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.

Contact Information

Date: 9/18/2026

Organization Name: SILO (Serving, Inspiring and Loving Others)
Address: PO Box 22 Oxford, PA 19363
Phone: 610-715-9952
Website: www.oxfordsilo.com
Year Incorporated: 2018
FEIN: 82- 2595175

ED/CEO Name: Melissa Pacella
ED/CEO E-mail: Melissa@oxfordsilo.com
Board Chair Name: Ed Herr
Board Chair Approval (check here): X
Primary Contact Name: Melissa Pacella
Primary Contact E-mail: Melissa@oxfordsilo.com

Organization Information: Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: SILO is a welcoming and diverse group of friends who come together to Serve, Inspire and Love Others in our community.

Geographic Area Served *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):*
SILO's work focuses on the southern part of Chester County, primarily Oxford and the surrounding area.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. *(Include Chester County # &/or % served.)*
Last year, SILO served 2,622 unduplicated people, including friends (clients) with mental illness, limited mobility, addictions, single parents, senior citizens, immigrants, unemployed and homeless individuals.

Annual Budget $554,060 (2025/26)
84% of budget for program expenses
9% of budget for administrative expenses
7% of budget for fundraising expenses

3 Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
6 Board Volunteers
133 Active Non-Board Volunteers
2,370 Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: Oxford Area Foundation (15% of annual budget), James and Miriam Herr Family Fund (9%), Ed and Diane Herr (5%), United Way of Southern Chester County (5%), Connelly Foundation (5%)

This grant proposal is for: Capacity Building

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

	Contingency Planning		Partnerships, Collaborations		Merger, Closure
	Mission, Vision, Strategy		Board Engagement & Leadership	X	Marketing, Communication
X	Resource Development		Operations	X	Technology
	If other, please describe: **Expanding and diversifying revenue streams, Financial Management**				

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

Proposal Summary:
SILO's Development Assessment Report, created by Krys Sipple and Strategic Plan highlight key areas to improves SILO's long-term financial stability including: investing in a CRM to manage donor information, begin succession planning for SILO's key staff and increasing educational storytelling about SILO with potential donors. These goals will be achieved by using Bloomerang, a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system, to engage lapsed donor, identify new donors, accept additional forms of payment and send quarterly emails. SILO's website is another critical resource to tell the story of SILO's impact, but requires updates and maintenance.

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

SILO's Overall Aim

SILO's overall aim is to strengthen the stability and well-being of individuals and families facing hardship in southern Chester County by reducing barriers to essential resources and services, building meaningful relationships, and creating a community where people feel supported, connected, and valued.

SILO's Key Initiatives

Delivering Hope delivers fresh and shelf stable food directly to the front door of households facing food insecurity. Delivering Hope removes barriers to food access like not having transportation, limited mobility and working while traditional food banks are open. Last year, 2,010 people received convenient food delivery, a relief for households experiencing the stress of financial pressure.

Growing Together Community Garden and Orchard are places where friends and neighbors come together to grow food for themselves and others. Each week, volunteers come to the garden to plant, weed and harvest produce. Last year, 1,649 pounds of produce were grown and distributed on the Free Produce Stand. Educational workshops build community, while teaching both critical and fun skills.

SILO's **Monthly Community Meals** bring together an average of 208 people each month to enjoy a free, nutritious meal in a welcoming environment. In additional to providing food, the meals reduce social isolation while creating a space where neighbors from different backgrounds can meet, connect, and build community across a shared table.

SILO's **Emergency Assistance** program helps individuals and families achieve housing stability through two primary approaches: providing short-term rental assistance to prevent homelessness, and working directly with people experiencing homelessness to help them secure safe, stable housing. Support is tailored to each household and may include case management, landlord advocacy, transportation, and connections to additional supportive resources.

