of outreach materials and mobile resources.

Together, these investments will enable the library to reach more Montgomery County residents, strengthen community partnerships, support economic development, and deliver literacy-focused programs that support lifelong learning, workforce development, and civic and social participation across Montgomery County.



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II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Please provide the following information clearly and concisely.
Proposals of 1 or 2 pages are strongly encouraged.*

- 1. Organization’s history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness**
- 2. Funding request:**
 - A. Specific Chester County and/or Montgomery County needs and issues addressed**
 - B. Organizational impact (for general operating proposals) or project impact (for project proposals)**
 - C. Overall strategies to implement the organization’s mission (or project)**
 - D. Why it is important to fund this now**
- 3. Timetable, with anticipated outcomes and their relevance to the nonprofit’s mission**
- 4. How impact and results will be demonstrated**

1. Organization History, Goals, Key Achievements, and Distinctiveness

Montgomery County–Norristown Public Library (MCNPL) traces its origins to 1794, when the Norristown Library Company was established as a subscription library by 47 residents. Over more than two centuries, the library has expanded alongside the county it serves. In 1962, MCNPL was designated the District Center for Montgomery County, providing leadership, coordination, and shared services for the county’s public library network.

Today, MCNPL is an essential civic and cultural hub for southeastern Pennsylvania. As the District Center for Pennsylvania’s third-largest county, MCNPL coordinates services for more than 875,000 Montgomery County residents. MCNPL supports 34 library locations, operates five delivery vans, three bookmobiles, and Books by Mail, and provides extensive technology access and educational programming. Through strategic partnerships with schools, municipalities, workforce agencies, and nonprofit organizations, MCNPL delivers programs that advance literacy, workforce readiness, civic engagement, and lifelong learning.

Montgomery County’s 2050 Planning Commission projects the county population will grow by 12.7% by 2050, including significant increases in older adult populations. Current data highlight several community needs: more than one-third of residents are age 65 or older, 21% live with a disability, 11.4% experience language barriers, and 10.9% demonstrate low literacy levels, particularly in Norristown, Pottstown, Lansdale, and rural communities. Digital inequities persist as well: 12% of residents lack a computer and 7% lack home internet, disproportionately affecting lower-income households (PA CareerLink, 2024).

MCNPL is uniquely positioned to address these challenges through its countywide reach, trusted public presence, and expertise in delivering PA Forward literacy programs that integrate education, workforce development, and community engagement. In 2024 MCNPL began a major library renovation project, focused on upgrading its outdated facility to create a 21st century library for Montgomery County. The Literacy Access Expansion Project will build on this transformation by updating and improving library programs and services.

Funding Request

A. Specific Montgomery County Needs and Issues Addressed

The Literacy Access Expansion Project will expand access to educational resources and literacy programming across Montgomery County by strengthening services aligned with the Pennsylvania Library Association's five PA Forward literacies: Basic, Civic/Social, Digital, Health, and Financial Literacy.

Many residents experience barriers to transportation, internet connectivity, educational resources, and workforce services. Rural communities, lower-income neighborhoods, seniors, immigrants, and job seekers are particularly affected. This project addresses those gaps by bringing learning resources directly into neighborhoods through mobile technologies, community partnerships, and targeted outreach.

B. Project Impact

The Literacy Access Expansion Project will expand access to educational, cultural, and workforce resources by strengthening programs aligned with the five PA Forward literacies: Basic, Civic/Social, Digital, Health, and Financial Literacy.

Basic Literacy: MCNPL will install a Lending Library Kiosk and Drop Box in a high-traffic community location, allowing residents to borrow and return books outside traditional library facilities. The project will also support a Bookworm Vending Machine that distributes free books to children and families at outreach events, schools, and community programs, encouraging reading engagement and helping build home libraries.

Digital Literacy: To address the digital divide, the library will provide ten mobile Wi-Fi hotspots that residents can borrow for home internet access. These devices will support students completing homework, job seekers applying for positions online, and residents accessing telehealth, government services, and workforce training.

Health Literacy: The project will introduce a Charlie Cart mobile teaching kitchen, enabling hands-on nutrition and cooking education in libraries, schools, community centers, and ESL learning programs.

