

2026 Treetops Kitty Cafe GRANT PROPOSAL

GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit www.chescocf.org
page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors + posted online.

Date: September 11, 2026

Contact Information

Organization Name: Stephanie O'Neal Sauer

Address: 305 West State Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348

Phone: 763-568-9360

Website: www.treetopskittycafe.com

Year Incorporated: 2006

FEIN: 20-5403519

ED/CEO Name: Kristine Baney

ED/CEO E-mail: treetopskittypres@gmail.com

Board Chair Name: Maria Boulden

Board Chair Approval (check here): ☐

Primary Contact Name: Stephanie O'Neal Sauer

Primary Contact E-mail:

treetopsdonorrelations@gmail.com

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission:

Tree Tops Animal Rescue is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to rescuing at-risk cats who are lost, abandoned, surrendered, or transferred from shelters and rescue partners. At Treetops Kitty Cafe in Kennett Square, we provide essential daily and medical care, socialization, and the time each cat needs to become ready for adoption in a cage-free environment. Our goal is to place each cat in a permanent, loving home, carefully screening potential adopters to ensure the right fit for both the cat and the family.

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

Treetops Kitty Cafe primarily serves Kennett Square and surrounding communities throughout Chester County, while also serving families from neighboring areas in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. We transfer cats from partner shelters and rescues in Chester County, Philadelphia, and Maryland. The majority of individuals and families who adopt from Treetops or visit the Cafe live in Chester County.

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

Treetops Kitty Cafe serves individuals and families throughout Chester County and the surrounding region through cat adoption, Cafe visits, community programs, and special events. Since opening the Cafe in 2017, Treetops has facilitated 982 cat adoptions. While we serve the broader region, our impact remains strongly local: more than 60% of our adoptions have been to Chester County households, representing approximately 580 local adoptions.

At any given time, Treetops typically cares for 12 to 24 cats. As of September 11, 2026, 22 cats are in our care, with 17 residing at the Cafe and five in foster care for medical reasons. Treetops provides for the full cost of care for our foster cats, including food, litter, medical care, and other supplies. Our free-roaming Cafe environment provides cats with daily care, enrichment, and socialization while allowing prospective adopters to interact with them in a relaxed setting.

Treetops welcomes more than 3,500 visitors annually, in addition to adopters and participants in community and special events. Our location in the heart of Kennett Square also allows us to reach residents through major community events. During the 2025 Mushroom Festival alone, more than 260 people visited the Cafe in just 8.5 hours.

Our community engagement extends beyond regular Cafe hours. Treetops hosts recurring programs including Silent Meow Book Club and Meow and Make, as well as seasonal programs such as Paint Night with Cats, Kitty Bingo Night, and Purrfect Yoga.

In 2026, we also launched Tails Around Town, an outreach initiative in which one of our cats travels by stroller to visit organizations and businesses throughout Kennett Square. To date, visits have included Friends Home in Kennett Square, Forage Books, and Saint Patrick Catholic Church. The program introduces Treetops and our mission to new members of the community while providing valuable socialization and enrichment for participating cats, an important part of preparing many of our cats for adoption.

Annual Budget \$	164,386.39	2	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
82	% of budget for program expenses	9	# of Board Volunteers
8	% of budget for administrative expenses	25	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
10	% of budget for fundraising expenses	30/week	# of Volunteer Hours

100% = total

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Treetops Kitty Cafe receives funds from four areas. Revenue is earned from Cafe visits, after-hours events and other special events, and through adoption fees. Charitable revenue is earned from direct individual donations and grant awards. Treetops Kitty Cafe also operates a retail boutique and earns revenue from sales of product in the boutique.

Revenue through August 31, 2026

Total: \$152,856.07

Earned Revenue and Services (cafe visits, event revenue, adoption fees): \$34,635.07

Charitable Individual Donations: \$63,551.32

Grant Awards: \$39,081.80

Sales of Product: \$7,647.39

This grant proposal is for: ☒ Direct 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: \$ 10,000.00

Proposal Summary:

Treetops Kitty Cafe is requesting \$10,000 in general operating support to strengthen the organization behind our rescue and adoption mission. Funding will help sustain the direct care of our cats while supporting the technology, financial management, fundraising, community engagement, and organizational systems necessary to operate responsibly and effectively. This support will allow Treetops to build on the progress we have made, respond to both expected and unexpected needs, and plan more confidently for the opportunities ahead.

Grant Proposal

Organization Name: Treetops Kitty Cafe, Kennett Square, PA

Project Title: Strengthening Treetops' Core Operations

Amount Requested: \$10,000

Treetops Kitty Cafe History, Overall Aims, Key Initiatives, Key Achievements & Distinctiveness

Treetops Kitty Cafe has been part of the Kennett Square community since 2017, but our history of saving animals goes back more than 20 years. Originally founded as Tree Tops Animal Rescue in 2006, Treetops began as a foster-based rescue and successfully placed more than 1,500 animals, primarily cats, into homes before opening the Cafe.

With the opening of Treetops Kitty Cafe, our focus shifted primarily to at-risk adult cats transferred to us from partner shelters and rescues. Many of the cats who come to Treetops have medical needs, are seniors, are frightened, or are under-socialized. They have disabilities or simply have not done well in a traditional shelter environment and need more time and resources before they are ready for adoption.

Our free-roaming environment allows us to give them that time. Cats receive necessary medical care, medications, nutritious food, enrichment, socialization, and, when needed, weeks or even months to become comfortable with people and show their personalities. We do not place any time limit on how long a cat can remain at Treetops. Some are adopted quickly, while others remain with us for a year, or two years, or longer. Our commitment to them does not change.

