



## LAY CONTINUING EDUCATION & FORMATION ENDOWMENT FUND

Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland

February 15, 2022

### HISTORY

The Lay Continuing Education & Formation Endowment Fund, administered by the Catholic Foundation of Maine, was established through the *Strengthening the Heartbeat of the Church Campaign* in 2008. The purpose of the endowment was to build resources to support the present and future lay ecclesial ministry of the Catholic Church in Maine.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this fund is to provide grants to current employees and volunteers of parishes, Maine Catholic schools, and diocesan offices (*such as pastoral life coordinators and associates, business coordinators, music ministers, catechetical leaders, teachers and youth ministers, etc.*) to further their education and training related to professional service within the Church. This fund also provides parishes, Maine Catholic schools, diocesan offices, and affiliated organizations of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland with grants to support education, training, and the start - up of new initiatives related to adult faith formation and professional service to the Church. The fund is not intended for the annual budgets of ongoing or recurring programs.

### GRANT CYCLE AND TIMELINE

Grant applications and awards are offered annually for expenditures incurred in the next fiscal year. Grants are awarded according to the funding available in a given year.

Grants will range from \$250 to \$3,500 for individuals. For parishes, diocesan schools, diocesan offices, and affiliated organizations the amount may be between \$2,000 and \$10,000. Parishes, schools, diocesan offices, and affiliated organizations may submit multiple requests in the same grant cycle, though often only one new project will be recommended for funding.

Grant application available on-line	January/February
Submission of grant application and attachment	March 30
Applications reviewed by the Grant Review Committee (GRC)	April/May
Decisions communicated	May 30
Distribution of awarded grants	July 1 to June 30 of the following year

## **PROCESS**

In January of each year, the grant application forms will become available on the diocesan website, with notifications sent to parishes, diocesan schools, diocesan offices, and affiliated organization by the usual channels of communication.

Individuals, parishes, diocesan schools, diocesan offices and affiliated organizations must submit their grant application and required attachments electronically to the Office of Ministerial Services c/o the Diocese of Portland by March 30 of the same year. Handwritten attachments or attachments which are not legible will not be accepted.

The Office of Ministerial Services will:

- screen all submissions for eligibility, accuracy and required fields.
- make an additional request for further information if needed
- assign the application to the appropriate priority category (See "Selection Process.")
- make all the submission materials available to the Grant Review Committee
- coordinate meetings of the Grant Review Committee
- notify applicants of approval or denial
- oversee disbursement of funds according to the grant awards with proper documentation

The Grant Review Committee (See below) will:

- evaluate each application according to the published criteria (See "Eligibility.")
- review and discuss the applications to make funding recommendations.
- submit grant recommendations to the bishop.

The bishop will review the GRC's recommendations and give his final approval. The Moderator of the Curia will communicate the bishop's decision, in writing, to each applicant by May 30. The Bishop of Portland also reserves the right to directly make grants from the proceeds of the endowment consistent with the purposes of the endowment.

## **GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE**

The GRC is comprised of seven (7) members who are recommended to, and appointed by the Bishop. The GRC will manage the grant process, review grant requests and proposals, and make recommendations to the Bishop for his approval. The GRC will be comprised of:

- Moderator of the Curia, chair (non-voting except in case of a tie)
- Executive Director of the Catholic Foundation of Maine (or delegate)
- Director of the Office of Lifelong Faith Formation
- Superintendent of Maine Catholic Schools
- Director of Human Resources
- Diocesan Priest or Deacon (5-year term, beginning 2013)
- At Large Lay Representative (non-employee) (5-year term, beginning 2016)

The Controller of the Diocese of Portland and the Administrative Assistant of the Office of Ministerial Services serve as staff to the committee.

When necessary, the current year GRC members will recommend potential candidates to the bishop for future GRC membership (i.e., for the Diocesan Priest or Deacon and the At Large Lay Representative).

## ELIGIBILITY

Current employees and volunteers of parishes, Maine Catholic schools, and diocesan offices are eligible to apply for a grant from the Lay Continuing Education & Formation Endowment Fund. In addition, parishes, Maine Catholic Schools, diocesan offices and affiliated organizations are themselves also eligible to apply for a grant from the Fund.

Funding is awarded for programs taking place from July 1 of a particular grant cycle through June 30 of the following year only, e.g. July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020.