Civic and Social Literacy: MCNPL will purchase three portable lecterns to support community forums, civic discussions, and public workshops held throughout the county.



Financial Literacy and Workforce Development: MCNPL is establishing BRIDGES @ The Library (Business Resources for Innovation, Development, Growth, Enterprise, and Skills), an integrated hub for workforce development, adult education, and nonprofit capacity-building. The project will support an Outreach and BRIDGES Project Coordinator to build business and workforce partnerships and expand literacy programming. RFID technology will also be implemented to streamline circulation and tracking of outreach materials and equipment.

C. Overall Strategies

MCNPL's strategy centers on expanding literacy access by combining mobile tools, technology resources, and community partnerships. Programs will be delivered in locations where residents already gather—including schools, community centers, workforce sites, parks, and neighborhood organizations. Outreach and partnerships with educational institutions, workforce agencies, and community groups will ensure that programming is responsive to local needs.

D. Why Funding Is Needed Now

MCNPL will be re-opening its newly renovated facility in mid-2027. The Literacy Access Expansion Project builds on this transformative project by expanding and enhancing library programs, technologies, and outreach services to ensure residents throughout the county can access updated learning resources and literacy opportunities.

3. Timetable and Anticipated Outcomes

MCNPL will purchase resources for the Literacy Access Expansion Project within the year before MCNPL re-opens in its newly renovated location, scheduled for mid – 2027. An Outreach and BRIDGES Project Coordinator will be hired in 2026 and RFID implementation will be completed before the scheduled re-opening of the library.

Anticipated outcomes include increased access to books and educational materials, expanded internet access for residents, improved community engagement through civic and social programming, greater participation in nutrition and health education programs, and expanded workforce and financial literacy services. These outcomes directly support MCNPL's mission to provide equitable access to information, education, and community resources that strengthen individuals and communities.

4. Demonstrating Impact and Results

MCNPL will evaluate project success through a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures. Key metrics will include circulation data from the Lending Library Kiosk, hotspot lending statistics, attendance at literacy and health programs, community outreach participation, and usage of BRIDGES workforce services. These evaluation measures will demonstrate how expanded literacy access strengthens educational outcomes, economic opportunity, and community well-being.



III. ATTACHMENTS

Please attach the following 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. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year and current fiscal year to date
5. Itemized project budget (if applying for project-specific grant)

Note: The Philanthropy Network's Grant Application may be submitted with CCCF Summary Sheet. Please visit our website at www.chescocf.org to obtain an electronic version of this application. E-mail applications are strongly encouraged.

Please e-mail completed applications to:
Stephenie Stevens, Grants Director & Outreach Officer
Chester County Community Foundation
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THANK YOU!



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Mission...

Charitable purpose limited to education, especially those involving reading, writing and speech, with an emphasis on attending Montgomery County Community College, or similar credited institution in Chester, Montgomery, or Delaware Counties in Pennsylvania, through direct scholarships or to provide assistance to such colleges through their programs and activities, which in the discretion of the Founding Fund Advisors, make a significant impact on learning enhancement and learning skills.

About Robert H. Erb...

Robert H. Erb joined the Montgomery County Community College (MCCC) faculty in 1970 as a librarian, just 6 years after the College's founding. He often worked evenings and enjoyed helping adult students, assisting them with their research, listening to their stories, and providing encouragement. His service in the library continued for 45 years until his retirement in 2015. However, Mr. Erb's commitment to MCCC did not end with his tenure. As a passionate learner and an avid steward of his community, Mr. Erb was always looking to improve and learn more each day, and he wanted to help MCCC students do the same. He was passionate about the community college mission and equitable access to education and information for all. Simply put, Mr. Erb "wanted Montco to be a 'reflection of the community.'" That is one of the many reasons he continued his partnership with the College as a philanthropist both during and after his employment.

Unfortunately, in July of 2021, Mr. Erb passed away. Described as a gentle, friendly, and caring person, who always lived by the motto, "Simple beginnings with great endings," Mr. Erb will be missed as a physical presence on campus, but his effect on students, both through his giving as an employee and a donor, live on through the community at large in perpetuity.