CHESTER COUNTY community FOUNDATION
28 W. Market Street, Lincoln Biography Building
West Chester, PA 19382
610.696.8211 www.chescocf.org

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/



- 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.**

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 DILIGIENCE

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: Kennett Library
Address: 320 East State Street / PO Box 730
Phone: (610) 444-2702
Website: https://kennettlibrary.org
Year Incorporated: 1958
FEIN: 23-1547585

ED/CEO Name: Christopher Manna
ED/CEO E-mail: CManna@kennettlibrary.org
Board Chair Name: Collis Townsend
Board Chair Approval (check here): X
Primary Contact Name: Sheila Tekavec
Primary Contact E-mail: STekavec@KennettLibrary.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

X	Arts, Culture, Heritage	X	Education, Library	X	Environment, Animals
X	Health	X	Human Services	X	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
	Religion	X	If other, please describe: In 2022, Kennett Library was designated as a PA Forward® Gold Star Library – the highest level of recognition by the program. Kennett Library offers free programming related to Basic Literacy, Information (Digital/Technical) Literacy, Civic and Social Literacy, Health Literacy, and Financial Literacy as well as Environmental Literacy, Arts & Culture Literacy, and community resources for social services.		

Mission: The friendly and helpful staff of the Kennett Library work diligently to engage patrons - cultivating creativity, innovation, and digital literacy in a welcoming third place. They are dedicated to a mission that ignites imagination, sparks curiosity, enriches lives, and creates community - one in which we envision Kennett Library as the proponent for a lifelong love of learning and discovery. Built upon the free exchange of information and accessible resources, Kennett Library is *the* local community resource that connects people to art, books, languages, literacy, movies, science, technology, and more - in a safe and stimulating environment, where everyone can discover new passions and expand their horizons.

Geographic Area Served *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):* Kennett Library serves the Borough of Kennett Square and the Townships of East Marlborough, Kennett, New Garden, Newlin, Pennsbury, Pocopson, and West Marlborough.

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

According to CensusReporter.org, the total population in the Borough of Kennett Square, where the library is located, and surrounding townships directly served by the library is 77,747. That is roughly 8% of the total population in Chester County, which is 560,745. The library is open to all, and visitors come from the entire region including other municipalities in Chester County, our neighboring counties, Philadelphia, and northern Delaware. In 2025, Kennett Library welcomed 171,967 visitors, and the website received 203,000 visits. The library offered 2,147 free programs that were attended by 7,169 preschoolers, 8,934 school-age children, 1,135 teenagers, and 15,996 adults.

Annual Budget $___2,700,610.00_____ ___21___ # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
___38___ % of budget for program expenses ___15___ # of Board Volunteers
___59___ % of budget for administrative expenses __200___ # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
____3___ % of budget for fundraising expenses _5200___ # of Volunteer Hours
100% = total ___30___ # of Part-Time Staff

Top 3-5 funding sources: Kennett Library receives the largest share of income for general operating expenses from individual donations, including contributions from the annual giving campaign and the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, for which the library was approved by the state of Pennsylvania in 2024. Other major streams of revenue include grant awards and municipal support. Fines, fundraising events, investment income, and private event venue rentals round out the library's financial portfolio. As an independent 501(c)(3) organization, it is the largest non-municipal library by budget, and the only branch of the Chester County Library System actively engaged in fundraising activities tasked with raising more than 75% of annual operating costs. While the budget has grown, it is strictly balanced with little room for discretionary spending.

This grant proposal is for: ____Direct Service Programs & General Operating &/or __X__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	X	Operations		Technology
	If other, please describe:				

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: $_10,000_____

Proposal Summary: *(a few sentences, please)* Since opening the new building in 2023, Kennett Library has experienced growth that has far exceeded everyone's expectations. Library staff is more than double now, and some employees either share desks or work remotely while program offerings and marketing efforts are growing, as well. The A/V Recording Studio currently operates by playing an unpopular game of musical chairs using borrowed items and folding tables. Kennett Library respectfully requests funding toward capital improvements and purchases for two areas of daily operations where expansion of office space and significant upgrades to equipment and furnishings are necessary.

