Historic religious buildings are community assets that help define local history, offer architectural significance, and provide vital space for community-serving programs. As a component of the Historic Preservation funding area priorities, The Cameron Foundation will provide Sacred Landmarks Grants of up to $25,000 to help eligible congregations maintain their physical facilities and preserve important landmark buildings for future generations.

Priority will be given to exterior preservation projects demonstrating urgent repair needs to primary worship buildings. Consideration will be given to roofing and drainage repairs, masonry repointing and restoration, structural repairs, and stained glass window repair and restoration. Grants to restore stained glass windows will only be considered if the windows are highly significant and severely deteriorated.

Grants cannot exceed $25,000 and are for exterior preservation projects only. Grants cannot be used for pipe organ restoration, interior work, mechanical upgrades or routine maintenance. Soft costs (architectural fees, plans, specifications, conditions surveys, etc.) cannot exceed 15% of the grant request and should be included in the total budget. Grants are not retroactive, and therefore, a grant cannot be used for any expenses that have been incurred prior to the date that the grant was awarded.

Sacred Landmarks Grants are awarded through the Foundation’s General Grants program. To be eligible for a Sacred Landmarks Grant within the Foundation’s Historic Preservation funding area, properties must be:

- Originally constructed as a church.
- Located in The Cameron Foundation’s service area.
- Owned by a religious institution and actively used for worship.
- Listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places or designated pursuant to a local landmarks ordinance by a city or county within the service area, either individually or as a contributing component of a historic district.

The following criteria are used when considering awards for Sacred Landmarks Grants:

- Architectural, historical, and cultural significance of the religious building
- Need for the project and financial resources of the congregation
- Appropriateness of the scope of the project, methodology, consultants and budget
- Applicant’s ability to manage and execute the project within the stated schedule
- Applicant’s ability to raise other sources of support to complete the project, as necessary
- Project meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

Applying for the Sacred Landmarks Grant

After reviewing the Foundation’s guidelines for Sacred Landmarks Grants to determine if your organization and proposed work meet the Foundation’s funding criteria, you are encouraged to contact The Cameron Foundation’s program staff about the project you wish to undertake.

As a component of the Historic Preservation funding area under the Foundation’s regular grant program, there are two rounds of funding for Sacred Landmarks Grants each year.

There are two steps in the grant application process. The first is the submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI). After the LOI has been reviewed by the Foundation, the second step is the submission of a Sacred Landmarks Grant Application if your organization is invited to do so by the Foundation.

Beginning with the June 2015 grant cycle, the Foundation is offering an online application process and is no longer accepting hard copy applications. Registration for the online system is based on your email address, a password you select, and your organization’s tax ID. Register here.
Step 1: Letter of Intent

The first step in the application process is the submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI). The LOI application includes an eligibility quiz, organizational information, a preliminary project budget, and proof of your organization’s tax-exempt status. The LOI will require the following information:

Eligibility Quiz – See eligibility requirements above

Organization Information
  • Organization contact information
  • Tax status
  • Denomination and Adjudicatory Group information
  • Number of your members and average attendance at weekly services
  • Building owner’s name
  • Brief background of the religious institution and congregation requesting support
  • Organization operating budget
  • Religious leader contact information

Primary Contact Information

Project Information
  • Project title
  • Brief description of the historical, architectural, and/or cultural significance of the property
  • Project budget amount
  • Amount requested from The Cameron Foundation
  • Brief description of the project for which funds are being requested
  • The plan to raise additional funds if needed, including possible sources of funding
  • The anticipated start date and end date for the project

Attachments
  • Preliminary Project Budget – Include requested amount from The Cameron Foundation, requested amount from other funders, and your organization’s financial resources committed to the proposed project.
  • Proof of Exemption – Include one of the following: 1) determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service indicating the organization is exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; OR 2) group determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service indicating that the group is exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and documentation that indicates that the organization is a member of the group; OR 3) a statement signed by an officer stating that the organization is automatically considered tax exempt because it meets the requirements of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code:
    o The organization must be organized and operated exclusively for religious, educational, scientific or other charitable purpose.
    o Net earnings may not inure to the benefit of any private individual or shareholder.
    o No substantial part of its activity may be attempting to influence legislation.
    o The organization may not intervene in political campaigns.
    o The organization’s purposes and activities may not be illegal or violate fundamental public policy.

