

This is a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) designed to attract high-level creative agencies or consultants to create a capital campaign toolkit (pitch packet). It emphasizes the "Collective Impact" model used by the Lancaster Clean Water Partners and focuses on turning technical environmental data into a compelling narrative for donors.

Request for Proposal (RFP):

Fundraising Capital Campaign Pitch Packet Development

Project Title: Lancaster Clean Water Partners Narrative & Pitch Presentation

Issued By: Lancaster Clean Water Partners

Date of Issue: 2/27/2026 **Proposals Due:** 4/1/2026

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1. Project Overview

Lancaster Clean Water Partners (the Partners) is seeking a creative firm to design and develop a **Fundraising Capital Campaign Pitch Packet**. This packet—a concise, visually-driven presentation—will be the primary tool for securing large-scale investment from private donors, foundations, and corporate partners to the Clean Water Fund and network leadership. This campaign will be major donor focused and not include a public small gifts phase.

The Partners' work as a network is based upon our [Common Agenda](#), the vision and roadmap for **clean and clear water by 2040** supported by the community. The Common Agenda describes how we align collectively to achieve our shared vision, and clearly communicates our goals, metrics and measurements. It outlines the network's values, priorities and cross cutting strategies. Detailed best management practices that help achieve the shared clean water goals are outlined in our [Countywide Action Plan](#).

In 2019, the Partners established the Clean Water Fund to support and implement watershed conservation projects in Lancaster County, PA. The Lancaster County Community Foundation is the host, providing financial stewardship for the donor advised fund (current structure). The Lancaster Clean Water Partners administer the program, which means establishing criteria, yearly priorities, and application questions. An independent advisory committee of local experts score applications to determine which local water quality improvement projects receive the dollars in the form of grants. This donor advised fund is an opportunity for partner organizations to collaboratively fundraise to one place that provides capacity building and accelerated implementation.

In 2024, the Partners' Board of Directors established a strategic goal of significantly increasing private funding that is additive to current funding coming into the network. The intent is to increase the total amount of dollars coming into the Clean Water Fund so that the network can better support the 90 partner organizations but avoid competition with donors who may already be directly supporting our partner organizations locally. The Partners, after extensive conversations with network organizations and sector stakeholders, have set a goal of \$10 million (+/-) from a small group of private individuals, foundations and businesses **outside** of Lancaster County. The pitch packet needs to be ready for initial feasibility with a "pilot" campaign of \$500,000 in the first year, and ultimately be scalable to achieve the \$10 million goal by 2031.

More funding for project implementation will accomplish our 2nd priority in the Common Agenda: Accelerated Implementation. Increased development and installation of projects that engage communities and improve the health of local streams. In our most recent grant process through the 2026 Countywide Action Plan we received grant requests of \$8,400,000, yet only met one third of the demand by awarding \$2,250,000 grant dollars to seven out of 21 projects submitted. Maintaining project momentum is vital to keeping landowners engaged, projects moving forward and ultimately seeing water quality improvements.

This pitch packet project will include the creation of donor-centric campaign materials including a case for support, financial and project details, and a call to action. The deliverables are a set of supporting documents that tell the compelling story of how this unique network approach has a bigger impact than individual organizations. These will show how this is the most efficient way to achieve clean and clear water in Lancaster County by 2040, the ways in which the work in Lancaster impacts the Chesapeake Bay, and why funders from outside Lancaster should invest in the work being done here.

The pitch packet will be used in a campaign primarily outside of Lancaster County for growth of the Clean Water Fund. Implementation dollars and financial resources to sustain and grow backbone staff leadership.

2. About Lancaster Clean Water Partners

The Lancaster Clean Water Partners is a countywide, collaborative network of more than ninety diverse organizations – local leaders in business, municipal public service, higher education, conservation planning, and non-profit management – that come together with a shared vision of clean and clear water in Lancaster by 2040. The Partners follow the Collective Impact framework, a structured, cross-sector approach designed to solve complex social problems by aligning diverse stakeholders—government, business, non-profits, and citizens—around a common agenda, shared measurement, and mutually reinforcing activities, supported by a dedicated backbone organization. ([Stanford Social Innovation Review: Collective Impact](#)).

The need for water quality improvement is urgent because the streams in Lancaster need to have reduced pollutants at a pace that is not only on target with the [Bay Agreement](#) but also achieves local water quality goals. The cross-sector collaboration of this group is essential to accomplishing goals and requires intentional outreach, strategic and strong partnerships, as well as transparency and inclusive practices. The Partners have come together to design and drive a strategy with a collective approach so that Lancaster County will see improved water quality across the landscape.

- **Website:** lancastercleanwaterpartners.com
- **Vision:** clean and clear water in Lancaster by 2040
- **Mission:** to collaborate, accelerate, and expand efforts to restore and sustain healthy waterways in Lancaster County. The Common Agenda outlines how we'll get there.