CHESTER COUNTY community FOUNDATION

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**

Kennett Library was founded in 1896 as a local public library open to all and was originally named in honor of the 19th-century poet, diplomat, and local resident, Bayard Taylor. In 1962, a new library was opened on State Street in the Borough, on property that had previously been home to a Quaker Meetinghouse. Over time, the population grew. Kennett Square and the surrounding area developed from a farming community into suburbs of both Philadelphia and Wilmington.

Programs at Kennett Library support our strategic initiatives, collection of materials, services, resources, and facilities along with regional goals. In addition, programs serve the popular, recreational, informational and social needs of the general public and reflect equitable outreach and engagement to a diverse community while promoting a culture of inclusion. Inherent in the program philosophy is an appreciation for each patron of Kennett Library. The library provides programs to support each individual's journey and does not place a value on one patron's needs or preferences over another's. The library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox or unacceptable to others. The views and opinions of program presenters do not constitute endorsement of Kennett Library.

Founded in 1979, Kennett Library's Adult Literacy Program offers classes and tutoring in English as a Second Language and preparation for GED and U.S. citizenship. More recently, a curriculum for Workforce Development has been added in partnership with The Welcoming Center to teach English for Job Search as well as English for Workplace Communication. Participants in the program are introduced to other free resources in the library that include digital literacy coaching, and reference material for agencies that aid with healthcare, housing, legal aid, and other social services. Adult Literacy Program staff celebrate milestones with students who achieve citizenship, earn a high school diploma or driver's license, accept employment, earn promotions, or open a small business. Kennett Library considers this type of programming integral to the free exchange of information and resources we provide to the diverse community that we are privileged to serve.

As previously stated, Kennett Library was designated as a PA Forward® Gold Star Library in 2022. This is the highest level of recognition by the program. Annually, Kennett Library offers thousands of free programs related to Basic Literacy, Information Literacy, Civic and Social Literacy, Health Literacy, and Financial Literacy. Additionally, Kennett Library offers various Environmental Literacy, as well as Arts & Culture Literacy programs. Library patrons are also provided with information about numerous community resources for social services.

In June of 2023, the highly anticipated new Kennett Library opened its doors to the public. In addition to the traditional stacks and children's library, the new building hosts a 110-seat auditorium, an art gallery, an A/V recording studio, classrooms, private event spaces and meeting rooms, state-of-the-art adult and student makerspaces, a terrace, and the Bayard Taylor quiet reading room - on two floors in 33,425 square feet.

The friendly and helpful staff of the Kennett Library work diligently to engage patrons - cultivating creativity, innovation, and digital literacy in a welcoming third place. They are dedicated to a mission that ignites imagination, sparks curiosity, enriches lives, and creates community - one in which we envision the Kennett Library as the proponent for a lifelong love of learning and discovery. Kennett Library is *the* local community resource that connects people to art, books, languages, literacy, movies, science, technology, and more - in a safe and stimulating environment, where they can discover new passions and expand their horizons. Built upon the free exchange of information and accessible resources, Kennett Library serves the Borough of Kennett Square and the Townships of East Marlborough, Kennett, New Garden, Newlin, Pennsbury, Pocopson, and West Marlborough.

Building upon the resounding success that followed significant expansion of the adult and student makerspaces in 2024, Kennett Library is now poised to become a *regional* resource center. Expanded staffing and hands-on learning programs in the makerspaces resulted in increased foot traffic, patron participation, and broader community support from collaborative partner organizations and individual donors. In 2025, the library offered 2,147 free programs that were attended by more than 33,000 preschoolers, grade-schoolers, teens, and adults. Kennett Square is among the top 10 fastest growing towns in one of the fastest growing counties. To-date this year, program participation has already exceeded those numbers for 2025, and the library is on pace to double attendance for registered events.

2. Funding request

- **What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?**
  There is a wish list for the A/V Recording Studio, since it was never furnished when the new building opened in 2023. Staff have been borrowing chairs and tables from other library spaces. With proper furnishings permanently in place, the studio will finally provide a comfortable space to utilize equipment for expanded programs that include regularly scheduled tech-support office hours, conversion from analog to digital recordings, community podcasts, peer-to-peer student mentorships in collaboration with the Kennett Consolidated and Unionville-Chadds Ford School Districts to create original podcasts and other media, use of Tonie hardware for story reading, augmented virtual reality, music recordings, and recorded community conversations and interviews, inspired by StoryCorps on NPR.

