I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

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Date: 9/17/2026

Contact Information

Organization Name: **West Chester Dance Works**
Address: **315 Westtown Road #9 West Chester, PA 19382**
Phone: **610-692-3398**
Website: **www.westchesterdanceworks.org**
Year Incorporated: **1983**
FEIN: **30-0080438**

ED/CEO Name: **Diane Matthews**
ED/CEO E-mail: **Director@wcdw.org**
Board Chair Name: **Donna Hymes**
Board Chair Approval (check here): [X]
Primary Contact Name: **Diane Matthews**
Primary Contact E-mail: **Director@wcdw.org**

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: The mission of West Chester Dance Works (WCDW) is to uplift, nurture and transform dancers and community through an accessible, inclusive dance experience.

Geographic Area Served *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):*
WCDW serves Chester County, Delaware County, Montgomery County and the greater Delaware Valley.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. *(Include Chester County # &/or % served.)*
We serve a diverse community with dancers and audiences including Black, White, Asian and Latinx people. As an organization with diverse leadership, it is important for us to be an inclusive place where all feel safe to grow and thrive. We are actively seeking to expose individuals who may not know about organized dance classes, and all that can be gained. We have always tried to find those who may not be able to afford dance classes to offer a scholarship. Membership in our performing groups is open to anyone nine years of age and older, amateur or professional, interested in participating after acceptance through the completion of an audition process meeting all commitment criteria set forth by the artistic director. Students ages 3 and up in our resident school, the Diane Matthews School of Dance Arts, have the opportunity for exposure to various genres of dance instruction. WCDW had 32 performing members and 180 school students this past season, and it is estimated that approximately 5,000 individuals were reached from the variety of engagements the company partook in. Over the past year, engagements included neighborhood parks, community events, dance festivals, senior citizens' facilities, fundraisers for autism, Juneteenth celebrations, and more.

Annual Budget $_____**434,213**_____
___**65**___ % of budget for program expenses
___**25**___ % of budget for administrative expenses
____**9**___ % of budget for fundraising expenses
100% = total

___**1**____ # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
___**6**____ # of Board Volunteers
___**25**____ # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
___**150**____ # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: **Pincus Family Foundation, Pennsylvania Creative Industries, JD2 Environmental, Vanguard**

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	**X**	Merger, Closure
	Mission, Vision, Strategy		Board Engagement & Leadership		Marketing, Communication
X	Resource Development		Operations		Technology
	If other, please describe:				

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: $_____**10,000**_____

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

West Chester Dance Works (WCDW) continues to build on the merger of our nonprofit dance company and dancing school. With $10,000 in capacity-building support from the Chester County Community Foundation last year, we were able to create a new unified website and improve our marketing and communications, giving the organization a stronger and more consistent presence in the community. Our next step is to strengthen our fundraising efforts by creating a dedicated Special Projects & Fundraising/Events Coordinator position. This person will help plan and carry out fundraising efforts and events, stay connected with donors, alumni, volunteers, and community partners, and manage the communication and follow-up that are so important to successful fundraising. This position will help us build on the work made possible through the previous grant and give WCDW the staffing support we need to grow our fundraising efforts and continue strengthening the organization following the merger.

Capacity Building Proposal: Staffing and Organizational Sustainability

Chester County Community Foundation,

West Chester Dance Works (WCDW) is very grateful for the Chester County Community Foundation's continued support of our organization. Last year, CCCF provided WCDW with $10,000 in capacity-building support to strengthen our branding, marketing, and digital infrastructure as we continued bringing the Diane Matthews School of Dance Arts and West Chester Dance Works together under one nonprofit organization.

That support made a real difference. With CCCF's investment, we created a new, unified website that gives our students, families, donors, community partners, and audiences one place to learn about WCDW and what we offer. We also improved our marketing and communication efforts, giving us better ways to share our classes, performances, and community programs. Having these pieces in place has helped us communicate who we are more clearly and has given us a much better starting point for the work ahead.

As we have continued to grow and settle into our unified organization, we have also seen where we need additional help. The merger brought our school and nonprofit company together, but it also means that we are now managing a larger organization with many different moving parts. Our educational programs, performing companies, community outreach, fundraising, events, and day-to-day administrative needs all require attention. Right now, much of this work is being handled by a small number of staff members who are wearing many hats.

We have reached a point where we need to add staff, not simply because there is more work to do, but because we need someone who can give fundraising and development the consistent attention it deserves. For this year's capacity-building initiative, we are seeking support for a dedicated Special Projects & Fundraising/Events Coordinator, with the goal of filling the position immediately.

Special Projects & Fundraising/Events Coordinator

Fundraising is an important part of keeping WCDW going. Our programs are supported through a combination of tuition, ticket sales, grants, donations, sponsorships, and community partnerships. We are fortunate to have people and organizations who believe in our work, but maintaining those relationships and continuing to build new ones takes time and consistent follow-through.

We are ready to hire for this position now. The role is a part-time W-2 position at $20 per hour for 10 hours per week, for 49 weeks, for a total personnel cost of $9,800. Filling the position now will allow us to begin putting more consistent time and attention toward fundraising during the current fiscal year, rather than trying to fit this work around the many other responsibilities already being handled by our staff.

The coordinator would help manage fundraising campaigns and events, donor communications and follow-up, donor information, sponsorship and partnership outreach, and email and social media communications. The position would also provide support for seasonal events, productions, volunteers, our annual recital, and other fundraising activities throughout the year.

At present, this work is spread among staff members whose primary responsibilities are in other areas. As a result, fundraising often has to compete with the immediate needs of running the studio, teaching, producing performances, and carrying out our community programs. Having one person dedicated to this work would allow us to be more consistent about staying in touch with donors, following up with potential sponsors and partners, planning fundraising activities, and looking for new opportunities to support WCDW.

This request builds directly on the work CCCF helped us accomplish through last year's grant. We now have the unified website and improved marketing tools that we needed. We are at the point where we need the staff support to make the most of these improvements and continue building relationships with the people who support WCDW.

The addition of this position will give us more time to focus on our donors and community partners and to be more intentional about fundraising throughout the year. It will also take some of this work off the plates of staff members who are already responsible for artistic, educational, and administrative duties. In turn, that will give our leadership more time to focus on programming, community outreach, planning, and the day-to-day work of serving our dancers and families.

For us, this is about building a sustainable organization for the future. We want important responsibilities to have a person behind them who has the time to do them well. We also want to be in a position to respond when a fundraising, sponsorship, or community opportunity comes our way, rather than having to pass it by because there simply isn't enough time.

WCDW has come a long way through the process of bringing our school and nonprofit company together. We have created a unified identity, strengthened our communications, launched a new website, and continued finding new ways to bring dance into the community. We are proud of that progress, and we know that continuing to grow will require us to invest in the people who make that work possible.

We are grateful to the Chester County Community Foundation for recognizing the importance of this work and for helping WCDW strengthen the organization behind our programs. Last year's support helped us improve how we present ourselves and connect with our community. We hope you will continue alongside us as we build on that progress and put the staff support in place to sustain the work we have worked so hard to build.

Thank you,
Diane Matthews
Founder & Executive Director
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