Welcome! My name is Laura Lee and I’m the Director of Grantmaking at the Maine Community Foundation. I’m joined by my colleagues Laura Reed, Senior Foundation Officer, and Joey Lendaro, Program Associate.

If you would like to use the chat box to introduce yourself and your organization, feel free to do so and say hello.

If you have questions during the presentation, please use the raise hand function. However, please note that we will not call on you until the end of the presentation. At that time, we will take your questions in order. We will call on you and unmute you so you can ask your question.

In the next week, we will also email you the slideshow and a link to today’s recording so you don’t need to feel pressured to write everything down.
The Maine Community Foundation brings people and resources together to build a better Maine.

The Maine Community Foundation is a statewide nonprofit organization that brings people and resources together to build a better Maine.

- We partner with people, including nonprofit leaders, community members, philanthropic individuals, and government officials
- We use resources such as charitable dollars, research, community knowledge, and relationships to build on Maine’s strengths and address its greatest challenges.

One of the ways we fulfill our mission is through our over 20 grant programs.
Community Building Grant Program

Purpose: To support projects and organizations focused on making communities stronger

Who is eligible to apply?
Nonprofit, charitable organizations tax-exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code

Community Building Grant Program is a grassroots grant program that makes grants across the state. Funding comes from dedicated, permanent county funds but also from other related funds. So you are not applying to a specific fund, but to the Community Building grant program.

Proposals are reviewed by a committee of local community members who either live or work in that county or region. We have 15 review committees: 12 single county committees; 2 regional committees (Western Mountains: Franklin and Somerset; Southern Midcoast: Lincoln and Sagadahoc); and one statewide committee that gets seated solely for grantmaking purposes.

One of the most frequently asked questions is... Who is eligible to apply? More information is available on our website. It includes...
• Nonprofit, charitable organizations tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and also classified as an organization described in sections 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2)
• Municipalities
• Public schools
• Public agencies working for the State of Maine
• Indian tribal governments (or political subdivisions) recognized by the Department of the Interior
*Groups without any tax status may also apply with a fiscal sponsor that is an eligible organization as described above. Please also visit our website for additional information on fiscal sponsorship.

Another one of the most frequently asked questions is...Will my proposal be shared with donors who have donor advised funds at MaineCF?
All proposals that meet the grant program criteria will be added to our online donor portal for donors to review and consider funding. Staff contacts also share proposals of interest directly with donors who choose not to use the online portal. Donors may choose to partially or fully support a proposal. Please note proposals determined by staff to be ineligible because they don’t meet the eligibility guidelines or Community Building criteria will not be shared with donors.
Community Building is our largest grant program. It receives the most applications and supports the broadest range of projects and organizations across the state including arts, education, environment, economic development, and human services. In recent years, we have received over 400 applications from across the state. For more information about this year’s Community Building Grant Program, there’s a great report on our website—hover over Grants on the green banner and you’ll see a drop-down menu where you can choose Reports & Resources at the bottom. The CB report is at the top of the page on the left side.

Giving Together program with donors allows us to fund more. When a donor makes a grant, we will immediately send a letter and check by regular mail. Max grant award is $10,000. Overall 62% of applicants received grants but this varies by county as the number of applications received and the funding resources available vary by county. Some county funds have existed for 36 years and our newest fund is less than 5 years old. Check out the county web pages for more detailed information. Deadline is Feb 15 at 11:59pm. In 2023, this is a Wednesday. A frequently asked question is...May my organization apply in consecutive years? Yes, one application per grant program per year.
Following the 2021 grant cycle, I spoke with several grantees to find out how well the application process worked and to discuss what challenges their organizations were facing. We also received valuable feedback in grant reports. What we heard from nonprofits is that they were still responding to the impacts of the pandemic and need flexible funding to sustain their organizations, meet challenges, and take advantage of opportunities. So this year, we responded to that information we learned in 4 ways...

• Returned to three core criteria.
• Decided to introduce general support grants.
• Simplified the application.
• Developed additional resources (including Word document with guidance and a FAQ document translated into 4 languages: Spanish, French, Arabic, and Portuguese)

Next year, we are continuing to clarify and simplify (such as simplifying the Organizational Financial Information Section). However, we haven’t made any changes to the core criteria or the types of support provided.
Community Building Grant Program

Criteria
Projects or organizations must . . .

• **Invest in people** by increasing skills, knowledge, abilities, and/or well-being

• **Engage the people you serve** in the design, delivery, and/or evaluation of the work

• **Strengthen community resources** including organizations, partnerships, and built and natural environments

These are the same three core criteria we have used in recent years.

**Invest in people** by increasing skills, knowledge, abilities, and/or well-being
The review committee will try to understand how people will benefit from your proposed activities.

**Engage the people you serve** in the design, delivery, and/or evaluation of the work
The review committee will evaluate the breadth and depth of engagement.

