



Welcome! My name is Laura Reed and I'm Maine Community Foundation's Director of Resources and Community Engagement.

I'm joined by my colleagues Katie Howard, Community Partner, and Joey Lendaro, Community Impact Associate.

If you have questions during the presentation, please add them to the Q & A or raise your hand. However, please note that we will not answer questions posted to the Q & A or call on those who have raised their hand until the end of the presentation. Katie will monitor the Q & A and interrupt me if she feels the question should be answered during the presentation. We find it's more efficient to wait until the end of the presentation. During the presentation, many of the questions are answered.

Next week, we will also send you a follow up email with the slideshow and notes as well as a link to today's recording, so you don't need to feel pressured to write everything down.

About Maine Community Foundation

Founded in 1983, the Maine Community Foundation brings people and resources together to build a better Maine.

Values

Integrity: We earn trust by being honest and open in everything that we do.

Respect: We treat everyone with dignity and civility.

Stewardship: We manage the resources entrusted to us responsibly.

Equity: We promote just and fair access to opportunities for all people.

Collaboration: We work with others to achieve common goals.

To learn more about the foundation, visit mainecf.org.



A community foundation is a public charity, dedicated to improving the lives of people in a certain geographic area by combining financial resources with issue expertise and community partnerships.

MaineCF is a statewide community foundation, working with all 16 counties. There's no part of Maine we don't reach and embrace with open arms.

MaineCF's mission or purpose is to bring people and resources together to build a better Maine.

We've been working at this for 40 years and our commitment to working and partnering locally is what sets MaineCF apart.

MaineCF's county funds and committee work gives voice to our communities' aspirations, and challenges, as we work on building a better Maine.



MaineCF's 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.

Applicants don't apply to a specific fund, but rather to one of our competitive grant programs, in this case 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 seated solely for grantmaking purposes.

Throughout the presentation, I will answer some of the most frequently asked questions by applicants.

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

Note: Groups without any tax status may also apply using a fiscal sponsor. Please also visit our website for additional information on fiscal sponsorship agreements.

Another 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 called Giving Together 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 and grant guidelines, or Community Building criteria will not be shared with donors.

Community Building Stats

Proposals received: 544

Total amount requested: \$5 M

Total amount awarded: \$2.2 M

Number of grants awarded by committees: 200

Grant dollars awarded by committee: \$1.67M

Number of grants awarded by donors: 72 grants

Grant dollars awarded by donors: \$533,263



Maine
Community Foundation



Community Building is our largest grant program. It receives the most proposals and supports the broadest range of projects and organizations across the state including arts, education, environment, economic development, and human services. Last year, we have received 544 proposals from across the state.

Our Donor Portal or Giving Together program allows us to fund more which is why the slide breaks down the 272 total awards made by committee and donors.

Deadline is Feb 15 at 11:59pm. In 2024, this is a Thursday.

Max grant award is \$10,000.

In 2023, 50% of applicants overall received grants. HOWEVER, this varies by county as the number of proposals received and the funding resources available vary by county. Some county funds have existed since 1986 and our newest fund was established in 2018. Check out the county web pages

for more detailed information.

A frequently asked question is...

May my organization apply in consecutive years?

Yes, one proposal per grant program per year. You may even apply to two grant programs in the same cycle, For example, you could submit one proposal to the Community Building grant program and one proposal to the BIPOC Fund grant program.

Go to our webpage to:

- View a list of the last three years of awards by county.
<https://www.maineecf.org/apply-for-a-grant/recent-grants/community-building/>
- Review a report summarizing the awards across the state.
<https://www.maineecf.org/2023/07/reporting-out-community-building-grant-program-july-2023/>

Community Building Changes

- New definition provided for “located in Maine”
- Eligibility for type of funding (project or general) is determined by an applicant’s expenses in the most recent fiscal or financial year
- Project support is available for new projects only (NOT expanding or ongoing)
- Project support total project budget not to exceed \$100,000



We have not made any changes to the core Community Building criteria and will continue to offer both project and general support this year.

