

Welcome!

2026 National Fund Application Webinar
January 22, 2026



Agenda

1. National Fund Overview

1. Program Components

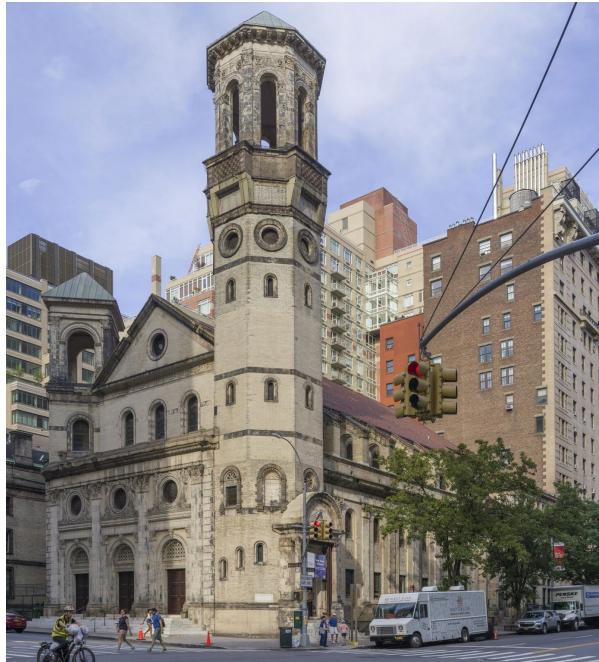
1. Application Process

1. Q&A

National Fund Overview



Introduction



Funded through 2028 by



Lilly Endowment Inc.

A Private Philanthropic Foundation

167 congregations served

\$33 million pledged or
committed

The National Fund Program



AT THE INTERSECTION
OF HERITAGE, FAITH,
& COMMUNITY

Partners for Sacred Places

in collaboration with



**National Trust for
Historic Preservation**
Save the past. Enrich the future.™

The National Fund Team

Partners for Sacred Places

Bob Jaeger, President

Gianfranco Grande, Executive Vice President

Rachel Hildebrandt, Senior Director, National Fund for Sacred Places

Lily Hamilton, Associate Director

Daniel Cruz, Technical Assistance Coordinator

Rosie Loughran, Program Associate

Jillian Riseman, Program Associate

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Jennifer Sandy, Senior Director of Preservation Programs

Tisha Allen, Associate Director

Ann Phillips, Senior Preservation Architect

Amanda E. Moore, Preservation Architect

Dawn Ellis, Manager

Charlotte Hevly, Associate Manager

Advisory Committee Members

Alice Antonelli, Director, Nonprofit Finance Fund

The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis

Stephanie Boddie, PhD, MSW, Assistant Professor of Church and Community Ministries, Baylor University

The Rev. Dr. Christopher Coble, Vice President for Religion, Religion Division, Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Mark Constantine, President and CEO, Richmond Memorial Health Foundation

Marsh Davis, President, Indiana Landmarks

The Rev. Katie Day, PhD, Charles A. Schieren Professor Emerita of Church and Society, United Lutheran Seminary

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Frank, President, Heritage Conservation Carolina & Retired University Professor, Wake Forest University

Advisory Committee Members

Christopher S. Hunter, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Architecture, Mississippi State University

Catherine Lynch, Development Specialist, Presbyterian Church (USA) Investment and Loan Program

The Rev. Katherine Glaze Lyle, Retired Clergy Member, North Texas Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church

Ariana Makau, President & Principal Conservator, Nzilani Glass Conservation

Rev. Michael Mather, Pastor, First United Methodist Church of Boulder

Jorge Rigau, Architect, Arquitectos PSC

Edward Torrez, President, Arda

The Rev. Robb R. Webb III, Director of the Rural Church Program, The Duke Endowment

Robin Whitehurst, Principal, Bailey Edwards Architects and Board Chair, Partners for Sacred Places