As of September 11, 2026, 982 cats have been adopted through Treetops Kitty Cafe since 2017, with five additional adoptions currently pending. We are now approaching our 1,000th adoption as well as the Cafe's

10th anniversary in 2027. Both milestones are an opportunity not only to celebrate what Treetops has accomplished, but also to look ahead.

Our longer-term goals include expanding our ability to serve cats with specialized medical and socialization needs, including pregnant cats, mothers with litters, and kittens, as well as establishing a community pet pantry for families needing help with food and supplies. We have also begun conversations with local veterinary providers about partnerships that could make low- or no-cost veterinary care more accessible in Kennett Square and the surrounding Chester County community. By helping families meet their pets' basic and medical needs, we hope to keep more cats in their homes and reduce the number surrendered or abandoned.

These growth opportunities must be supported by a strong organization. Over the past year, we have focused on strengthening our financial management, Board leadership, fundraising systems, and donor stewardship so that Treetops can continue saying "yes" to cats who need a safe place to land.

Funding request

What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?

Treetops Kitty Cafe is requesting \$10,000 in general operating support to help strengthen and sustain the organizational infrastructure that makes our rescue and adoption work possible. Over the past two years, we have made significant progress toward operating Treetops on a more structured and sustainable foundation. That progress has also helped us identify areas where our operating budget needs to better reflect the true cost of running the organization.

With funding from the Chester County Community Foundation in 2025, Treetops implemented Bloomerang as our donor management, fundraising, and volunteer platform. It has significantly improved how we manage donor information, acknowledgments, communications, campaigns, stewardship, and volunteer management. The annual renewal is \$7,999, making continued investment in this technology an important part of building a sustainable fundraising program.

We have also strengthened our financial management through a new accounting firm that provides regular bookkeeping, reconciliations, financial reporting, and support to staff and the Board. An unexpected financial need in 2026 required approximately \$2,000 in additional professional services, while heavy snowfall resulted in a significant unbudgeted snow-removal surcharge from our landlord. For a small organization, expenses like these can quickly require us to draw from reserves or redirect funds intended for other needs. General operating support gives us greater flexibility to absorb the unexpected while maintaining strong financial oversight.

As our fundraising program has grown, we have also recognized the need to address charitable solicitation requirements outside Pennsylvania. Treetops now receives donations from supporters in multiple states and has included out-of-state donors in some of our fundraising outreach. Beginning in 2027, we plan to approach multi-state charitable solicitation compliance in phases, prioritizing states where we have received donations or conducted fundraising activity. Registration fees and, where necessary, professional guidance will represent a new operating expense, but one we believe is important as we continue to grow our fundraising program responsibly.

Finally, we want to invest more intentionally in fundraising, marketing, and community engagement. Historically, these efforts have operated on a shoestring budget, with staff, Board members, and individual supporters sometimes personally covering costs for printing, promotional materials, events, and other needs.

The needs described above exceed the amount of this request. A \$10,000 general operating grant would not be expected to cover every expense. Instead, it would give Treetops flexibility to support these priorities where funding is most needed while protecting the resources necessary for the everyday care of our cats.

Why is it important to fund this now?

Treetops is at an important point in its development. Over the past year, we have made deliberate changes to strengthen our financial management, Board leadership, donor stewardship, fundraising systems, and organizational planning. We are already seeing results. Our 2026 One Mission campaign, for example, surpassed its \$25,000 goal and raised \$31,500 for the care of the cats at Treetops.

Now we need to sustain that progress. The systems we have put in place require ongoing investment, our expanding fundraising reach brings new compliance responsibilities, and our fundraising and marketing efforts need an appropriate budget if we expect them to continue growing.

The timing is particularly meaningful now because Treetops is approaching two major milestones: our 1,000th adoption and the Cafe's 10th anniversary in 2027. We see both as opportunities not simply to celebrate our history, but to introduce more people to our mission, grow our community of supporters, and begin laying the groundwork for Treetops' next decade.

General operating support would give Treetops something we have not had the luxury to have: the ability to plan rather than react. It would help us protect the progress we have made while preparing for the opportunities ahead, and keeping our resources focused on the cats who need us.

How will results & impact be demonstrated?

Because this request supports general operations rather than a single program, we will measure its impact across both mission delivery and organizational health.

We will continue tracking the number of cats entering Treetops, successful adoptions, length of stay, and the medical and socialization support provided while cats are in our care. Reaching our 1,000th adoption will be an important milestone, but success is not simply about increasing adoption numbers. We remain committed to accepting cats who may require significantly more time and resources before they are ready for a home.

Through Bloomerang, we will track donor retention, new and recurring donors, campaign performance, and contributed revenue, while also using the system to strengthen our grant tracking and management. We will measure engagement surrounding our 1,000th adoption and 10th anniversary and work to expand our volunteer base by creating new opportunities for volunteers to take on committee and event-planning responsibilities. We will also track progress toward charitable solicitation compliance in priority states.

Regular professional accounting and financial reporting will allow staff and the Board to monitor expenses, identify issues earlier, and make better-informed decisions about Treetops' resources. Ultimately, success will mean that Treetops is not only continuing to save cats, but doing so from a stronger and more sustainable organizational foundation.

Ultimately, success will mean that Treetops is not only continuing to save cats, but doing so from a stronger and more sustainable foundation. General operating support from the Chester County Community Foundation would help us build on the progress we have made, plan more confidently for the future, and remain focused on what has always been at the heart of our mission: giving cats who need more time, care, and patience the chance to find a home.

We are grateful for the Community Foundation's past support of Treetops and appreciate the opportunity to share where we are headed next.