As we proceed through the presentation, I will explain each of the four major changes listed in the slide.

What we will not fund, without exception...

All applicants must meet the Maine Community Foundation's grant eligibility requirements. Please read our **eligibility and grant guidelines** before submitting a proposal.

What we will not fund without exception includes:

- Expenses already incurred
- Regranting to a secondary grantee through a competitive process
- Political campaigns
- Lobbying in the form of calls to action on a specific vote
- Religious activities, including, but not limited to, religious services, promotion of religious beliefs, or activities that are restricted to church or religious group membership.



Please note MaineCF's eligibility and grant guidelines apply to ALL of our competitive grant programs. These also apply to both project and general support grants. Included in these is a list of "What we will not fund without exception" including...

- Expenses already incurred
- Regranting to a secondary grantee through a competitive process
- Political campaigns
- Lobbying in the form of calls to action or a specific vote
- 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 Criteria

Projects or organizations must...

Invest in people

by increasing skills/abilities, knowledge, 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/abilities, knowledge, and/or well-being

The review committee will try to understand how people will benefit from the work you do or the 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 with the population served.

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.

A frequently asked question is...

How do I figure out if I'm eligible to apply based on the criteria?

If you are an organization applying for general support, think about how your organization meets the criteria. How do you as an organization invest in people, engage the people serve, and strengthen the community?

If you are an organization applying for project support, think about how the proposed project meets the criteria. Does this project invest in people, engage the people served, and strengthen a community resource?

Types of Funding

General Support

for flexible funding of any type such as new/expanding/ongoing programs and operational needs including capital expenses

Project Support

for new projects (defined as within the first two years), including capital expenses

General Support and Project Support MUST meet the Community Building Criteria.



Since the Community Building grant program began offering general support in 2022, organizations with expenses below \$500,000 in the most recent completed fiscal or financial year were eligible to apply for either Project Support or General Support. However, one of the most frequently asked questions we received from applicants eligible to apply for both was which one should I apply for?

As there is one source of funding for both funding types, we decided to simplify and tie the eligibility for each type of funding to the applicant's annual expenses.

You will look at your expenses for the most recent completed fiscal or financial year.

If they are BELOW \$500,000 OR AT/ABOVE \$500,000 will determine if you are eligible for general support or project support.

To clarify, applicants are now only eligible to apply for one type of support.

This may seem like a big change. However, those eligible to apply for only project were never eligible to apply for general. Those organizations

eligible to apply for only general support may chose to use this flexible funding to support a project.

The focus of this grassroots grants program is on supporting smaller organizations. However, we know larger organizations are also meeting unmet needs in their communities, so we have retained project support as a funding option for larger organizations.

When we started offering general support grants, 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. We encourage committees to make awards that maintain the general percentage balance between the two types of requests.

Now let's talk about each type of support separately so we can discuss the specific changes we made for 2024.

Types of Funding

General Support

for flexible funding of any type such as new/expanding/ongoing programs and operational needs including capital expenses

- **Be located in Maine**, defined as your organization has a Maine address
- Have had **expenses BELOW \$500,000** in the most recent completed fiscal or financial year
- **NOT be a municipality, government agency, public school, or faith-based organization.** (These organizations may be eligible for NEW project grants only.)



Review details included in the slide.

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.

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

Types of Funding

Project Support

for **new projects** (defined as within the first two years) including capital expenses

- **Be located in Maine**, defined as your organization has a Maine address
- Have had **expenses AT or ABOVE \$500,000** in the most recent completed fiscal or financial year
 - Municipalities, government agencies, public schools, or faith-based organizations may apply regardless of expenses for their most recent completed fiscal or financial year
- **Total project budget does not exceed \$100,000**
- Project expenses DO NOT to include endowments, annual appeals, or scholarships.



Review details included in the slide.

New projects only! Expanding or ongoing projects are no longer eligible to apply for funding.

Applicants must have a Maine address.