The Rev. Brian Williams, Program Director, Religion Division, Lilly Endowment

Program Components

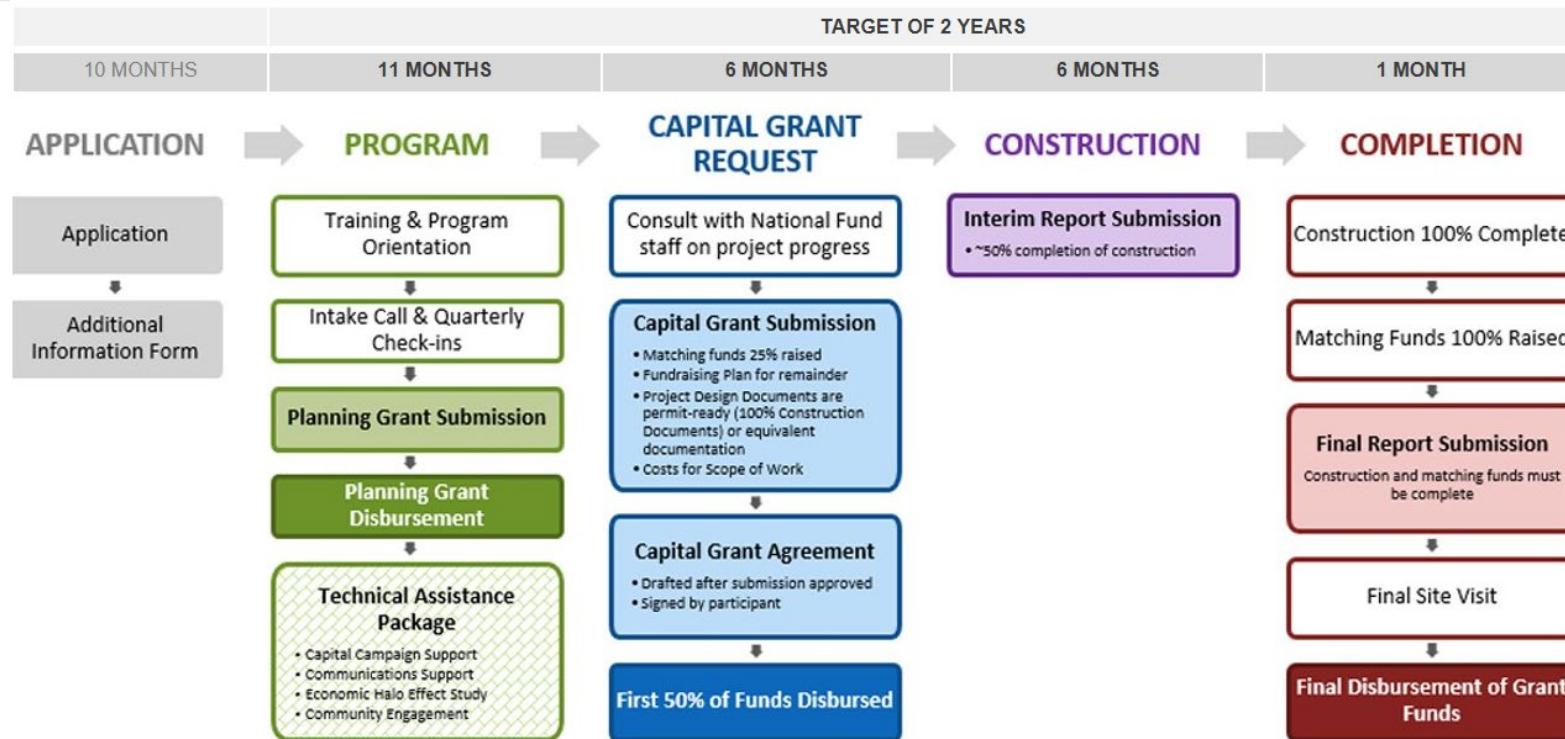


National Fund Program Components

National Fund grantees receive:

- 1.Training
- 2.Technical Assistance
- 3.Planning Grant – Up to \$20,000 (no match required)
- 4.Capital Grant – \$50,000-\$500,000 (1:1 match required)

Typical Program Timeline



Training

- Capital project planning
- Making your case for support
- Community-wide fundraising
- Friends groups and supporting organizations
- National Fund overview



Technical Assistance

- Capital Campaign Support
- Communications Support
- *Economic Halo Effect* Study
- Community Engagement



Planning Grant

Up to \$20,000 for

- Conditions assessments or architectural design services
- Capital campaign consulting services
- Creation of marketing materials, including video

The image displays four panels from a building assessment report for Calvary Church, showing examples of architectural conditions and observations.

