



JONAS C., MARIAN D., & ROBERT H. ERB CHARITABLE FUND PROPOSAL

Contact Information

Musicopia

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Year Incorporated: 1974
FEIN: 23-7397981

ED: Catherine Charlton
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Board Chair: Richard M. Gordon IV
Board Chair Approval (check here)
Primary Contact: Kate Lombardi
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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities Environment/Animal Welfare Education

Mission: Musicopia’s mission is to provide equitable access to music education and enrichment, encouraging self-confidence, global awareness, dedication, and joy in Pre-K to 12th grade students and their communities. Since its founding in 1974, Musicopia has helped more than 413,000 children and their communities experience the benefits of first-hand exposure to the arts and is a recognized leader in rebuilding and revitalizing school music programs through a roster of professional artists sharing music from around the globe.

Geographic Area Served

Musicopia’s work in Chester County has been focused in and around Coatesville, Exton, Kennett Square, Malvern, and Paoli. Musicopia also works in Philadelphia, Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery, and New Castle (DE) Counties.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: 96% of Musicopia's students organization-wide attend under-resourced schools and live in under-invested neighborhoods. Our programs directly respond to the needs of these communities by providing safe spaces where youth can engage in music education. This not only fosters creativity but also helps students develop critical socio-emotional skills such as resilience, empathy, and self-regulation. We empower students to navigate their emotions, learn important life skills, and build healthier relationships, contributing to a more positive future for themselves and their communities. During the 2024-2025 school year, Musicopia provided culturally and musically diverse programming to 20,839 students. **Within Chester County, Musicopia served 960 students and residents last school year at 5 locations.**

Annual Budget \$ <u>2,235,769</u>	<u>13</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>80</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>26</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>12</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>44</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>8</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>170</u>	# of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

William Penn Foundation, Carnegie Hall Foundation, City of Philadelphia Overdose Prevention and Community Healing Fund

Grant Amount Requested: \$ 50,000

Proposal Summary: Musicopia reaches thousands of students each year in Southeastern Pennsylvania and Northern Delaware through in-school music education, an afterschool string orchestra program, an afterschool drumlines program, community arts programming, the Philadelphia Lullaby Project, and its Gift of Music instrument donation program. We hope to deepen our work in Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties, bringing the diverse county residents together through the shared language of music.

I. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. History, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

Musicopia was founded as Strings for Schools in 1974 by an all-female string quartet and has expanded over the past 50 years to share music and cultures from around the globe. Musicopia has a long-standing history of revitalizing music programs in schools affected by budget cuts by building and sustaining partnerships with school districts. Our programs span in-school, out-of-school, and community settings, targeting under-resourced schools and communities throughout the region.

Musicopia vision is to use the power of the arts to transform the lives of all children and youth. This is guided and informed by our belief in and commitment to our values, which are to:

- **Provide pathways to the arts for the students we serve**
- **Inspire learning through the arts**
- **Champion cultural and human diversity**
- **Promote the development of self-efficacy**
- **Create environments of mutual respect, well-being, and belonging**
- **Support students in finding safe spaces for self-expression**
- **Enrich the communities in which our students live and thrive**

Musicopia has a rich history working in Chester County. Throughout the past three years alone, we have served more than 3,700 students and residents through in-school and community-based programming. Some of the diverse cultural music and dance offerings shared with Chester County residents over the past three years include Afro-Brazilian Music and Dance, Bucket Drumming, Indian Classical Dance, Middle Eastern Music, and West African Dance and Drum.

Musicopia employs over 90 Teaching Artists, many of whom are alumni of our programs, who travel into neighborhoods throughout the region bringing music education and enrichment directly to the students and schools that need it. Our staff includes experienced educators and administrators who ensure high-quality program delivery. We have a strong community support network, including partnerships with schools, community organizations, and local government. Our Board of Directors, led by Richard M. Gordon IV, a nationally recognized educator, provides strategic guidance.

Musicopia uniquely engages with parents/guardians, families, schools, and community constituents through performances and workshops that involve families and community members, collaboration with school administrators and teachers to integrate music programs into the school curriculum, forming focus groups to ensure resident-driven programming strategies, and student mentorship programs connecting students with board members to discuss artistic interests, academic growth, and career paths.

