

GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date: March 21, 2026

Organization Name: Faith on the Spectrum
ED/CEO Name: Heather Altiero
ED/CEO E-mail: heather@faithonthespectrum.org
Address: 101 Glendale Rd, Exton, PA 19341
Phone: 610-548-3047
Website: www.faithonthespectrum.org

Board Chair Name: Jessica Westfall
Board Chair Approval: Yes

Year Incorporated: 2024
FEIN: 33-1283112

Primary Contact Name: Heather Altiero
Primary Contact E-mail: heather@faithonthespectrum.org

Organization Information

Field/s of Interest:

Human Services
Health
Religion
Social Justice, Civic Engagement

Mission

Our mission is to create welcoming, inclusive communities where individuals on the autism spectrum and those with other disabilities are embraced and empowered to participate in both faith and social activities. We focus on building sensory-inclusive environments supported by sensory tools and compassionate Buddy volunteers to ensure meaningful and comfortable engagement. Through personalized support, we foster understanding, acceptance, and full participation so that every individual feels valued and included.

Geographic Area Served

Primary service area includes Chester County, PA, with programming and resources also accessible regionally and online.

Population Served & Reach

Faith on the Spectrum serves autistic children, youth, adults, caregivers, clergy, and faith-based communities.

The organization currently serves approximately **3000–5000 individuals annually** through community events, sensory-friendly programming, and Buddy-supported activities.

Approximately **80–90% of those served are Chester County residents**, with additional reach through regional partnerships and online engagement.

Organizational Snapshot

Annual Budget: \$25,000–\$50,000

Full-Time Equivalent Staff:

0 (currently volunteer-led with limited stipend/contract support)

Budget Allocation:

Program Expenses: 70%

Administrative Expenses: 20%

Fundraising Expenses: 10%

Governance & Volunteers:

Board Members: 4

Active Non-Board Volunteers: 15

Annual Volunteer Hours: ~1,000

Board Structure & Compensation

Faith on the Spectrum operates with a working board model. Board members primarily serve in a volunteer capacity; however, limited stipends may be provided for individuals who take on

defined operational or programmatic responsibilities beyond standard governance duties. All compensation is structured in alignment with nonprofit best practices and conflict-of-interest policies.

Top Funding Sources:

Individual Contributions
Foundation Grants
Faith Community Partners
Program Fees / Events (as applicable)

Grant Request

This proposal is for:
Direct Service Programs & General Operating
Capacity Building

Capacity Building Focus Areas:

Contingency Planning
Mission, Vision & Strategy
Partnerships & Collaborations
Resource Development
Board Engagement & Leadership

Grant Amount Requested: \$20,000

Proposal Summary

Faith on the Spectrum seeks funding to strengthen organizational capacity while sustaining inclusive, faith-based programming for autistic individuals and their families in Chester County. This investment will support strategic planning, financial forecasting, and partnership development to reduce funding vulnerability and ensure long-term program stability.

Additionally, this funding will help lay the groundwork for future staffing and program expansion. By building a stronger operational foundation, the organization will continue delivering high-quality, inclusive experiences that promote belonging, accessibility, and dignity in faith communities.

FAITH ON THE SPECTRUM CCCF GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Nonprofit's Overall Aims, Key Initiatives, Achievements & Distinctiveness

Faith on the Spectrum addresses a critical and often overlooked intersection: disability inclusion within faith-based and community life. Autistic individuals and their families frequently experience exclusion from religious and community spaces due to sensory barriers, lack of understanding, and limited inclusive practices.

Faith on the Spectrum works to remove these barriers by equipping communities with education, tools, and relational support that foster meaningful inclusion.

Key initiatives include inclusive worship support, sensory-friendly environments, volunteer Buddy programs, caregiver support, and community education grounded in neurodiversity affirming principles. The organization uniquely bridges human services, disability advocacy, and faith communities, meeting families where they are while also honoring their identities.

Despite operating with limited resources, Faith on the Spectrum has established itself as a trusted community partner, building relationships across families, churches, and local organizations. Demand for services continues to grow as awareness increases and families seek inclusive environments where they feel welcomed and supported.

Funding Request

Needs & Issues Addressed

Faith on the Spectrum seeks funding to:

- Sustain and adapt direct service programming amid uncertain funding environments
- Build internal capacity for financial planning, partnerships, and long-term sustainability
- Reduce reliance on limited funding sources and ensure continuity of services

Why It Is Important to Fund This Now

Small nonprofits serving vulnerable populations face increasing instability due to shifting funding sources and rising costs. Without proactive planning, organizations like Faith on the Spectrum risk service disruption.

This funding allows the organization to transition from reactive operations to a more stable, strategic model ensuring continued access to inclusive faith environments. It also positions the organization to responsibly grow in response to increasing community need.

Results & Impact Measurement

Impact will be measured through both quantitative and qualitative indicators, including:

- Number of individuals served through programs and events
- Number of faith communities engaged or trained
- Number of Buddy-supported participants
- Participant and caregiver feedback on accessibility and inclusion
- Increased board engagement and strategic implementation

These metrics will support continuous improvement and demonstrate measurable community impact.

Capacity Building Component

Impact on the Organization

This initiative will strengthen internal infrastructure, enabling leadership and the board to make informed financial and strategic decisions. It will reduce operational risk while supporting sustainable growth and long term mission delivery.

Activities, Timeline & Costs (Summary)

Activities include financial forecasting, strategic planning, partnership development, and board engagement in governance best practices.

Timeline: 6–9 months

Estimated Cost: \$15,000–\$20,000

Year 2 Vision & Sustainability Plan

As Faith on the Spectrum continues to grow, the organization is transitioning from a fully volunteer-led model to a more sustainable hybrid structure. Beginning in June 2026, a key volunteer leader will move into a paid, part-time role focused on program coordination and volunteer management, improving consistency and capacity across all initiatives.

Over the next 12–24 months, the organization aims to expand its reach by increasing the number of faith communities engaged, strengthening program consistency, and continuing to build a trained network of Buddy volunteers. Additional goals include expanding access to sensory-friendly environments and increasing participation across Chester County.

This approach reflects a thoughtful and measured path toward growth, ensuring that increased demand is met with structure, quality, and long-term sustainability.