- Top Left Panel:** Shows the report cover for "Calvary Church Building Assessment" by Sequel Architecture, dated June 2018. It includes a summary of the subject building's condition and a list of contents such as the assessment report, project information, building observations, and a budget projection.
- Top Right Panel:** Shows "Building Observations" for the Calvary Church building. It includes a map of the building's location, a photograph of the church's exterior, and a detailed description of the steeple, noting its prominent地位 and the presence of a lightning rod.
- Bottom Left Panel:** Shows "Steeple - Architectural Sheet Metal". It includes a photograph of the steeple and a detailed description of the sheet metal condition, mentioning that an in-depth condition assessment of the sheet metal was not conducted due to the difficulty of access. It notes that the sheet metal is in fair condition with areas of discoloration and staining.
- Bottom Right Panel:** Shows "Steeple - Masonry". It includes a photograph of the steeple and a detailed description of the masonry condition, noting that the masonry is constructed primarily of brick masonry with stone bedding. It describes the condition of masonry on the primary facade and provides instructions for inspecting masonry, including the use of a 10x magnifying glass and a masonry chisel.

Capital Grant

- We offer capital grants of \$50,000 - \$500,000
- All capital grants require a **1:1** match

Example: A grant of \$250,000 requires a \$250,000 match while a grant of \$400,000 requires a \$400,000 match

- Matching funds must be new money raised or applied for after program entry

Eligible Matching Funds

- Congregational giving
- Cash or documented pledges from individuals, foundations, or corporations
- Proceeds from fundraising events (ticketed events, raffles, concerts, etc.)
- Government grants
- Proceeds from the sale of stock or real estate (gifted toward the match)
- Matured bequests (gifted toward the match)
- Donated materials and/or professional services that directly support the grant-funded project (up to 20%)

Ineligible Matching Funds

- Funds solicited, applied for, pledged, or secured prior to official acceptance into the program
- Endowment or reserve funds (including interest)
- Bridge or construction loans
- Other grants from the National Trust for Historic Preservation or Partners for Sacred Places

Eligible Projects

The property must have **urgent repair needs** related to structural components, walls, roof, and/or other elements of the building envelope that are integral to building preservation and longevity.

Projects that **improve functionality or improve accessibility** of the property in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are also eligible, as well as renovation projects that **make vacant or underused space usable for community outreach**, *but applicants should demonstrate that urgent repair needs to the building envelope have already been identified by a building condition assessment and addressed before proposing ADA or interior rehabilitation projects.*

Ineligible Projects

- Demolition of character-defining architectural features
- Purchase or lease of property
- New construction
- Landscaping or fencing
- Cemeteries
- Parking lots
- Religious art restoration (such as mural restoration)
- Pipe organ restoration or replacement
- Pew restoration or replacement
- Purchase of Audio-Visual equipment
- Security upgrades

Visit fundforsacredplaces.org for complete list of ineligible projects.

Capital Grant Submission

To receive the first half of grant funds, the following benchmarks must be met:

- **¼ of the match in hand or pledged** and a plan for raising the rest of the match
- **Permit-ready drawings and specs** describing National Fund scope of work - including bid(s) selected

This submission is completed in Foundant.

Reporting Requirements

- An **interim report** is submitted once construction is 50% complete
- A **final report** is submitted once construction is 100% complete
- A **final site visit** is conducted

The second half of grant is disbursed **after** the final site visit.

PLEASE NOTE!

Construction **cannot** begin on
the National Fund Scope of Work
until our team has reviewed and
approved your
capital grant submission.

Building Conditions Assessment



- **What is a Building Conditions Assessment?**

A report commissioned from an architect, engineer, or other specialist that assesses a building's condition, identifies issues, and presents a list of prioritized recommendations
- **What is its purpose – why is it important?**
 - Critical “check-up” for historic buildings
 - Assess building holistically
 - Diagnose the origins of any pre-existing issues
 - Explore repair and renovation options before the design phase
- **Do you have a Building Conditions Assessment?**

Building Conditions Assessment



- **Seek out Experienced Professionals**
Always consider professionals experienced with historic properties - look at websites, portfolios, check references of contractors and architects, talk to past clients, etc.
- **How to find Experienced Professionals**
Reach out to your local preservation organizations, municipal preservation office, and/or your State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for suggestions of experienced professionals.
- **What is the deliverable/what should I expect?**
The format of the final product may vary but typically includes photographs of existing conditions, a thorough report describing existing conditions, prioritized list of recommended actions which should be used to inform your project's scope of work.

Building Conditions Assessment

Steeple - Masonry



The steeple is constructed primarily of brick masonry with stone banding. The general condition of the masonry appears consistent with the condition of masonry on the primary church building, with some areas/elements in need of repair or reconstruction.

Repointing: General observation is consistent with review of the prior masonry repair bid 80%-100% of the joints appear likely requiring repointing.

