

Fields Pond Foundation Inc.

Application Guidelines

About the Foundation

Fields Pond Foundation was established in 1993 as a Private Foundation under IRS Sections 501(c)(3) and 509(a). Its primary mission is *to provide financial assistance to nature and land conservation organizations that are community-based and that serve to increase environmental awareness by involving local residents in conservation issues.*

The Foundation's emphasis stems from its founding Directors' beliefs that the conservation of special places in our environment, and providing public accessibility to those conservation areas, is a desirable end in itself; but it is also a means of building public support for future land and river conservation by increasing the direct connection between individuals and their environment, and fostering active participation in the work of conservation. The Foundation hopes to nurture such efforts by making grants under the following priorities:

1. Project grants for trailmaking and other enhancement of public access to conservation lands, rivers, coastlines and other natural resources;
2. Land acquisition and conservation;
3. Assistance in establishment of endowments as a means of funding stewardship of newly protected conservation areas; and
4. Directly related education programs and publications as components of a land protection project.

The Foundation encourages proposals from municipal government agencies. The Foundation may also consider short-term loans to conservation groups for the purpose of acquiring conservation lands.

The Foundation is looking for grantmaking opportunities where a modest investment of grant funds can help in a significant way to improve public access to and enjoyment of natural areas, while maintaining the health and integrity of the environment. Projects in which volunteerism is a significant component are more likely to be funded.

Application Procedures

We hope to make the application process as straightforward as possible. To save you time, we suggest you first determine whether your proposal falls within our general guidelines. Organizations with unique or complex projects are welcome to discuss their proposal plans with us, and may wish to begin the application process by submitting a one-page proposal outline. Among other purposes, the proposal outline is intended to save applicants from spending a great deal of time and expense in preparing elaborate proposals which may not be funded. Outlines are considered at the regular meetings of Directors, and applicants will be notified promptly regarding the outcome. If the Directors or staff believe that the concept merits further consideration, a full proposal will be requested.

We encourage applicants to contact us informally before proceeding to prepare a formal application.

We are pleased to accept proposals prepared under the Associated Grant Makers (AGM) Common Proposal Format.

Other full proposals need not be more than three or four pages long, plus attachments, but should include the following:

Information About Your Organization

- History of the organization, its mission and major accomplishments, its geographic scope and special populations served, if any.

Board and staff rosters, and an indication of the capabilities of key staff to be involved in the proposed project.

- Current and projected operating budgets, the most recent financial statement, an annual report (if one is published), and a complete copy of the most recent IRS Form 990 (if appropriate to the organization).
- Current copy of the tax exemption letter from the IRS under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including the indication that the organization is "not a private foundation" under Section 509(a).

Proposal Content

- Concise description of the purpose for which the grant is sought, including both the general goals and the specific objectives of the project, and a summary of the anticipated benefits for the environment, the organization, local residents and the broader population.
- An indication of how your proposal is consistent with the Foundation's significant objectives.
- Evidence that the funds will be used to address an important need that would otherwise remain unmet.
- The project's budget, a description and summary of other firm or likely sources of funding, and, for projects that are intended to continue beyond the proposed period of

the Foundation's support, an indication of plans for ongoing funding.

- An indication of plans for evaluating the project and reporting the results to the Foundation.

How and When to Apply

- One copy of your full proposal should be sent to the Foundation office either by mail or by email. Proposals must be complete in order to receive funding consideration. An incoming proposal is critically assessed to determine whether it meets current guidelines and interest. If it does not, the proposal may be denied immediately or following a regular meeting of the Directors. In all other cases, notification as to the Directors' decision will be given shortly after regular meetings.
- Proposals and concept papers may be submitted at any time, since the Directors meet regularly throughout the year.

Grant Size and Type

The expected range of grants is \$500 to \$25,000 with most grants falling within the range of \$2,000 to \$10,000. The Foundation is willing to consider multiple-year grants.

Whenever possible we seek to expand the impact of limited funds through challenge grants, conditional grants, matching grants, and special initiatives, and by collaborating with other donors in joint funding efforts.

We welcome joint applications by two or more organizations coordinating their efforts on a single project.

Grantmaking Limitations

Although the Fields Pond Foundation attempts to be as inclusive as possible, there are some activities and interests that clearly fall outside the scope of these guidelines. As a normal practice, the Foundation is unlikely to make the following kinds of grants:

- support for deficits, for routine operating budgets or general appeals, or where the Foundation may become the predominant source of an organization's funding.
- for funding efforts usually supported by public subscription or through national appeals, or for purposes which are generally understood to be the responsibility of government.
- support for sectarian religious activities.
- to individuals, such as for personal needs, welfare, travel, or research.

Our regular grantmaking programs are presently limited to organizations in New England and New York State.

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