

Information about the Lyman Fund

The Lyman fund was endowed in 1987 by a Quaker donor, Charlotte Lyman Fardelmann. Its purpose is to help people fund and carry out a “next step” on their spiritual journeys. We hope to encourage members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) to apply, but the Board currently welcomes applications from people with financial need from all faith traditions. Grants are reserved for future, hoped-for projects and spiritual education. They are not for past endeavors.

The Lyman Fund does not currently grant to persons dwelling outside of the USA.

Grants may range from \$1000 to \$3000. A recipient may receive a lifetime total of \$6000 for one purpose from the Lyman Fund by applying for and receiving a second grant. Grant applications are considered and given out by the Board in April and October of each year.

The Application

Your application should be typed, consist of no more than two pages of your narrative, plus a budget form, which is included with this packet. **The deadline for receipt of the applications is March 15 for the spring cycle, and September 15 for the fall cycle.**

Please compose your application by filling in information for all 11 of the items below.

1. Your name, postal address, phone number, and e-mail address
2. Brief summary of proposal and amount of grant money requested.
3. Statement of your spiritual journey to date. Please show us how this project/educational pursuit/retreat series is part of a next step in your journey. Why do you want to do this *now*?
4. A proposal for your undertaking.
5. Your occupation, educational background, family and community responsibilities, and a brief work history.
6. Your spiritual home(s), and your level of affiliation with it (them). How long have you been engaged there?
7. How did you hear about the Lyman fund?
8. A letter of recommendation from one member of your clearness committee** emailed (like your application) to Stephen Cobb (see details below).
9. A second letter of recommendation from someone (not a family member or someone involved in your project) who knows you well, also emailed to Stephen Cobb.

10. A color photo head shot (optional if you are not comfortable with this request). We use this to form a collage of recipients so that we as a Board can pray for all of you during your grant year.
11. The completed budget form.
12. If you are applying for a creative project, send a sample or web link of what sorts of things you have done.

Your completed application, plus the budget form, should be emailed (preferred) or mailed to:

**Stephen Cobb
179 Ave. A, 2nd floor
Turners Falls, MA 01376**

roastfor90@duck.com

Your 2 recommendations should be sent by the persons writing them to Stephen Cobb as well.

The Clearness Committee**

The **clearness committee** is a product of the centuries-old Quaker clearness process. It may be used by anyone seeking Divine guidance about the way forward on any number of problems. Here, we recommend it as a way of illuminating, nurturing, energizing, and focusing your plans for your journey and your project. Here's how it works.

1. The applicant invites 2-4 persons from their spiritual community to gather in worship to focus on the applicant's proposed project. Persons connected with the project (such as teachers or guides of a specific program), and family members, should **not** be members of this clearness committee.
2. Applicant sends a written background paper to each participant in advance of the meeting.
3. Meeting members should plan on at least 2 hours to fully understand the applicant, the program proposed, and the connections and "rightness" of the two. Sometimes, a second meeting is in order.
4. The gathered group selects a clerk to conduct the meeting, and a recorder to take notes. Often, the clerk becomes the person to communicate with the Lyman Board.
5. The meeting opens with vocal or silent worship, hoping to place the group under the care of the Divine.

6. The applicant presents the history and the context for their proposal.
7. Participants' inquiries are designed to help the applicant to become more clear about the proposed project and its spiritual basis. Is this the time in one's life to pursue this leading? Does the proposal feel connected to the applicant's spiritual journey to date? Does the proposal link to the applicant's understanding of their future spiritual activity? What barriers to participation does the applicant face, and what may help release them from these barriers? How has the Divine been involved?
8. Questions and replies are framed in Divine time. Rushing, advising, or judging probably are not the best use of the time.
9. The clerk bears the responsibility of sensing from the group that the applicant is responding to Divine guidance, and that this step by the applicant is rightly ordered. The clerk states this out loud and awaits concordance from other members.
10. The clerk, or someone else chosen by the group, writes a letter of reference from the committee process and emails it to Stephen Cobb (see above information).

Do You Need a Second Grant?

As stated above, an applicant can receive up to \$6000 for continuing the same project for which they were first granted money from the Fund. The second application is abbreviated from the first, and often comes 6-24 months after the first, but should include:

1. Your name, address, phone, and email address and another brief summary of your proposal and amount of grant money requested.
2. An abbreviated statement of your spiritual journey.
3. A progress report on your project to date; how the money will be used; expenses of the project.
4. Another letter from your clearness committee, who will again meet and discern the rightness of the project at this time. If possible, the committee will have the same composition as the first clearness committee.
5. All of this needs to be sent to Stephen Cobb, whose information appears above.
6. Second grants come under the same discernment process as the first and cannot be guaranteed.

A Report from You

We request that you send us a report of your activities and growth 6-9 months after beginning your project. This need not be lengthy, more than a page. What has challenged

you? How have you grown? How has the Divine been active with you in the project? What has been most meaningful?

We understand this summary to be the report of a work in progress—always in process—not the end of anything. We love to hear how what you've chosen to do works out for you, and for your communities.

A Gathering?

In the past, the Fund has sponsored and paid recipients' and Board members' ways for a weekend gathering. The purpose of such a gathering was for all to hear about the workings of the spirit in peoples' lives. The Board is discerning whether this is of use to grant recipients. We'd be interested in your thoughts.