



GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

February 12, 2026

Contact Information

Organization The Fund for Women and Girls	ED/CEO Name: Cheryl Brubaker
Address: 113 E Evans Street Ste A West Chester, PA 19380	ED/CEO E-mail: cburbaker@thefundcc.org
Phone: (484) 356-0940	Board Chair Name: Sandra Donahue
Website: https://www.thefundcc.org/	Board Chair Approval (check here): X
Year Incorporated: 1996	Primary Contact Name: Andrea Blue
FEIN: 76-0724241	Primary Contact E-mail: ablue@thefundcc.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Arts, Culture, Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education, Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment, Animals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> If other, please describe:			

Mission: The Fund for Women and Girls leads and unites the community through philanthropy and advocacy to ensure that women and girls have resources and opportunities to thrive.

Geographic Area Served *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):*

Chester County (Some of our advocacy work has state-wide (PA) considerations.)

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. *(Include Chester County # &/or % served.)*

In our last grant cycle, more than 61,877 Chester County community members' lives were touched through our grantmaking, education and advocacy programming. More than 42,691 (70%) identifying as female.

Annual Budget \$857,210

81% of budget for program expenses

8% of budget for administrative expenses

11 % of budget for fundraising expenses

100% = total

4 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

14 # of Board Volunteers

75 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

2,100 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

- Claneil Foundation
- Horlandia Giving Fund
- Germeshausen Foundation
- The Lily Foundation

This grant proposal is for: __ Direct Service Programs & General Operating &/or __X__ 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 checked="" 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:

As The Fund’s work has expanded beyond grantmaking to include advocacy and civic engagement, the need for strategic, audience-specific communications has outpaced current staff capacity. A \$10,000 capacity-building grant will support communications consultants to develop targeted messaging and campaign strategies to strengthen our ability to engage community members, volunteers, donors, and policymakers in advancing equity in education, health and safety, and economic stability.

II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Spring 2026 marks 30 years of The Fund for Women and Girls investing in the well-being of women and girls in Chester County. Founded in 1996 as a grantmaking organization, The Fund initially supported local nonprofits providing direct services.

In 2005, The Fund published the first [Blueprint Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Chester County](#), a comprehensive, data-driven assessment released every five years (2005, 2010, 2015, 2022). The Blueprint tracks outcomes across key domains including economic stability, health and well-being, safety from violence, educational attainment, and civic participation.

Over nearly two decades, this data revealed a consistent pattern: while urgent needs were met, many core indicators, including poverty rates, wage disparities, and access to affordable childcare, remained largely unchanged. In some areas, disparities deepened. These findings underscore a critical reality: direct services alone cannot produce lasting change without addressing the policies, practices, and norms that shape access to opportunity. In response, The Fund's work has evolved to include community education and policy advocacy alongside continued investment in nonprofits.

Our commitment to gender equity and human rights guides this work. When we refer to "women and girls," we include women, girls, and all individuals with lived female experience. Our approach is grounded in our [Human Rights Statement](#), which affirms the need for an intersectional lens and engagement of those most impacted by inequity.

To focus our efforts, The Fund advances this work through three priority areas:

1. **Equity in Education:** Expanding access to fair funding, inclusive curriculum, and supportive learning environments.
2. **Health & Safety:** Increasing access to healthcare and protection from gender-based violence.
3. **Economic Stability:** Advancing living-wage employment and access to childcare, transportation, and housing.

Within these priority areas, The Fund supports targeted initiatives that address root causes. Currently, we have...

Empower Her Vote A nonpartisan initiative that educates and mobilizes women and gender-expansive individuals to participate in the democratic process.

Vote16PA A youth-led effort to expand local voting rights to 16- and 17-year-olds while building civic leadership skills.

Paid Family Leave Advocacy to advance statewide paid leave policies that support workers and families.

Project Dignity Student-led advocacy to expand access to menstrual products in schools.

