


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.

- ◇ 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/>
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- ◇ 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**.

Capacity Building: Coping with Cutbacks

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

- ◇ 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**.
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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
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.*

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://chescof.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.chescof.org
- Proposals are only accepted electronically. The format is online at <https://chescof.org/receive/apply-for-grants/>
- **E-mail proposals to grants@chescof.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
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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 4/28/26

Contact Information

Organization Name: The Garage Community & Youth Center ED/CEO Name: Kristin Proto
 Address: 115 S Union Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348 ED/CEO E-mail: Kristin.proto@garageyouthcenter.org
 Phone: 610-444-6464 Board Chair Name: David Kreh
 Website: www.garageyouthcenter.org Board Chair Approval (check here):
 Year Incorporated: 2001 Primary Contact Name: Kate Henson
 FEIN: 10-0007967 Primary Contact E-mail: kate.henson@garageyouthcenter.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission:

The mission of The Garage is to empower youth to pursue their potential academically, relationally, and spiritually. Our desired impact is to: help youth make wise decisions about themselves, their core convictions, their relationships, their educational pursuits, and interactions with their communities. The Garage assists students to begin a cycle of hopefulness by acknowledging and taking steps to overcome life challenges, engage in programs, trusting The Garage as a second home, taking part in shaping activities, and enjoying productive experiences.

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

Southern Chester County, primarily the Kennett Consolidated and Avon Grove school district areas.

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

In the 2024- 25 school year, The Garage served a diverse group of 462 individual students, comprising 87% Latino, 2% African American, 4% Mixed race and 7% Caucasian. For 34% of our population, neither parent graduated high school, and 91% of students are eligible to receive free and reduced lunch based on familial income as a result of living between 130-180% of the poverty level (Up to \$54,000 annual household income for a family of 4). 100% of The Garage's served population resides in Chester County.

Annual Budget \$1,578,197

85 % of budget for program expenses
 6 % of budget for administrative expenses
 9 % of budget for fundraising expenses

100% = total

6 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
 10 # of Board Volunteers
 82 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
 1,896 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

The William Penn Foundation
Hamilton Family Charitable Trust
United Way of Southern Chester County

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
<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: \$5,000

Proposal Summary: *(a few sentences, please)*

The Garage Community & Youth Center respectfully requests \$5,000 of General Operating programs support to help fund the ongoing expenses of our After-School Program in Kennett Square and Avondale locations.

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

In 2001, a local pastor and businessman saw the opportunity for a reclaimed car garage to serve a greater purpose than service vehicles. The Garage Community & Youth Center (The Garage) was born from his passion for serving the community and over two decades later, we continue to thrive in Kennett Square. This success launched the desire to open a second location to serve more youth in the surrounding communities. In 2011, The West Grove location opened its doors to local youth. The need for out of school time programming, community-based education spaces, and trusted "Third Places" for youth and families have deeply increased due to multiple factors including the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, educational shifts, and more. In 2021, The Garage expanded to a larger location in the Borough of Avondale and has transitioned services from our West Grove location. We focus on achieving the follow specific goals through our programmatic outputs:

- *Create an environment where teens feel safe and their basic needs are met:* The Garage prides itself on providing a safe, open environment, where all students are welcome, regardless of circumstances, beliefs, or abilities. We provide a "third place" outside of school and home where students feel supported physically, emotionally, and mentally.
- *Encourage students to stay in school and to continue their studies after graduation:* Garage population faces academic hurdles fueled by discrimination, language barriers, and other hurdles. We provide a support system through relationships and tangible services including computer lab access, tutoring, and internet access to assist with studies. High school-age students are encouraged to participate in our MAPS Program which will continue to assist with post-secondary navigation.
- *Promote social, and professional development:* The Garage promotes and provides healthy and impactful relationships with adults who our students can trust through mentorship, community service, and program activities. The Garage has a wide network of partners who provide presentations and programs including career insights, enrichment activities, tutorials, and more!
- *Promote economic opportunities:* Career Compass employs up to 20 students during the summer, 25-30 hours per week for 8 weeks. Program participants complete a formal application and interview process and are placed at worksites around the community based on their professional aspirations. Past host sites have included law firms, doctors' offices, educational institutions, police departments, and other private businesses. Weekly resource workshops are required for students to attend which builds further skills in financial literacy, communications, professional development, and other job and life skills.