Applications accepted for:

- Tuition for college and university courses or certificate programs from approved and accredited institutions in catechetics, theology, and religious studies or in a subject related to an individual's work as an employee or volunteer. Individuals in ongoing degree or certificate programs may re-apply for funding in subsequent years; however, funding **is not guaranteed** for each year of a degree or certificate program. Requests for funding in subsequent years will be considered upon verification of successful completion of academic work in the years previously funded. Applicants who received funding for a degree or certificate program are not eligible for additional funding for three years after the completion of the degree or certificate program.
- Registration fees for approved seminars, conventions, or conferences related to an individual's work as an employee or volunteer or which foster adult faith formation or professional development. In addition, costs for travel, lodging, and meals (per diem) for the same out-of-state seminars, conventions, or conferences. Applicants are eligible for such grants once in a three-year period.
- Start-up expenses for new initiatives related to faith formation activities for adults sponsored by parishes, schools, diocesan offices, or affiliated organizations. These entities may apply for ongoing startup expenses in successive years. Funding **is not guaranteed** after the first year. Funding is limited to a maximum of three successive years of start-up expenses. Future new initiatives will be considered three years after the last grant for a previous initiative.
- New or one-time training and education programs related to adult faith formation or professional development offered by parishes, schools, diocesan offices and affiliated organizations for their own employees or volunteers.

Expenses *not* covered by grant funds:

- Books and materials for such seminars and classes as identified above.
- In-state travel, lodging, and meals to and from seminars, conventions, or class.
- Non-tuition fees for an academic or certificate program, such as application fees, student services fees, room and board.
- Catechetical texts, series, or subscriptions.
- Any faith formation activities or materials related to children or youth
- Capital expenses for equipment or devices
- Primarily spiritual or devotional events or initiatives for parishioners at large, or liturgical training for parish liturgical ministers

## **REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants must complete the application form, which includes a breakdown of expenses related to the program, and the following information:

### For Individuals

- Name of course, seminar or conference
- Description of the course, seminar, or conference
- Name of the applicant's Sponsoring Institution or Organization
- Brochure/Invoice showing course, seminar, or conference cost
- Total cost of participation (lodging, meals, registration, etc.) including registration form, hotel rates, etc.
- Signature of the pastor in the case of a parish employee or volunteer, or the principal in the case of a Maine Catholic school employee or volunteer, or the immediate supervisor in the case of an employee or volunteer of a diocesan office.

### For parishes, Maine Catholic schools, diocesan offices and affiliated organizations

- Description of program, including number of people intended to serve
- Current operating budget for a new program including projected revenue and expenses
- Brochure/Invoice showing program cost if applicable
- Names of people who will be involved in leading the program
- Signature of pastor in the case of a request for a parish grant, the principal in the case of a request for a grant for a Maine Catholic school, or the department supervisor in the case of a request for a grant from a diocesan office or affiliated organization.

If the grant is approved, the Diocese will pay costs directly for the approved activity, upon submission of bills, invoices, registration forms, etc. Grants for tuition or conference fees will be paid to the appropriate institution upon submission of an invoice and proof of registration from the same institution. Reimbursement to award recipients for approved expenses will only be made with supporting documentation. The recipient must provide invoice, registration form and or a receipt showing the expenses incurred before funds will be dispersed. Only award letters that include a specific amount or per diem allowance may be used to cover out of state meal/lodging expenses associated with the particular grant activity.

In the event the successful applicant cannot use the funds disbursed, whether in total or in part, the total award or any residual amount must be returned to the Office of Ministerial Services of the Diocese of Portland. Any unpaid balance from an award cannot be applied for a different purpose in the same year or for the same purpose in the next fiscal year.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Applications submitted after the submission deadline will not be considered for grants. Applications which are incomplete at the time of the submission deadline will not be considered for grants.

GRC will convene to determine which applicants (individuals and groups) to recommend for funding based on the eligibility and requirement guidelines. Final recommendations will be determined by simple majority vote to approve or deny. The GRC will act on applications, keeping in mind the funding available in a given year, according to the following list of priorities:

1. Funding for adult formation activities designated by the Diocesan Bishop
2. Requests for tuition for credit in degree programs for individuals
3. Requests for costs for certificate programs for individuals
4. Requests for costs for seminars, training sessions, conventions, etc, for individuals
5. Requests for funding for initiatives in parishes and Maine Catholic Schools
6. Requests for funding for initiatives in diocesan offices and affiliated organizations

The GRC will conduct one cycle of grant requests per year.