The Foundation will provide a response to the LOI at least four weeks prior to the deadline for submitting proposals. Detailed application instructions will be made available in January 2015.

Step 2: Submitting Your Application for a Sacred Landmarks Grant

If your LOI is approved, you will be invited to submit a Sacred Landmarks Grant Application. Detailed application instructions will be made available in January 2015. Please note: Applicants are not to contact members of the Board of Directors or the Grants Committee regarding applications. Decisions are made approximately four months from the receipt of a completed application. Grants are awarded in June and October. Expenses may be applied to the grant effective the date of the grant award.
**Funds Distribution**
Funds will be distributed to grant awardees when The Cameron Foundation receives all of the following:

- A signed award letter between The Cameron Foundation and the grant recipient.
- A signed contract between the religious institution and consultant, architect or contractor.
- Evidence of additional sources of funds to complete the project, when applicable.

**Post-Grant Reporting**
Sacred Landmarks Grants are made with the expectation that the funds will be used within one year of the grant award. Sacred Landmarks Grant recipients are required to submit a Sacred Landmarks Grant Report by the date noted on the grant award letter. As part of the Foundation’s conversion to an online reporting system, this form is currently being updated. Detailed reporting instructions will be made available following the update to the online system.

**Links to Helpful Resources**
- **Common Bond** – The New York Landmarks Conservancy’s free journal of technical advice for religious properties that reaches over 6,000 subscribers nationally.
- **Partners for Sacred Places** – Partners for Sacred Places offers help to congregations through training programs, an information clearinghouse and a professional network. The organization also helps promote the value of a congregation’s architectural assets, its worth as a faith community, and the significance of its service to the community at large.
- **Partners for Sacred Places Information Center** – This resource for congregations contains over 10,000 books, articles, reports, brochures, and audio-visual materials. Many materials are available online at no charge.
- **Partners for Sacred Places Publications** – Books and pamphlets published by Partners for Sacred Places that help congregations maintain their historic buildings and raise funds to make capital improvements. These materials include publications such as *The Complete Guide to Capital Campaigns for Historic Churches and Synagogues* and *Your Sacred Place is a Community Asset: A Toolkit to Attract New Resources and New Partners*.
- **Preservation Virginia** – A statewide historic preservation leader dedicated to perpetuating and revitalizing Virginia’s cultural, architectural and historic heritage thereby ensuring that historic places are integral parts of the lives of present and future generations. The organization preserves, promotes and serves as an advocate for the state’s irreplaceable historic places for cultural, economic and educational benefits of everyone.
- **Restore Virginia Directory** – Preservation Virginia’s web-based resource dedicated to connecting people and resources to ensure the continued vitality of Virginia’s historic places. Search the directory to find contractors, craftsmen, materials and preservation related services for your historic property.
- **REPORT: Sacred Places At Risk: New Evidence On How Endangered Older Churches and Synagogues Serve Communities**
- **Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties**
- **Technical Guides** – The New York Landmarks Conservancy’s publications offering a wide range of technical advice.
- **Virginia Department of Historic Resources** – The State Historic Preservation Office which fosters, encourages, and supports the stewardship of Virginia’s significant historic architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources. The agency’s website provides information and resources related to historic registers, including the Preliminary Evaluation & Nomination Process, Preliminary Evaluation and Nomination Forms, and Register Listings by City & County. To obtain a copy of your original State or National Register form, contact the office at (804) 367-2323. Contact your local city or county government regarding local registers.