  The growing Marketing and Programs departments will move into a new space created by converting the mailroom and materials processing center. Some construction as well as electrical and HVAC upgrades is required. Office equipment and furnishings will be purchased to fill the space for 4 full-time and 2 part-time staff members. There, marketing staff will complete a brand redesign, create a brand standards guide, update collateral templates for print and digital use, and launch a modern website. Collaborations are planned with the Brandywine Conservancy, local school districts, and other valued community partners who will use the A/V Studio as part of the free, expanded library programs.

- **Why is it important to fund this now?**
  The A/V Recording Studio completion provides a safe, welcoming third space for the entire community. With free access to equipment and technology, technical support, shared information and resources – everyone has a place at the table, and a voice. This is one of the best ways Kennett Library can serve the public. The expanded marketing department can effectively promote these upcoming programs to engage a larger audience and increase participation. As previously stated, Kennett Library's free programs are created to reflect equitable outreach and engagement to our diverse community while fostering a culture of understanding and inclusion. We are pleased to work with so many local

organizations on a regular basis, and work diligently to increase the circle of collaboration and cooperation with all members of the Kennett Community. Since 2023, Kennett Library has consistently ranked among the most visited and utilized libraries in the region. As an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, it is the largest non-municipal library by budget, and the only branch of the Chester County Library System that actively engages in fundraising activities – tasked with raising more than 75% of the annual operating costs through donations, grants, fundraisers, and sponsorships. While the budget has grown, it is strictly balanced with little room for discretionary spending.

- **How will results & impact be demonstrated?**
  Kennett Library's proposed grant project has two general areas, each with its own metrics for success. A successfully outfitted A/V Studio will be measured by how many new programs are piloted, and the increased numbers of patrons served, volunteer hours relevant to the programming. Volunteer hours are currently tracked at Kennett Library through the self-reporting software, VolGistics. Customized reports can be run for specific periods of time in addition to various library programs and spaces. Program impact for all of these criteria will be tracked in a similar way using spreadsheets and reports. Patrons are counted hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, and annually so that participation and program interest trends can be tracked and adjusted in real time. This will promote greater efficiencies for scheduling, marketing, and implementation of relevant, convenient programs based on community needs. The marketing team and their promotional strategy will be judged by Increased website traffic and social media engagement, increased program attendance, and increased donor acquisition from digital channels in response to website updates and social media posts.

- **Additionally, for capacity building grant proposals:**
  - **How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?**
    A fully equipped A/V Studio will allow library staff to develop new programs and community collaborations, increase access to digital literacy opportunities, and scale program capacity to support larger groups of students and adults, providing essential future-ready technology skills and further expand strengthen intergenerational and student leadership and mentorship initiatives. The creation of adaptive programming will increase visibility of the library as a communication hub. To begin, a grant award from the Chester County Community Foundation would allow for additional tech support hours and hands-on, supervised experience with equipment and software necessary for recording community conversations, creating original podcasts, editing video, engaging with virtual reality scenarios, and to provide analog to digital conversions as a regular service to the public. Kennett Library has a robust marketing department that has recently expanded thanks to another capacity building grant award from a local private foundation. Currently working in an office area that has exceeded capacity, they deserve their own space to develop creative, relevant strategies that effectively promote upcoming opportunities. Publicity materials are accessible and inclusive to ensure information reaches all audiences in our service area. All of these efforts combined ensure that Kennett Library's patrons and the surrounding community are consistently informed about A/V Studio and other programs and encouraged to participate.

  - **How will this impact be demonstrated?**
    A fully functioning studio space enables the library's programming and marketing departments to develop and cross-promote a schedule of events and community collaborations with the local school districts and other valued community partners like After the Bell, the Brandywine Conservancy, Casa Guanajuato, the Kennett Heritage Center, and Square Roots Collective, to name only a few, in response

to community feedback and needs. Impact will be directly measured by the following criteria, year-over-year:

- Number of new programs created
- Increase in engagement on the website
- Increase in program registration and participation

- **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.**
  Please see cost estimate, attached. Kennett Library has applied to 3 other private foundations to fund the total cost of these upgrades for the A/V Recording Studio and Marketing Office.

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
- Proposals are only accepted electronically: https://chescocf.org/receive/apply-for-grants/
- **Email proposals to** grants@chescocf.org
- Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments**.
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CHESTER COUNTY community FOUNDATION

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 ###