The Fund defines systemic change as measurable shifts in policy (laws and regulations), practice (institutional procedures and resource allocation), and culture (public awareness and norms). Results and impact are assessed through initiative-specific outcome measures aligned with these goals. Across all four initiatives, The Fund tracks both outputs (e.g., participation and engagement) and outcomes (e.g., knowledge gained, behaviors changed, and policy or practice shifts).

Examples of measurements include:

Empower Her Vote: pre/post changes in civic knowledge and confidence.

Vote16PA: youth participation in advocacy efforts; number of municipalities introducing or advancing youth voting rights policies; participant growth in civic leadership skills.

Paid Family Leave: legislative progress of statewide policy proposals; number of advocacy engagements with policymakers; coalition growth and stakeholder support.

Project Dignity: number of schools adopting menstrual product access policies; student advocacy participation

In addition, The Fund uses longitudinal Blueprint data to assess broader community-level trends in economic stability, health and safety, education, and civic participation over time.

CAPACITY BUILDING ASK \$10,000 for Communications Consultants

As The Fund's work has expanded to include policy and advocacy, the need for strategic, audience-specific communications has become critical to advancing systems-level change. Currently, one staff member is responsible for meeting the organization's communications needs across fundraising, community engagement, and advocacy initiatives. Advocacy planning occurs only once per month due to staff capacity constraints, and the development of advocacy materials including messaging, design, and media outreach often competes with essential fundraising and program planning activities.

This capacity gap limits The Fund's ability to consistently mobilize supporters around initiatives such as Paid Family Leave, Vote16PA, and Project Dignity, despite demonstrated community interest. For example, while The Fund's general newsletter reaches 1,762 subscribers, its newly launched advocacy newsletter has only 75 subscribers, and many of the 72 members of the Paid Leave Advocacy Group (formed within the past year) are not yet engaged as donors.

To address this need, The Fund has contracted with The Bridge Sisters, a bilingual and bicultural strategic communications firm specializing in advocacy, fundraising, and community engagement. Through this capacity-building initiative, The Bridge Sisters will develop a multi-year strategic communications plan aligned with The Fund's advocacy and fundraising goals, including messaging development, audience segmentation, campaign planning, branding alignment, and guidance across communications channels. This work will strengthen The Fund's ability to mobilize community members, engage voters and policymakers, and communicate effectively with donors and stakeholders in support of initiatives such as Paid Family Leave, Vote16PA, and Project Dignity.

The initial outcome of this initiative will be a comprehensive strategic communications plan. Implementation metrics will include:

- Increased engagement with advocacy communications (email open and click rates, social media interactions)
- Growth in volunteer participation in advocacy initiatives (e.g., Paid Leave Advocacy Group)
- Expanded subscriber base for advocacy newsletter
- Donor retention and acquisition rates
- Increased participation in civic engagement initiatives

These indicators will be monitored over time to assess the effectiveness of communications strategies in supporting The Fund's advocacy and fundraising goals.

The project began in October 2025 and will continue through September 2026 at a cost of \$2,000 per month. To date, consultants have facilitated a staff workshop to identify key messaging and developed a proposed branding guide.

Next steps include the development of a Core Identity Statement, Core Values, Unique Value Proposition, and audience-specific messaging. Following the Board's strategic planning retreat in March, draft communications strategies will be refined into a comprehensive FY27–29 communications plan aligned with the organization's strategic priorities.

III. ATTACHMENTS

Email this support information. If it is on your website, please provide the URL.

On our website:

1. List of **Board** of Directors, with their affiliations [URL: https://www.thefundcc.org/staff-board](https://www.thefundcc.org/staff-board)
2. Most recent **annual report** [URL: https://www.thefundcc.org/files/ugd/8f7c09_b201a36e9b864769ae0d97953d165bd6.pdf](https://www.thefundcc.org/files/ugd/8f7c09_b201a36e9b864769ae0d97953d165bd6.pdf)
3. Audited or reviewed recent **financial statement** [URL: https://www.thefundcc.org/financials](https://www.thefundcc.org/financials)

Attached to email:

4. Copy of **501 (c) (3)** federal tax-exempt letter
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**.

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

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