2. Funding request

The Garage provides high-quality programming in a trusted community third space while also providing essential and everyday basic needs to a marginalized population. Our efforts are culturally appropriate for the unique community we serve. Each program provision is implemented with dignity and in a framework that is structured to provide long-term growth over continued one-time assistance. The significance of Out of School Time programming is not a new concept. These programs provide a significant return-on-investment, with every \$1 invested saving at least \$3 through increasing youth's earning potential, improving their performance at school, and reducing crime and juvenile delinquency. An investment in The Garage and the space provided, not just physically but emotionally and relationally, is vital to investing in youth and their narrative of success. We believe that all youth have the capacity for great distinction and potential and, through guidance and support, should be equipped to define their own success and create thriving lives within their communities. Therefore, The Garage desires that all middle and high school youth, in Kennett Square and Avon Grove, feel empowered to pursue and reclaim their value and purpose in the world. Empowered youth make wise decisions, have hope for their future, and will be prepared to be successful, balanced, healthy, and active members of their community.

Our current population is students 6-12th grade, ages 11-18. Out of School Time programming operates Monday- Thursday 3 PM – 6 PM during the school year and will pivot to Monday through Thursday from 11 AM – 4 PM during summer months. The Garage is excited to expand services based upon the needs of our community which are aligned with our programmatic strategies to offer the following programs:

- **Academic Support:** The Garage's daily, academic support time serves to empower students to achieve, which will open them up to further opportunities. Emphasis on academic performance is geared towards giving youth the tools they need to finish high school and be in a position where they can pursue post-secondary education or training, or gainful employment, thus empowering them to have hopeful futures and confidence in their endeavors. The Garage provides tutors to assist students with one-on-one attention and academic support.
- **Robotics:** Students meet weekly to design, build, and operate robotic systems, and prepare for competitions. Through partnerships with the Kennett Square Green Lemons Robotics team and Malvern Prep Robotics, The Garage has been excited to expand this program to include 3D Printing and TinkerCAD skill building.
- **MAPS (Motivating and Advancing Powerful Students):** We focus on advising and counseling Garage students as they prepare for and transition to life after high school graduation. MAPS offers presentations and workshop sessions related to career interests and opportunities, post-secondary education and training programs, and personal aptitude and passion identification. The Garage's Graduate Coordinator works with high school students at both Garage centers to navigate post-secondary success.
- **Driver's Education:** Reliable transportation remains a significant challenge for many of our students. Without reliable transit options, many children face difficulties in accessing essential educational and recreational opportunities. Through a partnership with the Chester County Intermediate Unit's (CCIU) Driver's Education Program at the Chester County Workforce Investment Board, The Garage supports students pursuing their Pennsylvania driver's licenses. Students who meet qualifications are enrolled in a 30-hour online learning program to learn the rules of the road and prepare for their permit exam. To date, 36 students have been enrolled in this partnership program.
- **Career Compass:** The Garage's workforce development program is an extension of our summer program opportunities. Because many of our student's families depend on them financially, summer is typically when students are not engaged with The Garage or any other support programs. Unfortunately, employment opportunities for youth are limited, and most students resort to strenuous agricultural jobs. Through Career Compass, students are hired and paid to work at host sites around the community related to their post-secondary career interests.
- **Nutrition Kitchen:** Recognizing that hunger can significantly impact a student's ability to learn and thrive, The Garage offers a daily meal to students, prepared in our commercial kitchens by a professional chef. We work with many partners including local restaurants, The Chester County Food Bank, Kennett Consolidated School District, Avon Grove School District, and surrounding grocery stores to provide food and supplies to our students regularly.
- **Garage Body Shop:** The Garage Body Shop provides weekly fitness and physical health workshops where students learn about the benefits and safety of weight lifting, proper cardio, stretching, and how to maintain healthy growing bodies. Students work together to perform physical activity but also learn trust and relational skills through a safe and comfortable workout space. Our Body Shop coordinator is a certified personal trainer who is also certified in trauma-informed physical activity, highlighting best practices which holistically serves our students as they navigate the connection between mental and physical connection.
- **Social Development Program (TOP):** The Garage received a multi-year grant through the Department of Health to provide the research-based Wyman Center's "Teen Outreach Program" (TOP) curriculum as part of our Out of School time programming. TOP is a nationally-recognized, evidence-based program empowering teens with the tools and opportunities to build social-emotional skills, strengthen relationships, and avoid risky behaviors. Interactive weekly lessons are provided by our trained Garage staff to promote core values of skill building, exploring identity and engaging with the community while lowering risks of academic course failure, school suspension, and sexual activity.
- **Makerspace:** The Garage believes that art is not a privilege, but an essential part of healthy youth development. Our programs are intentionally designed to remove barriers of cost, access, and expectation. The Garage's Makerspace includes supplies and tools for various forms of art and skills including pottery, painting, woodworking, and more. Garage students can access this space daily and work in a creative a la carte fashion and use the space for expression, problem-solving, and skill-building. Further, the space is open to the community for classes, a monthly open studio, rental opportunities, and local art events.
- **Performance Art:** Performance Art programming including silk dance, theater, and circus arts have been essential to the restoration of our students enthusiasm, confidence, and joy. It requires that participant focus and be present in the moment, a practice often challenging for teenagers — especially those surrounded by constant digital distractions. Students learn new skills that build confidence in both body and mind and include preparation for community performances.