Expenses AT or ABOVE \$500,000; HOWEVER, municipalities, government agencies, public schools, or faith-based organizations may apply regardless of annual expenses.

Total project budget does not exceed \$100,000. As a grassroots grant program with a maximum award of \$10,000, the grant program is not intended to support larger scale projects. Stated another way, a \$10,000 award would only make up 1/10 of a \$100,000 project budget.

Although large and broad, this very competitive grant program is not designed to provide support to all projects.

The project proposals most likely to be funded will be discreet projects that meet the Community Building criteria.

- Invest in people
- Engage the people you serve
- Strengthen community resources

Community Building grants do not support endowments, annual appeals, or scholarships.

General operating expenses are not eligible as full project requests.

Another frequently asked question is...

May I include indirect or administrative costs in the project budget?

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.

Primary County Served

For General Support Grants

- Choose the county where the organization is located (unless statewide)

For Project Grants

- Choose ONE county that will most directly benefit
- If 3 or more counties will benefit, then choose "Statewide"



A frequently asked question is...

Why does the “primary county served” matter?

1. Any funds awarded must be spent within the county selected because of funding requirements.
2. This will determine which committee will review your proposal and how it will be sorted in our Giving Together donor portal.

Another frequently asked question is...

How do I determine this?

Identify the ONE county that will most directly benefit from funding requested in this proposal.

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 proposal.

Community Building Timeline

Date	Activity
Feb 15	Application deadline
Late Feb	Due diligence
Early Mar to Mid Mar	Eligibility reviews, assignments, donor referrals
Mid Mar until Apr Mtg	Proposal review by county advisors & phone calls to final pool
Apr	Grant decision meetings
Early May	Process decisions
Mid to Late May	Notifications go out



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 review pool.

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.

NOTE: 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.

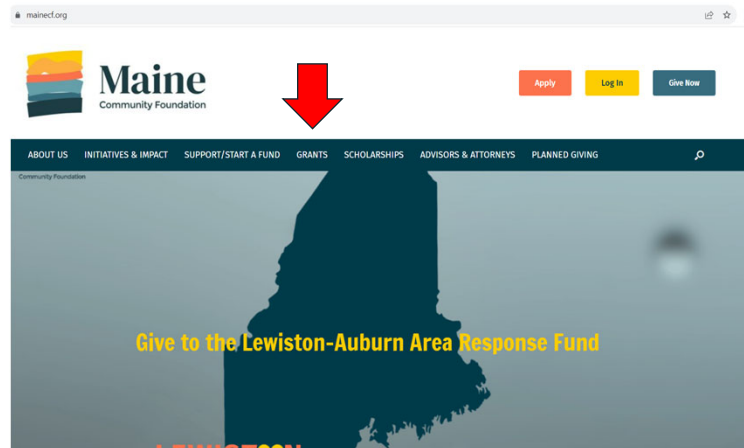
The proposals will remain in the donor portal until the end of the year.

Notifications (both award and declines) 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.

You will only receive a hard copy letter if you receive an award and check.

Now let's transition to discussing Online Resources and the Online Application System.

Online Resources



If you search for mainecf.org, it takes you to Maine Community Foundation's homepage.

To view our grant programs, click on the word "GRANTS" noted here with a red arrow. Then, select "Available Grants & Deadlines".