**Strengthen community resources** including organizations, partnerships, and built and natural environments
While people are a community resource, here we are talking about identifying an additional community resource that the project will strengthen.
The review committee will look to see how a community resource might be improved, used more, or made more accessible.
Community Building Grant Program

Types of Funding

General Support Grants
• For ongoing programs and operational needs
Primary work must meet the criteria AND your organization must:
  • Be located in Maine
  • Have had expenses below $500,000 in your most recent competed fiscal or financial year
  • NOT be a municipality, government agency, public-school, or faith-based organization

Project Grants
• For new or expanding projects

General Support Grants - For ongoing programs and operational needs. Organization’s primary work must also meet the Community Building criteria.
*Please note this year we are allowing applicants using a fiscal sponsor to apply for general support grants.

Project Grants - For new or expanding projects that meet the Community Building criteria
New projects are within the first two years of implementation
We no longer define expanding as new geographic region, population or content. It can simply mean serving more people.

In terms of how we allocate funding, we were concerned that our review committees might favor project grants because they have clearly stated goals, activities, and budgets. We ensured that general support and project support proposals were treated equally by establishing target funding goals for each committee based on amounts requested for each type of funding. This approach resulted in our county and regional committees funding general and project support at similar levels to the percentage of requests received. We plan to take the same approach next year.
Community Building Grant Program

Important Note!

Municipalities, government agencies, public-schools, or faith-based organizations may still be eligible to apply for project grants.

Keep in mind MaineCF **MAY STILL provide project grant support** for all of these applicants we just discussed as ineligible for general support grants.

Why aren’t these organizations eligible to apply for general support?

- **Municipalities, government agencies, and public schools**
  
  MaineCF funding should not replace public funding sources for general/operating support.

- **Faith-based organizations**
  
  MaineCF’s eligibility and grant guidelines state we will not fund without exception religious activities, including, but not limited to, religious services, promotion of religious beliefs, or activities that are restricted to church or religious group membership.
Community Building Grant Program

Primary County Served
For Project Grants
• Choose ONE county that will most directly benefit
• If 3 or more counties will benefit, then choose “Statewide” committee
For General Support Grants
• Choose the county where the organization is located (unless statewide)

Identify the **ONE** county that will most directly benefit from funding requested in this application. Any funds awarded must be spent within the county selected because of funding requirements. If your organization serves two counties and you are applying for general support, you must select the county in which your organization or main office is located. Select Statewide if 3 or more counties will **directly benefit** from the funding requested in this application.

This will determine which committee will review your application and how it will be sorted in our Giving Together donor portal.
For Project Grants Only – Ineligible Expenses

- General operating expenses (up to 20% “administrative costs” allowed)
- Major capital expenses: buildings or land
- Camperships
- Endowments
- Capital campaigns
- Annual appeals

These ineligible expenses only apply to project grants. General support grants are considered flexible funding and not restricted in any way.

General operating expenses are not eligible as full project requests. If your organization meets the requirements, you can apply for an unrestricted general support grant instead.

In terms of that allowable 20%--the Project Budget may include up to 20% of the total amount requested from MaineCF for administrative costs. These funds may be used for overhead or operating expenses (examples: rent, utilities, bookkeeping) and can be a line item labeled as “administrative costs.” You may calculate this amount based on a percentage of the total requested (not more than 20% or $2,000 of a $10,000 request) and do not need to specify how the funds will be used.

Please NOTE: our eligibility and grant guidelines apply to both project and general support grants. Those eligibility and grant guidelines state we will not fund without exception the following...
• Expenses already incurred
• Regranting to a secondary grantee through a competitive process
• Political campaigns
• Lobbying: calls to action on a specific vote
• Religious activities: religious services, promotion of religious beliefs, or activities restricted to religious group membership.
Community Building Grant Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>Application deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late Feb</td>
<td>Due diligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Mar to Mid Mar</td>
<td>Eligibility review, assignments, donor referrals</td>
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<td>Mid March until April meeting</td>
<td>Proposal review by county advisors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>Grant decision meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early May</td>
<td>Process decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid to Late May</td>
<td>Notifications go out</td>
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All proposals received are prescreened by staff to determine eligibility. Depending on the number of proposals received, a subcommittee may also be used to assess alignment with the criteria to limit the final pool of proposals. All proposals included in the final review pool are assigned to a county advisor or staff member who will serve as the lead reviewer and follow up with the applicant contact by telephone in late March or April. *You will not receive a telephone call if your proposal is not included in the final review pool.

Each county/regional committee collectively reviews all the proposals included in the final review pool for their county/region and decides which proposals to fund.

When a donor makes a grant, we will immediately send a letter and check by regular mail. This means that you may receive a check before the review committee meets. If your request was partially funded, the review committee will consider supporting the remaining amount. If your request was fully funded, the review committee will most likely decline further support so they may fund other proposals. Donors may also choose to support your proposal after the review committee has met, which means you could be declined by the review committee but later receive support from one of our donors.