- **Folkloric Dance:** The Garage encourages students to engage in their culture and feel empowered to represent the thriving Latino community, its creative strengths, resilience, and capacity for renewal. The Garage's Folkloric Dance team practice weekly and learn about traditional dances and performances to then share with their community. The team has been a featured performance at West Chester University's LatinX Communities Conference and Kennett Square's Hispanic Heritage Festival.
- **Therapy Services:** The Garage has partnered with New London Counseling Center (NLCC) to provide in-house counseling and mental health services through the contracting of licensed mental health professionals. Once a week, at both centers, a bilingual therapist provides individual and group therapy sessions. Further, our partnership with NLCC has expanded to combine the healing power of creativity through Art Therapy provided in our Avondale Makerspace.
- **Community Service:** The Garage offers opportunities for community service, both volunteer and court-mandated, to those who are looking to serve our mission and community. Through service, students can explore career options, learn about additional community resources, as well as create a habit of giving back to their local community.
- **Adult ESL:** Utilizing volunteers from the community, The Garage team in Avondale is able to provide weekly evening ESL classes for parents and alumni, as well as other community members in the Avondale area. Many Garage families speak little-to-no English, thus most of the resources, information, and opportunities are overlooked. Through this program offering in an accessible and trusted space, The Garage is able to assist adult community members learn English while encouraging them to maintain their native Spanish language.
- **Parent Resource Program:** Parent Resource Programming as an essential piece of making our programs successful and improving the lives of parents in our network. Each Garage center now employs a Parent Coordinator who connects daily with program parents. Through monthly workshops and resource development, The Garage also provides connections to other non-profits and services to improve the lives of our students and their families.

The Garage administers pre and post-program surveys to track student growth over program duration. In addition, surveys are sent to parents at the completion of the school year to gain insights from inside the home. The Garage utilizes a custom database system, Apricot, to streamline our data to improve accuracy, improve how data is used to inform programming decisions and improve the efficiency and capacity of staff. The Garage anticipates the following outcomes for the 2025-26 School Year:

Academic/Vocational:

- At least 425 individual middle and high School students attend The Garage throughout the calendar year
- At least 75% of students who actively participate in Garage programs report that the Garage helps them avoid skipping or dropping out of school.
- Increased academic performance in school
- At least 70% of students report feeling motivated while participating in Garage programming.
- Increase in students who understand where to search for jobs and gainful employment
- Increase in students who understand professional behavior
- At least 70% of students report having a career goal
- At least 50% of students report knowing where to go to get information about post-secondary options
- 100% of core Garage senior students who actively participate in programs provided will graduate from high school
- 100% of Career Compass participants complete the program in full and feel a sense of direction towards educational and professional post-secondary goals
- At least 75% of seniors who actively participated in MAPS enroll in post-secondary education or training

Social Emotional:

- At least 75% of students report feelings of success
- At least 65% of students report feelings of confidence
- At least 72% of students report an increase in trusted adult figures/ mentors
- At least 72% of students report The Garage supporting better decision making
- At least 72% of students report feeling desire to explore new experiences
- At least 60% of students report feelings of importance
- At least 73% of students feel hopeful for their future while participating in Garage programming
- At least 75% of students report an increase in supportive friends

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 - **Emailed**
 2. List of **Board** of Directors, with their affiliations **URL: <https://www.garageyouthcenter.org/board>**
 3. Most recent **annual report URL:**
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ea0255bcfc2a42338f4b98f/t/690ceff7a391be5680dfecf9/1762455543145/GYC+ANNUAL+REPORT+2024-2025+FINAL.pdf>
 4. Audited or reviewed recent **financial statement** - **Emailed**
 5. Itemized **organizational operating budget** with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date - **Emailed**
 6. If capacity building initiative, **itemized budget** (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable) **N/A**
 7. Current **strategic plan**. If your nonprofit does **not** have a current strategic plan, **explain why**. - **Emailed**
- Visit our website to learn more at www.chescocf.org
 - Proposals are only accepted electronically: <https://chescocf.org/receive/apply-for-grants/>
 - **Email proposals to grants@chescocf.org**
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