

What to Know about the Longwood Foundation's Grantmaking

- 1. The Longwood Foundation was founded in 1937 by Pierre S du Pont.** Since then, the Foundation has provided over \$2 billion in grants to nonprofits serving the state of Delaware and Chester County, Pennsylvania. We work to embody his explicit values of acting with integrity, empowering individuals, working hard, being responsible and accountable, and taking the long-term view.
- 2. We are a place-based, responsive grantmaker.** We accept grant requests from nonprofit organizations located in and/or benefiting the state of Delaware and/or within a four-mile radius of Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Within this geography, we welcome organizations to submit requests most important to them and the communities they serve. Each year we grant between \$20 to \$30 million through our competitive responsive grantmaking process. In 2025, we issued grants between \$10,000 and \$2 million, with the recent average between \$250,000 and \$400,000.
- 3. Our mission is to be a catalyst to strengthen nonprofits in our region.** Our vision is that nonprofits are better able to serve their communities, thereby improving quality of life. We meet our vision when nonprofits in our region meet their respective missions. Therefore, our grantmaking is geared towards helping a nonprofit get closer to their mission and goals. Our dollars should drive impact. We are looking for catalytic proposals – those that help a nonprofit grow, strengthen, or improve their efforts and impact.
- 4. We are open to proposals in nearly all sectors and from those employing different strategic approaches. We will fund operating, program, and/or capital requests.** We do not have funding priorities, nor do we start any given grant cycle with specified funding targets in given sectors. Rather, we are looking for the highest and best use of our funds. As a funder, we do not believe we are best positioned to drive (or define) the change to improve the quality of life in our region. We believe that nonprofits most proximate to the challenges are best positioned to define problems, craft solutions, and drive change – thus why we implement an open application process. We are agnostic to the strategic approaches that organizations take (i.e., there is not one “right answer” or silver bullet to any challenge in ways that should exclude other approaches). What catalytic means should be defined by the nonprofit, and our funding can support you in ways that you define. We are indifferent to whether it's for capital, operating, or programming. Note that we do not provide funding for explicitly religious purposes, nor do we provide funding for events, endowments, or individual scholarships.
- 5. The Longwood Foundation does not provide routine general operating funding.** Because our grantmaking is aimed at helping an organization improve and grow in service of their mission, our funding is focused on supporting that growth. Therefore, we are not a routine general operating funder for nonprofits (i.e., we will not provide a grant to support the existing level of operations and services).

- 6. Grantees are asked to sustain their growth in operations and impact after Longwood's funding.** Our grants typically span two years, during which time grantees are growing their impact and/or operations in the ways they define. We take the long-term view. Because we do not provide routine general operating funding, an important lens in our grantmaking decisions is how the nonprofit will sustain that growth and new operating level/impact after our dollars run out.
- 7. We operate two grant cycles, with deadlines of March 1st and September 1st.** Whether approved or declined, organizations are required to wait two years between requests. Therefore, nonprofits should be thoughtful about when to approach us with a funding request. You can read more about what to expect and the requirements for the application process by reviewing our Grant Lifecycle At-A-Glance.
- 8. To determine whether the proposal is a fit for Longwood, prospective applicants should ask themselves three key questions:** (1) What are you looking to grow, strengthen, or improve through a Longwood grant?; (2) What will the impact be and how will you know whether you've achieved it (i.e., what are your measures of success?); and (3) How will you sustain the growth in impact and operations after the grant?
- 9. Our rigorous process looks at both the organization and the details of the proposal.** We have been told that our selection process sets a high bar. If you apply, you can expect us to seek to understand your capacity to execute, deliver, & grow as proposed, how impactful that will be for our region, and how likely you are to sustain that level of impact and operations after our funds run out. We put particular emphasis on:
 - a. Leadership and governance;
 - b. Financial health and sustainability;
 - c. Impact, outcomes, and measuring success;
 - d. Quality of planning; and
 - e. Experience and knowledge of the sector and the community served.
- 10. The cash flow projection is a forward-looking tool that helps us to understand and pressure test your ambition, project plan, and pace of growth against your existing scale and sources of income.** As part of the application process, you will prepare a cash flow projection, which some nonprofits may refer to as a cash flow forecast. This document asks you to predict the revenues and expenses for both the organization as well as the proposed project over the length of the grant (typically two years). Note that this differs from the historical cash flow statement that would be included in your financial statements. A cash flow projection serves as a functional reality check for you and for us. We ask that you make some thoughtful and informed assumptions about what will materialize over the grant period, and explicitly articulate those assumptions in the document. These assumptions are the explanation as to how you landed at the revenue and expense projections. We do not expect you to have a crystal ball. We recognize these will not play out exactly as articulated. However, we have found that organizations who have their arms around this tool and who lean into using it are best positioned to weather the uncertainty of nonprofit fundraising as well as set realistic and ambitious goals and operational plans for growth. Given that we are looking to understand how you will sustain this new level of operations and impact after our grant, your cash flow will illustrate how our grant serves as a bridge from your existing state of operations towards your planned future state.

Cash allows you to pay your employees and vendors, and we ask for the granularity of a monthly or quarterly look because it allows us to understand the cash inflow and outflow needs that play out over the course of a grant. This document is the glue between your project plan, proposed outcomes/measures of success, and historical financials – and serves as a road map for you to measure your financial progress against your plan if a grant is made.

- 11. Outcomes are your measures of success and are an important way for us to distinguish where our dollars will be most impactful.** We look to you to define what success looks like through our grant, and quantitatively how you'll know you've achieved it. We do not want you to create or propose outcomes for us that are not important for your nonprofit. These should speak to and resonate with how you think about what success looks like – and represent 2-4 measures that are important for your nonprofit. For this reason, many times we find that nonprofits are strongly positioned to provide these when they can lift them directly out of their strategic plan. Be thoughtful when you're drafting these. While we want to see and understand your ambition, we will ultimately be holding you accountable to them. One of our founder's values – and thus our values – is to be responsible and accountable. Through our grantmaking, your performance on these outcomes is one way we think about whether a grant was successful.
- 12. Longwood will provide up to half of the funding for your project and/or planned growth.** We will want to understand how you'll raise the remaining amount, and organizations are best positioned when our requested funds are to be the last dollars needed. When applying for operating support, this can be thought of as taking half of your planned operating growth in each of the next two years (compared to the current fiscal year).
- 13. We intentionally keep grant reporting requirements and interactions to a minimum.** We purposefully minimize our reporting and check-ins, requiring just one final report to close out the grant. Further, we are intentionally leanly staffed compared to other foundations of our scale. Once we provide a grant, we believe in getting out of your way and allowing you to focus your time and effort on implementing your work. Unless there is a significant change or challenge encountered, we do not expect to hear from you.

Mission - The Longwood Foundation is a catalyst to strengthen nonprofit organizations in Delaware and the Kennett Square area.

Vision – Nonprofit organizations in Delaware and the Kennett Square area are better able to serve their communities, thereby improving quality of life.