Something less likely, but still possible, is receiving funding over the requested amount. The proposals will remain in the donor portal until the end of the year.

Notification will be by email through our online system. It will come from the
grantproposals@mainecf.org address. Please add this to your list of accepted addresses to avoid it going to spam/junk.
This is a screen shot of what our MaineCF homepage would look like if you searched for mainecf.org.
In the upper righthand corner, you see two buttons or rectangles, one is green and one is blue.
Click on the green button labeled “Log In” to apply to a grant program.
You will arrive at this landing page. Click on the Log In Here button for the Online Grant System in the top right section.
Log In - If you’ve previously used our online grant application system, type in your login information. If you forgot your password, click on the link that says “Forgot your password?” to reset it.

Register - If this is your first time submitting an online grant application, you will need to create an account. You can create an account using your name and email address or by using one of your social media accounts.

Click here - For step-by-step instructions on how to start a new grant application. You can save your application and come back to it later. You can also add collaborators who can read and edit the application.
This is a screen shot of what our MaineCF Community Building page looks like. To arrive here you can scroll down on our home page and click on the “Spotlight Program” which is currently Community Building and it will take you straight to this page. This page includes all the Community Building information but also several links to additional resources. For example, from here you can download a Word document with the 2023 application questions and additional guidance. We also plan to have the application translated and those documents would appear here as well. This is also where you will find a recorded version of today’s webinar in the next week. In addition, the Quick Overview at the top of the page has a section called **Staff Contact: Varies by county.** When you click **Varies by county** you will be directed to the County and Regional Program page. At the very bottom is a list of staff member contacts by county.
Staff Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAFF NAME</th>
<th>COMMITTEE</th>
<th>EMAIL ADDRESS</th>
<th>TELEPHONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Ochira</td>
<td>Androscoggin, Western Mountains (Franklin &amp; Somerset)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jochira@mainecf.org">jochira@mainecf.org</a></td>
<td>412-0837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erica Shaw McCrum</td>
<td>Aroostook</td>
<td><a href="mailto:emccrum@mainecf.org">emccrum@mainecf.org</a></td>
<td>227-7678</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie Howard</td>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td><a href="mailto:khoward@mainecf.org">khoward@mainecf.org</a></td>
<td>412-0832</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leslie Goode</td>
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<td>412-2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cate Cronin</td>
<td>Kennebec, Knox</td>
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<td>412-2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Lee</td>
<td>Oxford</td>
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<td>412-0838</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Reed</td>
<td>Penobscot, Piscataquis</td>
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<td>412-2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gloria Aponte C.</td>
<td>York</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gaponteclarke@mainecf.org">gaponteclarke@mainecf.org</a></td>
<td>412-0847</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Program Officer – Temporary Contact Listed</td>
<td>Southern Midcoast (Lincoln &amp; Sagadahoc)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:llee@mainecf.org">llee@mainecf.org</a></td>
<td>412-0838</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherie Galyean</td>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cgalyean@mainecf.org">cgalyean@mainecf.org</a></td>
<td>412-2017</td>
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*Note staffing assignments have recently changed. In January, a new program officer will be joining our team so there will be some changes.

Another frequently asked question is when would it be helpful to speak with a staff member?

Applicants may contact a staff member before submitting an application if you have questions or want to determine if your funding request is aligned with the criteria. However, you are not required to speak with a staff member before applying.

Applicants who receive a decline email may also want to talk to a staff member to learn more about how to strengthen your application in the future.

*Be prepared that sometimes staff may have several suggestions but other times it is simply how competitive the applicant pool was during a given grant cycle.

Grantees may also contact staff members to ask follow up questions concerning your award if something significant changes.
Thank you for joining us today.

Given some folks may choose to drop off this webinar during the Question and Answer time, I want to thank you all for joining us today.

Before we move on to the Q and A, I want to encourage folks to use the additional resources available on our Community Building web page including the Word version of the application. The Word version of the application has lots of guidance included that you will not find in the online application. It will help direct you as you draft your responses and provide insight to what the reviewers will be looking for when they read your application.

If you have basic or simple questions about the information I just shared in this presentation, please use this time to ask your question. If you have specific questions that relate to your project or organization, please contact the appropriate county staff member by email or telephone following this presentation.

To ask a question now, please use the raise hand function. We will be calling on
those folks who raised their hand during the presentation first.

I’m going to kick us off by answering another frequently asked question. Can we apply for funding for projects that start before June 1?

Yes, but only for the expenses incurred after June 1 as we can’t retroactively fund projects. When we revised the application last year, we removed the start and end date for the project. Now the following statement appears.

“I understand that this program cannot provide funding for activities that occur before June 1. I agree that if our organization receives a grant, it will not be used for expenses already incurred and will be spent within the year. If we are unable to use the funding during the year, we will contact grants@mainecf.org.”

Then, you check the I agree box.