

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.

Capacity Building: Coping with Cutbacks

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

- ◇ 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/>
- ◇ 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**.



- ◇ 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**.



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

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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

Contact Information

Organization Name: Main Line Deputy Dog
Address: PO Box 210 Devon, PA 19333
Phone: 734-476-5716
Website: www.mldd.org
Year Incorporated: 2012
FEIN: 27-3560764

ED/CEO Name: Mark Stieber
ED/CEO E-mail: mark@mldd.org
Board Chair Name: Al Ulozas
Board Chair Approval (check here): ☐
Primary Contact Name: Mark Stieber
Primary Contact E-mail: mark@mldd.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

☐	Arts, Culture, Heritage	☐	Education, Library	☐	Environment, Animals
☐	Health	☒	Human Services	☐	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
☐	Religion	If other, please describe:			

Mission:

Independence is an intrinsic aspect of a full life, and should be enjoyed by all regardless of circumstances. A service dog helps someone with physical or mental health challenges achieve greater independence. A Deputy Dog is a service dog you train yourself, with the help of expert dog trainers, to perform tasks that facilitate independence, allowing you to do more things and go more places.

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

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

Annual Budget \$162,606

50% of budget for program expenses

30% of budget for administrative expenses

4% of budget for fundraising expenses

100% = total

1# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

7# of Board Volunteers

30# of Active Non-Board Volunteers

1,040# of Volunteer Hours (Annually)

Top 3-5 funding sources:

1. General Contributions: \$99,899
2. Grants/Foundations: \$41,750
3. Class Fees: \$12,020

This grant proposal is for: XDirect Service Programs & General Operating &/or ____ Capacity Building

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

☐	Contingency Planning	☐	Partnerships, Collaborations	☐	Merger, Closure
☐	Mission, Vision, Strategy	☐	Board Engagement & Leadership	☐	Marketing, Communication
☐	Resource Development	☐	Operations	☐	Technology

☐ If other, please describe:

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$5,000

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

Main Line Deputy Dog provides service dogs to people with physical and psychiatric disabilities. We teach our students to train their own service dogs, graduating 80% of them in two years.

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

Main Line Deputy Dog began in 2012 with just 2 human-canine teams. Since then, we have graduated 60 teams, currently have 30 teams in training, and more on our waitlist. Our current students include veterans with both physical challenges and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), people with auto-immune disorders like multiple sclerosis, car accident and stroke victims, and many others. We seek to enrich and transform our students' lives by providing them with a service dog. It's fulfilling to watch our students be better able to walk, open doors, get the mail, and do other activities that increase their independence.

We rescue local dogs and match them with our students. The dogs live with their new human partners full-time, coming to weekly classes for up to two years. New tasks are taught weekly, challenges are addressed, and adjustments are made. We take students on frequent trips to practice public access protocol and specific tasks. When the students are ready, a three-panel review board administers the Assistance Dogs International service dog test. Upon successful completion, our students are certified as an official Deputy Dog team. Following graduation, we provide students with lifelong support and training.

2. Funding request

- What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?
- Why is it important to fund this now?
- How will results & impact be demonstrated?

- Additionally, for capacity building grant proposals:
 - How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?
 - How will this impact be demonstrated?
 - Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposal/s if applicable.

Needs and Issues:

MLDD's impact is seen in the improved health outcomes our students receive. People with disabilities often face significantly worse health outcomes compared to those without disabilities, including lower quality of life, reduced mobility, and increased dependence on healthcare services. Research shows that service dogs reduce symptoms of mental health conditions such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression. They also increase mobility and provide assistance for those with physical disabilities. A study conducted by Purdue University's College of Veterinary Medicine found that individuals partnered with service dogs exhibited notably better psychosocial health, including higher levels of social, emotional, and work/school functioning.

People with disabilities are significantly more likely to face poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to health insurance, according to the Center for Research on Disability. These inequities create substantial barriers to receiving care—especially when it comes to acquiring a service dog, which can cost between \$30,000 and \$50,000. However, our innovative model is built to be more affordable, more flexible, and more accessible. We offer low-cost and sliding-scale tuition, and we provide services at no cost to veterans and individuals with demonstrated need. Because our students train their own dogs, our organization pays just \$8,770 per fully-certified team.

Our Program:

We enroll our students in weekly service-dog training classes led by trainers with expertise in both dog behavior and disability support. Most students obtain a certified service dog within two years.