SILO's Key Achievements

While SILO has helped many people in life-transforming ways, the more subtle accomplishments lay the foundation for the success of our efforts including:

- Innovative programming that quickly adapts to the evolving needs we observe in the community
- Fostering a playful, hard-working, resourceful and collaborative volunteer culture
- Creating a sense of community and belonging for all participants. Our volunteers and meal attendees often refer to SILO as an extended family.
- Blurring the lines between those who are helping and those who are helped, resulting in empowerment for recipients

SILO's Distinctiveness
SILO operates in a uniquely relational and proactive way, building trust through consistent presence in the lives of the people we serve. These relationships allow us to identify otherwise "silent" needs in our community and connect people with resources they may not have sought out on their own. Rather than expecting people to come to us, SILO reaches out and meets people where they are—at home, on the street, or wherever they feel most comfortable. While this approach is more time- and labor-intensive than traditional service delivery, it allows us to reach people who might otherwise remain disconnected from support and creates opportunities for meaningful, lasting change.

2. Funding request

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

Critical needs in southern Chester County that SILO addresses include food insecurity, housing instability and homelessness, social isolation, and limited access to fresh food and environmental education. **Delivering Hope** addresses food insecurity, especially for those with limited transportation or employment, by bringing groceries directly to households facing barriers to traditional food assistance. **Emergency Assistance** works to prevent homelessness through rental assistance while helping people already experiencing homelessness secure stable housing. **Monthly Community Meals** address food insecurity and social isolation by bringing neighbors together around a shared meal. SILO's **Growing Together Community Garden and Orchard** increase access to fresh, locally grown food while providing hands-on environmental education.

Why is it important to fund this now?

Over the past several years, SILO has seen a steady increase in the number of people needing assistance. Rising costs are stretching household budgets, and families who were previously financially stable are increasingly turning to SILO for help. Simultaneously, shifts and cutbacks in traditional funding sources are creating greater financial uncertainty for SILO. We are facing the challenge of meeting growing needs while ensuring our organization has the financial resilience to continue providing critical services.

This makes capacity building particularly important right now. Over the next year, SILO will implement key priorities identified through our recent organizational consultation with Krys Sipple and our Strategic Plan, with a focus on strengthening donor retention, diversifying revenue, improving our storytelling and donor communications, and developing a thoughtful succession plan. These efforts will reduce SILO's vulnerability to changes in any single funding source and build a stronger, more sustainable financial foundation.

Support at this pivotal moment will help SILO adapt to a changing funding environment while remaining reliable for the families who depend on us. By strengthening the organization behind our programs now, we can better weather future cutbacks and remain a stable, responsive resource for our community.

How will results & impact be demonstrated?

Strengthening SILO's fundraising capacity will ultimately allow us to sustain and expand the services our community relies upon. SILO consistently collects program data to evaluate our reach and impact, including:

- Number and demographics of individuals and households receiving food delivery
- Number of grocery bags and meals distributed
- Number of individuals and families receiving rental and utility assistance
- Number of people experiencing homelessness who are helped to secure stable housing
- Pounds of produce grown and distributed through the Growing Together Community Garden
- Number of people participating in educational workshops and garden activities
- Estimated number of community garden visits
- Number of volunteers engaged and volunteer hours contributed

Together, these measures demonstrate SILO's ability to meet immediate needs throughout southern Chester County.

For capacity building grant proposals:
How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?

One of the primary recommendations of SILO's recent Development Assessment was to implement and consistently use a dedicated donor management system. Investing in a CRM (Customer Relationship Management system) will fundamentally improve how SILO identifies, cultivates, communicates with, and retains donors—building a stronger and more diversified base of support at a time when traditional funding sources are increasingly uncertain.

Historically, much of SILO's donor tracking and follow-up has been done manually, making it difficult and time-consuming to identify lapsed donors, track relationships, conduct targeted outreach, and ensure consistent follow-up. A CRM will allow SILO to better understand our donor base, reengage lapsed donors, identify prospective donors, cultivate relationships that lead to recurring support and accept additional forms of payment.

The CRM is an essential part of SILO's long-term succession planning, serving as the institutional memory. Donor relationships, history, and institutional knowledge that has lived in the memory of an individual staff member will now be documented in a shared organizational system. This will create greater continuity and resilience regardless of who is on staff.