3. Scope of Work & Content Requirements

The selected consultant will be responsible for the narrative arc and graphic design of a 10–12 page/slide "Pitch Packet." The content must weave together the following five pillars:

1. The Case for Support (Core Document)

This is the central tool that publications or other parts of this product will be based on. Work with staff at the backbone to combine the Common Agenda priorities and the expanded Clean Water Fund objectives into compelling presentations:

- A Compelling Vision & Mission for the Fund: A clear, bold statement about the future impact of the project, focusing on the community benefit rather than just the organization's needs.
- The Problem/Challenge: A specific, urgent description of the current state of Lancaster's waterways. Over half of our 1,400+ miles of streams are impaired. This is a local health issue, an economic issue, and a downstream responsibility (Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay). The opportunity is to diversify funding by leveraging substantial private support to traditional public support.
- The Solution/Project Plan: The Partners have a proven track record for managing large funds with a local network to assure donors of best use for their support.
 - A detailed summary of why the Collective Impact model was chosen, how it works, and the **Countywide Action Plan (CAP)**. Our data-backed blueprint identifies exactly where and how nitrogen and phosphorus reductions must happen to meet state and federal mandates.
 - *Reference:* [Countywide Action Plan](#)
- Urgency: A compelling reason why the project must happen immediately, highlighting recent wins—acres of riparian buffers planted, miles of streams trending towards being delisted, and the massive influx of collaborative funding already managed by the Partners. Highlight the necessity to maintain forward momentum of motivated partners and willing landowners.
- Impact & Outcomes: Concrete, data-driven, or anecdotal evidence of the positive change the project will bring.
- Past success of both Partners backbone staff and 90+ partners implementing projects, financial stability, and leadership expertise.

2. Financial & Project Details

- Campaign Goal & Budget: A clear, detailed budget breaking down exactly how the funds will be used for implementation, backbone organization administration and an endowment. It will include soft costs and fundraising expenses.
- Gift Range Chart (Table of Needs): A chart showing the number and size of gifts required to meet the goal (e.g., "1 gift of \$1M, 5 gifts of \$100k"), demonstrating a realistic path to success.
- Timeline: A realistic schedule of the campaign phases and project milestones.

3. Donor-Centric Materials

- Personalized Letter/Proposal: A letter tailored to the specific prospect, highlighting their connection to the cause and proposing a specific gift amount.
- Pledge Form: A clear document explaining how to donate, including payment schedules (e.g., pledges paid over 3–5 years) and multi-year options.
- Donation follow up: A letter tailored to donors to express the Partner's gratitude and the impact of the donation.

4. Supporting Visuals & Collateral

- Brochure: A concise, visually appealing, branded summary of the case for support.
- Impact Stories/Testimonials: Stories from partners and projects which have benefited from the Partner's coordination.
- Committee/Board List: A list of campaign leaders to build trust and legitimacy.

5. Final Call to Action (CTA)

- A direct, emotional invitation for the donor to play a key role in the project, concluding with contact information.

4. Deliverables

The Lancaster Clean Water Partners will have a complete set of supporting materials in a user-friendly format for future use to launch a Capital Campaign

1. **Pitch Deck:** A high-impact digital presentation (PowerPoint, Keynote, or Canva) optimized for both live presentations and digital sharing in a Capital Campaign.
2. **Executive Summary PDF:** A "leave-behind" 2-page print-ready version of the pitch.
3. **Visual Assets:** High-resolution infographics or maps.
4. **Ownership of Work Product and Content:** All deliverables, intellectual property, and copyright are the property of the client immediately upon creation.

5. Audience

The primary audience consists of:

- Funders of Collaboratives or Networks.
- Community leaders looking for legacy projects.
- High-net-worth individuals and family foundations.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) officers.

6. Submission Requirements

Interested parties should submit a proposal including:

- **Executive Summary:** overview of the proposed work plan, methodology, and scope of work explaining how project requirements will be met.
- **Vendor Overview and Qualifications:** background information, team (that will work on the project) introduction, certifications, resumes and a list of subcontractors who would work on this project.
- **Portfolio:** Examples of previous "Pitch Packets" or "Impact Reports" created for non-profits or environmental organizations and contact information for past clients.
- **Narrative Strategy:** A brief description of how you would approach telling the Partners story.
- **Project Timeline & Milestones:** Specific dates, deliverables, and proposed project management approach.
- **Budget:** A fixed-fee quote for the deliverables listed above and payment terms.

Twenty pages maximum.

7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- **Storytelling Ability:** Does the proposal highlight the collective action approach in Lancaster County, and how it impacts our local streams and communities as well as those downstream? **15 points**
- **Project Timeline & Milestones:** Specific dates, deliverables, and proposed project management approach. **10 points**
- **Visual Excellence:** Clean, modern, and professional design aesthetic. **10 points**
- **Strategic Alignment:** Demonstrated understanding of the Collective Impact model related to the Partner's efforts and how to approach a Capital Campaign with potential donors who know very little about the Partners. **15 points**
- **Expertise:** Demonstrated knowledge of major donor campaigns and experience working with fundraisers. **15 points**
- **Budget:** Anticipated costs. **15 points.**
- **Local Context:** Familiarity with Lancaster County's unique agricultural and urban landscape (preferred but not required). **5 points**

8. Contact & Timeline

- **Date of Issue:** 2/27/2026
 - **Questions Due:** 3/25/2026
 - **Proposals Due:** 4/1/2026
 - **Submission Email:** mdykman@lancastercleanwaterpartners.com
 - **Finalist Interviews:** 4/6/2026-4/27/2026
 - **Project Kickoff Window:** 5/1/2026 - 5/11/2026
 - **Final Deliverables Due:** 11/30/2026
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Note to Applicants: *We are not looking for a traditional brochure. We are looking for a tool that makes a funder feel like they are missing out on the most significant environmental movement in Pennsylvania if they don't join the Partners.*