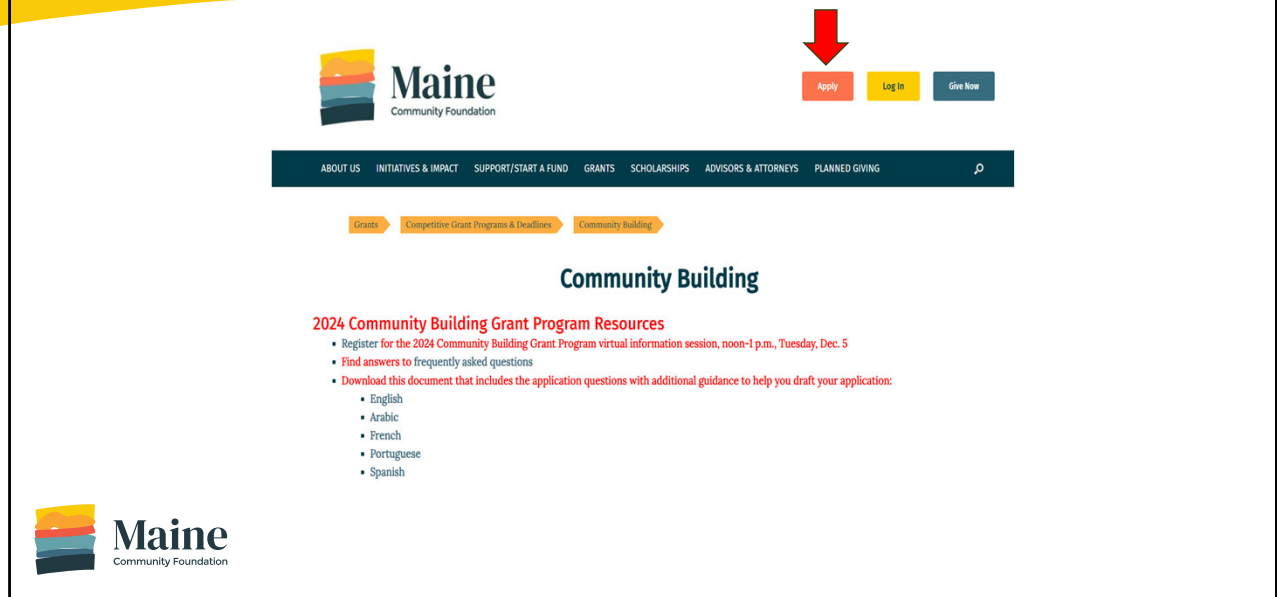
Online Resources



Once you select “Available Grants & Deadlines”, it takes you to this page with a listing of ALL of MaineCF’s competitive grant programs.

Select “Community Building” noted here with a red arrow.

Online Resources & Application System



We will also drop the link for the Community Building webpage in the chat.

This page includes all the Community Building information as well as a button to apply online.

Here you will find several links to additional resources.

For example, from here you can download a Frequently Asked Questions document as well as a Word document with guidance on how to complete the 2024 application questions.

The guidance document has also been translated into Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Spanish noting the online application only appears in English.

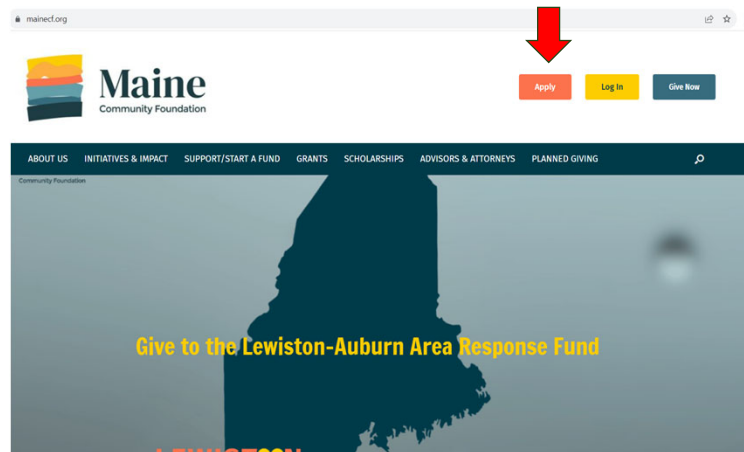
This is also where you will find a recorded version of today's webinar next week.

As noted earlier, next week we will also send a follow up email with a link to the slideshow with notes and today's recording.