2. Funding request

Musicopia's key programming initiatives:

- **In-school and community-based assemblies, workshops, and residencies** that champion and celebrate music and cultures from around the globe.
- **Fostering Artistry and Musical Excellence (FAME):** Offers year-round in-school and after-school music instruction.
- **Musicopia Drumlines:** After-school percussion programs for grades 6-12, founded in 2008, offering free participation. In 2023-24, we served 1,183 students across 17 school sites, providing 2,073 learning hours.

- **Musicopia String Orchestras (MSO):** Serving students aged 7-18 with group lessons, performance opportunities, and collaborations. MSO became tuition-free in the last fiscal year.
- **Gift of Music:** Over 20 years, we have collected, repaired, and placed 7,200+ donated instruments worth \$1.9 million with students, schools, and community organizations in need.
- **Lullaby Project:** Since March 2023, we have administered this program in Philadelphia, pairing primary caregivers with songwriters to create personal lullabies.
- **Walter R. Garrison Arts Leadership Academy - Rhythms for Success:** Our new permanent endowment will help us continue to grow new initiatives established in the past two years focusing on holistic out-of-school arts programming with additional elements such as mentoring, stipends for rehearsals, and college and career exploration.
- **Adopt-A-School:** 12 Title 1 schools receive instrument donations, repairs, and purchases, vocal and instrumental coaching sessions, music teacher support, and music/social dance residencies/assemblies.

Specific needs & issues to be addressed:

Musicopia programs promote the transformative power of music, value of musical discipline, and:

- **Develop crucial life skills including discipline, confidence, and teamwork**
- **Provide students with a safe space to process and express emotions**
- **Increase student self-confidence through successful musical experiences and interaction with peers/professional musician teachers**
- **Boost student understanding/appreciation of music from other cultures**
- **Enhance students' knowledge of their cultural traditions**
- **Inspire community appreciation of arts education and pride in student performances**
- **Indirectly influence student attitudes/motivation towards scholastic achievement**
- **Provide paid opportunities through performances, ensemble leadership, teacher training, and coaching**
- **Offer college and career readiness opportunities**

Why it is important to fund this now:

Musicopia is at a pivotal stage in its history as we celebrate our 50th anniversary. New Philadelphia program specific grants have provided the opportunity for Musicopia to expand into new communities and to deepen our impact in the ways most important to our constituents, but this also puts a strain on staff time and resources. Our organization was founded in 1974 working exclusively in suburban counties. We continue this work and have a significant waiting list of schools in Chester County, particularly in Coatesville and Kennett Square. Support at this time would help us expand our staffing to continue our work outside of Philadelphia, alleviating pressure and ensuring the greatest impact on our region's youth and communities.

How impact & results will be demonstrated:

Musicopia seeks feedback on all its services, which in turn, drives future programming. Evaluations are automatically distributed to teachers, students, and principals. Surveys ask open-ended and Likert Scale questions that use educational/developmental criteria to ascertain students' attainment of musical skills, increased interest in music, improved self-esteem/confidence, exposure to different cultures/musical influences.

Our Board Programming Committee also includes former and current educators/administrators who share their expertise, serving as Program Evaluators who visit schools and provide written evaluations of programs. Online collection of surveys increased survey response rates and speed of integration with program booking data in Salesforce. Programming staff/Teaching Artists/coaches receive detailed feedback immediately. Program staff follow up with teachers/administrators during/after programs to monitor implementation and course correct as needed

Musicopia identifies the following outcomes that demonstrate progress or success, based on program evaluation responses:

- Students face challenges in personal/home/school lives. Musicopia programs provide places to manage their stress and process emotions.
- Participation in Musicopia programs translates to greater confidence in general.
- Teaching Artists encourage/challenge students.
- Students learn the value of working toward a goal and recognize progress they have made.
- Musicopia's programs allow students to shine even if they struggle academically.
- Students have progressed in their musical practice and performance.

School feedback from a recently held Bucket Drumming Assembly:

"Leon provided details of what was needed to prepare, actively engaged all students and created opportunities for students with various abilities to take part. This type of programming provides our students an opportunity to engage in an area of strength and are motivated to come to attend school on the days we have our program scheduled."