

Guidelines for LWVMA Lotte E. Scharfman Citizen Education Grant Program

(Approved: August 6, 2012; revised: December 15, 2012; March 27, 2013; August 22, 2014; September 9, 2016, October 30, 2017, July 29, 2019)

Purpose: The League of Women Voters Lotte E. Scharfman Memorial Fund, known as the LWVMA Citizen Education Fund, a non-partisan public policy educational organization, is offering grants through the Lotte E. Scharfman Citizen Education Grant program. The purpose of the grant program is to encourage local Leagues to carry out citizen education and voter service events and programs in their areas. The projects should:

- Build citizen participation in the democratic process
- Study key community issues at all governmental levels in an unbiased manner
- Enable people to seek positive solutions to public policy issues through education and conflict management

Program requirements

The IRS and LWVUS criteria for use of tax deductible (501(c)3) funds must be followed, as listed below.

1. The project must be educational.

1. The project must be completed for the purpose of informing the public in a fair and objective manner. Through the project, your League cannot advocate a particular position on legislation or urge any action that affects legislation (federal, state or local).
2. The project cannot involve the development of a League position by consensus or other form of agreement, nor can it promote a League position.
3. The project cannot involve work with political parties or candidates for office, other than nonpartisan voter service activities. It cannot influence the outcome of an election.

2. Activities must be open to the public. The project must serve the general public, not League members exclusively.

3. The project cannot be related to League membership activities.

4. The project's resource cannot be used to support the membership recruitment or membership maintenance activities of your League. Education Fund resources cannot be used to promote League membership. Thus, internal membership materials would not qualify for funding under this service.
5. If the local League is hosting an education event, with support from the Education Fund, speakers may talk about League activities and encourage attendees to join. Membership material may be available to attendees.

In addition, the project must:

- Be planned to take place or begin within six months, before or after, of the award date.
- Be approved by a Review Committee appointed by the LWVMA Citizen Education Fund Trustees that may include representation from the LWVMA board, Membership and Local League Services Committee, Voter Service/Citizen Education Committee, local League members, and/or Program and Action Committee.

Applicants

- Must be a LWVMA local League, be a LWVMA Member-at-Large unit in the process of becoming a local League, or a group of Members-at-Large.
- Multiple local Leagues may submit a collaborative grant for a single project (see below for level of funding).
- Preference may be given to local Leagues with limited existing resources.
- Local Leagues must have filed a final report from all previous grants.
-

Uses of grant funds

- Carrying out an educational program or event, such as space rental, printing, publicity, speakers, performance; on-going or recurring projects such as Voter Service Guides, Know Your Town, updating of educational materials.
- Starting a new program, such as voter registration at the local high school, monthly topic series, video production, starting a voter information or civic education website.
- Purchasing local League banners.
- Local Leagues may request up to \$100 of any \$250 grant (or \$200 for multiple League grants) request to be used for signs.
- For a list of projects awarded grants over the past years, visit <http://lwvma.org/citizen-education-fund/programs/>.

Unacceptable uses of grant funds (other than those listed under requirements)

- Excessive expenditures for venues, equipment
- Refreshments
- Donations to other organizations

Funding the program

\$5,000 has been budgeted for 2018-2019 fiscal year. Funding is subject to available funds for each cycle.

Funding Limits

- The requested amount for a single League or two collaborating Leagues working on the same project in a given funding cycle should not exceed **\$250**.
- **Three or more Leagues collaborating on a single project may request \$500** in a given funding cycle. Applicants should research the costs before applying in order to make their budget as realistic as possible.
- An itemized budget must be submitted with the application.
- A local League, either alone or in collaboration, may receive one grant per fiscal year (July 1-June 30.)

Acknowledging the LWVMA Citizen Education Fund

The awardee should make every effort to acknowledge the Fund in printed or posted materials relating to the approved project. Suggested statement: "This event [or program] was [partially] funded by the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts Citizen Education Fund."

Follow up

- A Final Report must be submitted to the Chair of the review committee at the completion of the program.
- The Chair will make the reports available to the Lotte E. Scharfman Trustees at the end of the project.
- For events, the report should include the date of the event, attendance, description, and a program or handout from the event, press release, etc. For a project, a summary of the project, date completed, examples of product, news releases, etc. should be submitted. **Total** cost of project or event should also be included.
- A template for this report is available at [http://lwvma.org/citizen-education-fund/citizen-education-grants-for-local-leagues/#Follow_up_Final_Report].
- The LWVMA Citizen Education Fund may want to publicly display all or portions of any program produced with Education Fund monies.
- Leagues must keep records of their award(s) for seven years.

Review Committee

- The Grant Review Committee shall report to the LWVMA Citizen Education Fund Board of Trustees.
- The Review Committee will be given approximately 10 days to review the grant applications.
- The Review Committee shall submit its recommendations to the Trustees, who in turn will determine how many of the projects can be funded in a given cycle.
- It is the responsibility of the Review Committee to determine if the project meets the criteria for funding.
- The Review Committee will determine if any member of said committee has a conflict of interest with any of the applications and, if there is, take appropriate action.
- The Committee will make every effort to fund grants that meet the criteria. However, subject to funding availability, it may be necessary to adjust the amount awarded.