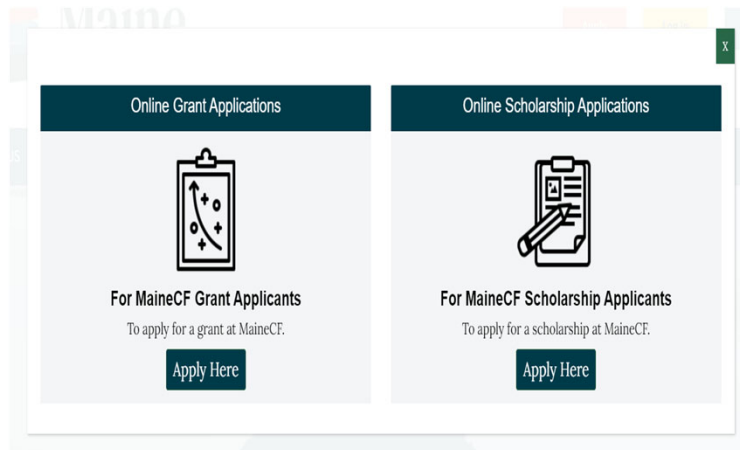
This page also includes a section called Quick Overview which includes critical program information, including the staff contact information. The staff contact information slide will be the last slide in today's presentation and we will drop a link to this information in the chat.

Before we review staff contacts, I want to make sure you know how to apply. The Community Building page and the home page have an orange or salmon colored "Apply" button in the upper right corner.

Online Application System



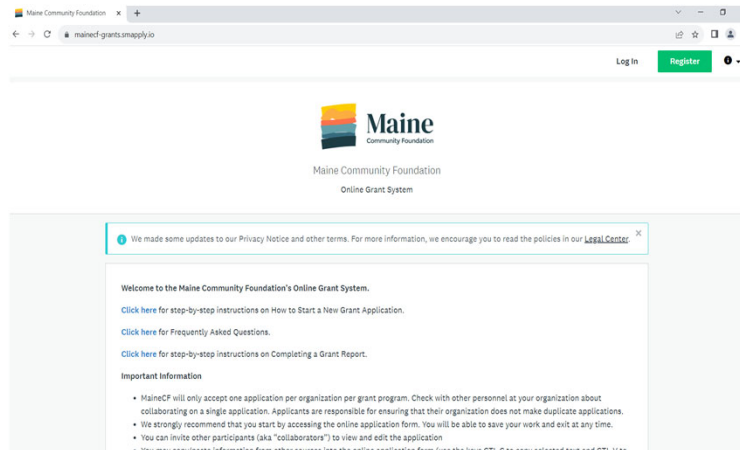
Online Application System



Once you select the orange/salmon colored “Apply” button, you will arrive at this landing page.

Select the “Apply Here” button for the Online Grant Applications in the left section.

Online Application System



You will arrive at this page to Log In or Register.

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 "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.

Note that you can save your application and come back to it later. You can also add collaborators who can read and edit the application.

Staff Contacts By County

Staff Contact Information

County	Staff Contact	Email	Phone
Androscoggin	John Ochira	jochira@mainecf.org	412-0837
Aroostook	Erica Shaw McCrum	emccrum@mainecf.org	227-7678
Cumberland	Katie Howard	khoward@mainecf.org	412-0832
Franklin	John Ochira	jochira@mainecf.org	412-0837
Hancock	Laura Reed	lreed@mainecf.org	412-2006
Kennebec	Stephanie Cesario	scsario@mainecf.org	412-0824
Knox	Stephanie Cesario	scsario@mainecf.org	412-0824
Lincoln	Stephanie Cesario	scsario@mainecf.org	412-0824
Oxford	Katie Howard	khoward@mainecf.org	412-0832
Penobscot	Laura Reed	lreed@mainecf.org	412-2006
Piscataquis	Laura Reed	lreed@mainecf.org	412-2006
Sagadahoc	Stephanie Cesario	scsario@mainecf.org	412-0824
Somerset	John Ochira	jochira@mainecf.org	412-0837
Waldo	John Ochira	jochira@mainecf.org	412-0837
Washington	Laura Reed	lreed@mainecf.org	412-2006
York	Gloria Aponte C.	gaponteclarke@mainecf.org	412-0847
Statewide	Cherie Galyean	cgalyean@mainecf.org	412-2017



Please note staffing assignments have recently changed. We are in the process of filling three Community Partner positions and have made temporary staff assignments to answer your questions for the 2024 Community Building grant program.