SILO's Development Assessment and Strategic Plan identified the need for SILO to tell our story more effectively. SILO has historically focused on doing the work, often leaving the full breadth and impact of that work under-communicated. A CRM will improve SILO's communications with donors through targeted appeals, quarterly newsletters, and more consistent sharing of SILO's impact. Additionally, updates and optimization of SILO's website will allow us to more consistently share engaging stories about SILO with current, lapsed, and prospective donors.

Together, these improvements will help SILO mature its fundraising infrastructure, diversify and strengthen its donor base, preserve institutional knowledge, and become less vulnerable to fluctuations in grant and foundation funding. Stronger organizational capacity and diversified funding will help the organization mature financially and sustain our efforts to care for those in need.

How will this impact be demonstrated?

The impact of this capacity-building initiative will be demonstrated through the following metrics:

- Successful implementation and consistent use of the CRM as SILO's central donor management system
- Training of staff beyond the Executive Director to use and maintain the CRM, ensuring donor history and institutional knowledge are shared across the organization
- Increased engagement with lapsed donors
- Decreased number of inactive or lapsed donors
- Increased donor retention
- Increased new and recurring donors
- Growth in individual and unrestricted giving
- Consistent donor communication, including the implementation of a quarterly e-newsletter and more targeted donor outreach
- Completion of an updated and optimized website that better communicates SILO's work and provides clear opportunities to engage and give

While increased community awareness of SILO is more difficult to quantify, the above measures will provide tangible evidence that SILO is building a stronger fundraising infrastructure, expanding and retaining its donor base, and distributing development knowledge beyond a single staff member. Over time, these improvements will demonstrate greater financial resilience and reduced vulnerability to external funding changes.

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.

In March, SILO began working with Veronica Anne Rae, a consultant who specializes in helping grassroots organizations strengthen their fundraising capacity, including the selection and implementation of donor management systems. With her guidance, SILO researched CRM options that could meet both our current needs and support future growth. We selected Bloomerang as the best fit and negotiated a two-year contract for $5,938. SILO has already paid $2,338 toward the contract; this grant request includes the remaining balance.

Implementation is currently underway. Donor information previously maintained across QuickBooks and multiple spreadsheets is being cleaned, organized, and migrated into Bloomerang. Data migration and initial setup are expected to be completed by early November, in time to utilize the system for year-end giving. Throughout implementation, Veronica is helping SILO develop systems and processes tailored to our fundraising needs and training staff to confidently use and maintain the CRM. Once launched, SILO will use Bloomerang to improve donor tracking and follow-up and begin sending quarterly e-newsletters and targeted donor communications—capabilities we have not previously had in a centralized system.

A second component of the initiative is strengthening SILO's digital presence. SILO's website has received limited attention in recent years and no longer adequately communicates the breadth or impact of our work. After meeting Felix Havkin of Serenity Digital Group through the Southern Chester County Chamber of Commerce, SILO began working with Felix and his team, who offered the organization a discounted rate for their digital services. Their work includes updating the website's structure and visual appearance, improving opportunities to tell SILO's story through photos and video, and making information about our programs easier to access.

The website improvements will also be integrated with the new CRM. Bloomerang provides additional online giving capabilities, allowing SILO to improve its donation pages, offer additional payment options, and create program-specific giving links. These improvements will make giving easier for donors whether they are responding immediately to a story or making a more considered philanthropic decision.

Following the website update, maintaining its functionality, security, and content will be essential so that this investment remains effective over time. SILO will establish an ongoing plan for website maintenance and updates rather than allowing the site to again become outdated.

Timeline: CRM selection and initial implementation began in March; data migration, system configuration, and staff training will continue through early November; year-end donor outreach will begin in November/December; and quarterly donor communications will begin the following year. Website redevelopment is currently underway, with ongoing maintenance and content updates continuing after launch.

Costs: Bloomerang's two-year contract totals $5,938, of which SILO has already paid $2,338. Veronica Anne Rae's consulting cost totaled $5,000. Ongoing website optimization and support from Serenity Digital Group will cost $2,000. Grant funding will support the remaining investment in Bloomerang and website maintenance.

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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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 ###

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