

## Application Guidelines for Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund Providence, Rhode Island

Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund was established in Providence in 1823 by a bequest from Obadiah Brown to be a fund, independent of New England Yearly Meeting, to enhance the Religious Society of Friends through grants to individuals and Friends' organizations. Sarah Swift, a trustee from Massachusetts, established the Swift Fund in 1914<sup>1</sup> to be administered by the twelve Trustees of Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund. Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund is primarily focused on New England Friends and Friends' organizations.

- I. Grants shall be made for Quaker purposes. OBBF favors discrete projects. "I recommend to (the trustees) specially the printing and disseminating useful books for the promulgation of the gospel and by that means, as well as otherwise, spreading our Religious Principles where they are little known."<sup>2</sup>
  1. As technology has evolved it follows that electronic communications projects such as online publications and film be included.
  2. The promulgation of the gospel is mentioned to reflect the nature of Quakerism as a Christian based faith although "*as well as otherwise*" does not exclude other writings of Quaker inspiration and values from suitable grant proposals.
- II. Grants may be made to individuals "of our religious faith who are in need and who shall be or have been engaged in gospel or philanthropic work." OBBF encourages applications from Friends engaged in a wide range of ministries.
- III. Grants to Friends' organizations are typically for programs with the tendency to produce

increasing benefits to the Religious Society of Friends. Grants to organizations are not for regular expenses usually included in operating budgets. OBBF does not contribute to educational organizations for general operating funds, though in particular circumstances it may support Friends attending Friends' institutions.

IV. OBBF has been able to respond favorably to a portion of applicants annually with modest grants. Grant amounts have historically ranged from \$1,000 to \$15,000. Grants are generally limited to one-time applications for each project. OBBF encourages matching funds raised elsewhere and other collaborative funding strategies.

1. Grants to individuals are typically provided through checks written to the individual's Monthly Meeting; the memo line notes the project or purpose for the grant.
2. OBBF Trustees ask the MM Treasurers to disburse the funds at the request of either the grantee or the Clerk of the grantee's Care Committee.

Approved 10/24/2014 -- Clerk Added Text 1/1/2024

<sup>1</sup> Sarah Swift Deed of Trust 5/27/1914 <sup>2</sup> Will of Obadiah Brown, Item 6

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## HOW TO APPLY

**Applications may be forwarded via email or post. Requests are to be submitted to:**

Mailing Address: Ralph Gentile, 108 Pine St, Andover, MA 01810-1722

Email Address: Clerk.OBBF@gmail.com (preferred)

Alternate Email Address: [ralphbgentile@gmail.com](mailto:ralphbgentile@gmail.com)

### **Application Deadlines:**

Trustees meet three times per year for funding decisions. Deadlines for requests are January 15th, April 15th, and September 15th.

### **Required Application Submissions:**

I. A description of not more than two pages of project/activity, including:

1. Its motivation
2. Compatibility with the mission of Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund
3. Connection to the Religious Society of Friends
4. How and when it will occur.

II. A one page budget for the project/activity including:

1. Project/activity expenses
2. Project/activity income from other sources
3. Resources the grantee is willing to commit to the proposed endeavor.

III. Information about the individual applicant or organization and their relationship to the Religious Society of Friends.

*Ordinarily, the support and/or encouragement of an individual's Meeting is necessary for a successful application. A letter from the meeting clerk or from a support or clearness committee is **strongly** suggested.*

**Trustees may postpone consideration of grant proposals for insufficient information or lack of funds.**

### **Requirements for Approved Grantees**

#### **Follow-up Reports:**

Follow-up reports describing briefly how the grant was used and the possible benefits of the project/activity are appreciated within a year of funding. These shall be sent to the mail or email address listed above.

Approved 10/23/2015 -- Clerk Added Text 1/24/2024