Another frequently asked question is...

When would it be helpful to speak with a staff member?

Applicants may contact a staff member **before submitting a proposal** 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.**

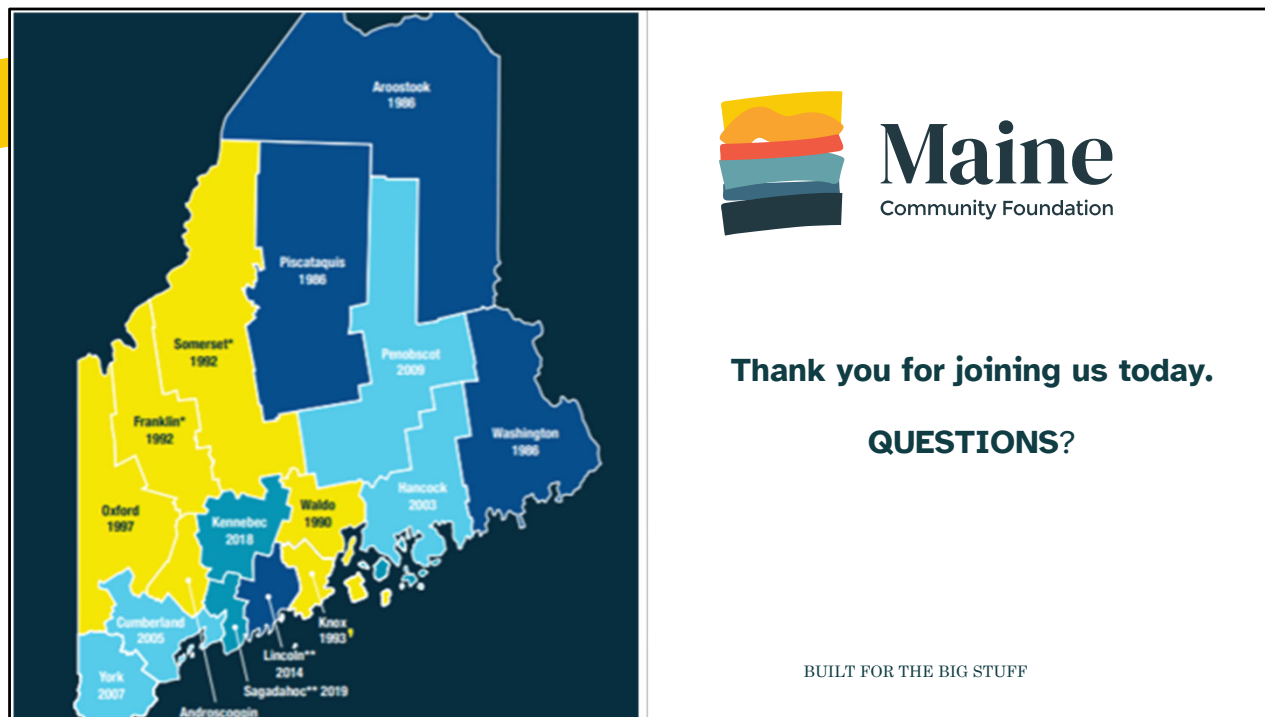
Applicants who **receive a decline email** may also want to speak with a staff member to learn more about how to strengthen your proposal in the future.

Be prepared that sometimes staff may have several suggestions but other times it is simply how competitive the proposal 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.

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. It 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 proposal.**



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.

If you have basic or simple questions about the information shared, please use this time to ask your question.

If you have specific or detailed questions that relate to your project or organization, please contact the appropriate county staff member by email or telephone following this presentation.

We will begin by answering question placed in the Q & A and then answer questions for those folks with their hand raised.