Our program follows a multi-stage structure:

- Accepting students referred by a medical professional who has determined that a service dog is an appropriate intervention;
- Selecting a suitable dog with the input of professional trainers and behaviorists;
- Coaching students through entry-level classes that build service dog foundations;
- Advancing students to upper-level classes focused on specific medical taskwork
- Evaluating each team using Assistance Dogs International's standards;
- Providing lifetime re-evaluation and support to ensure continued safety and effectiveness.

Below are our current costs for the complete, two-year education of a single service dog team:

Group Classes (Training Costs): $\$60/\text{hour} \times 72 \text{ total hours} = \$4,320.00$

These are weekly, expert-led group sessions that form the foundation of the training process.

Individual 1:1 Classes: $\$150/\text{hour} \times 20 \text{ total hours} = \$3,000.00$

Personalized sessions that target specific task training and address unique medical needs.

Service Dog Equipment: \$550.00

Includes vest, brace, harness, and any additional leads or adaptive gear required for safe public access and task performance.

Training Supplies: \$150.00

Covers food rewards, training toys, props, and other items necessary for skill development.

Certification: \$150.00

Includes testing according to Assistance Dogs International standards and formal recognition of service dog status.

Follow-up Sessions and Re-testing: \$60/hour × 10 total hours = \$600.00

Ongoing support to ensure continued effectiveness and compliance with training standards.

Total Cost per Service Dog Team: \$8,770.00

Measuring Results:

Training a service dog is extremely difficult—doing so on one's own is nearly impossible. Very few people have the patience, training knowledge, and experience of training a dog while disabled to navigate these challenges alone. With our organizational experience, we have developed a curriculum to help students train their own service dogs. Each class, our trainers assess each dog's progress on required service dog tasks using a standardized evaluation process. By tracking this progress, we accurately assess how the team is progressing and determine whether they are ready to move on to advanced training.

In advanced-level training, teams work toward mastery of individualized service dog tasks selected to address their specific disabilities. Our trainers continue to evaluate each team's performance, consistency, and readiness for certification throughout this stage of the program.

Conclusion:

A general operating grant of \$5,000 would allow Main Line Deputy Dog to continue providing certified service dogs in Chester County. These funds would sustain the core elements of our work—staff time, training classes, equipment, and follow-up care—ensuring that people with disabilities in Chester County can continue to obtain service dogs.

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
2. List of **Board** of Directors, with their affiliations [URL](#):
3. Most recent **annual report** [URL](#):
4. Audited or reviewed recent **financial statement** [URL](#):
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**.

- Visit our website to learn more at www.chescocf.org
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CAPACITY BUILDING FOR NONPROFITS:
Coping with Cutbacks



Capacity building is about empowering nonprofits to do **more good, more effectively, and for the long term**. It strengthens an organization’s ability to fulfill its mission, enhance sustainability, and better serve its community.

At its core, capacity building focuses on improving a nonprofit’s internal systems, leadership, and resources so that impact can grow and endure.

Traditionally, capacity building has included efforts such as **board and staff leadership development, strategic planning, fundraising, and technology investments** to improve operations and organizational effectiveness.

Today, however, nonprofits face a rapidly changing environment. Shifts in federal policies have resulted in rapid changes at all levels and in new directions. Nonprofits must **“meet the moment” and cope with cutbacks— think differently, shift paradigms and transform how we understand and interact with the world around us...adapt how we plan, lead, fund, and collaborate.**

Capacity building can play a critical role in helping nonprofits adapt and innovate. This may include **funding scenario planning, exploring new revenue models, expanding partnerships, pursuing mergers or strategic alliances**, and other adaptive strategies that strengthen long-term resilience.

Capacity building support can take many forms, tailored to each organization’s unique needs. Examples of projects that may be funded include:

- **CONTINGENCY & SCENARIO PLANNING**
Scenario Planning – Financial Modeling & Forecasting
- **PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATIONS**
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions
- **MERGER, CLOSURE**

These unprecedented times may present the need for a merger or closure of your organization.

Contact chaya@chescocf.org to confidentially discuss funding to assist in the planning or initial steps.

- **MISSION, VISION, STRATEGY**

Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning – Strategic Restructuring – Coping With Cutbacks

- **BOARD ENGAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP**

Board Recruitment – Board Engagement – Increasing Networks & Community Support - Leadership Development – Executive Transition & Succession Planning

- **MARKETING, COMMUNICATION**

Nonprofit Business Messaging & Storytelling – Re-branding – Marketing Planning & Re-Positioning – Crisis Communications Planning

- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development

- **TECHNOLOGY, OPERATIONS**

Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements

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