Masonry Cleaning: Masonry should be cleaned using the most gentle means possible. Given the observed deterioration of some of the masonry accents and banding, cleaning (if attempted) should be done with a soft brush, soft bristle and soft-bristle brushes. In no case should pressure washing or mechanical "blasting" be used.

Ballasting: Spalling masonry represents a potential danger to the building and pedestrians. A variety of different conditions were observed from initial cracks to major deterioration/failure of masonry units.

Masonry - Foundation



The primary foundation walls on the original structure are eight-face stone laid in an "Ashlar" pattern. In general, the masonry foundation walls are in fair to good condition, isolated areas, however, are showing signs of settling and cracking. These areas include several spalling stones, visible cracks, and areas of deteriorated or inappropriate mortar.

This photo is an example of a location where the repair work appears to be of a different composition than the original. The stone lintel and window openings are subject to differential settling and likely will need to be reset back to solid supporting material at some point in the future. Consideration like this should be monitored closely over time.

It is recommended that a detailed masonry plan and maintenance strategy be prepared. Masonry work can be "triaged" such that emergent issues are taken out of an overall plan for regular maintenance in place to address other non-emergent issues.

Refer to the Steeple Masonry section for additional information. The steeple repairs should be prioritized, along with foundation cleaning and reconstruction in order to ensure long-term stability. Additional "non-emergent" reporting, repairs, and maintenance can be monitored and addressed over time.

Wood Windows - Rehabilitation and Restoration



Windows and window trim/moldings are typically considered a "character-defining feature" of historic buildings. Where original wood windows remain, they can often be restored to full working order.

Typical window restoration scope would include removal of the sashes, wood sash repair, repair of hardware/pulleys, reglazing, repainting, weatherstripping, jams and sill repair, interior and exterior trim repair, and refinishing.

Window trim/moldings at existing window and door openings are in varying stages of deterioration. Coordinating other work, repair and/or replacement of these trim pieces should be addressed.

In many cases, deteriorated wood can be consolidated and repaired with wood-epoxy (such as "Abatron"). Where window frames are too far deteriorated, or where the wood is in danger of collapse, address underlying repairs, this trim can be replicated and replaced with new wood elements to match the existing.

Masonry - Cleaning



Lichen and moss growth were observed in some areas. This condition should be addressed as part of the overall masonry maintenance strategy.

All masonry cleaning should be performed in accordance with Historic Preservation Brief #1 using the gentlest method that achieves the desired result. So-called "blasting" methods should never be used.

Masonry - Steel Lintels



Some of the masonry opening headers (in particular on the school wing addition) are supported by steel bearing lintels - angles and plates. These are subject to deterioration and rusting due to exposure to moisture.

When masonry work (repointing) is performed, steel lintels should be evaluated for bearing and deterioration. Failing elements should be replaced.

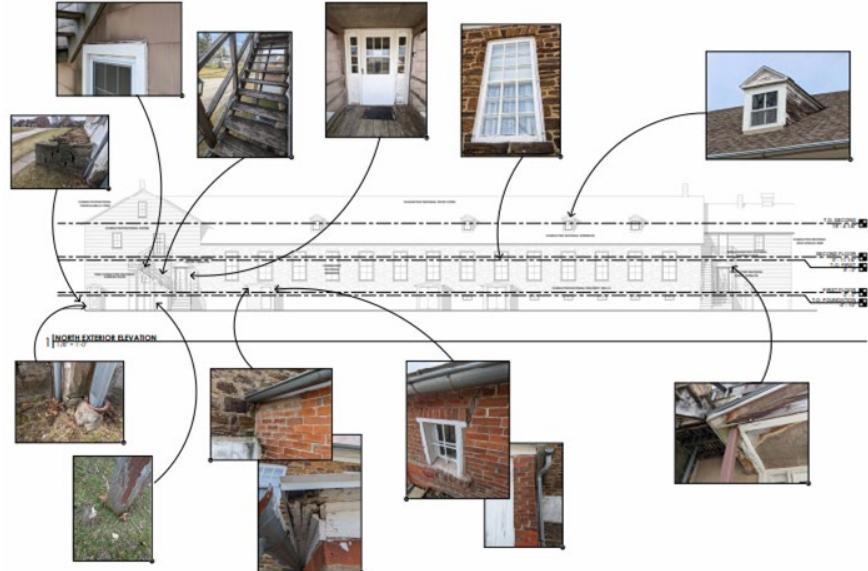
Paint coatings should be well-maintained to increase the longevity of exposed steel lintels.

Masonry - Inappropriate Mortar

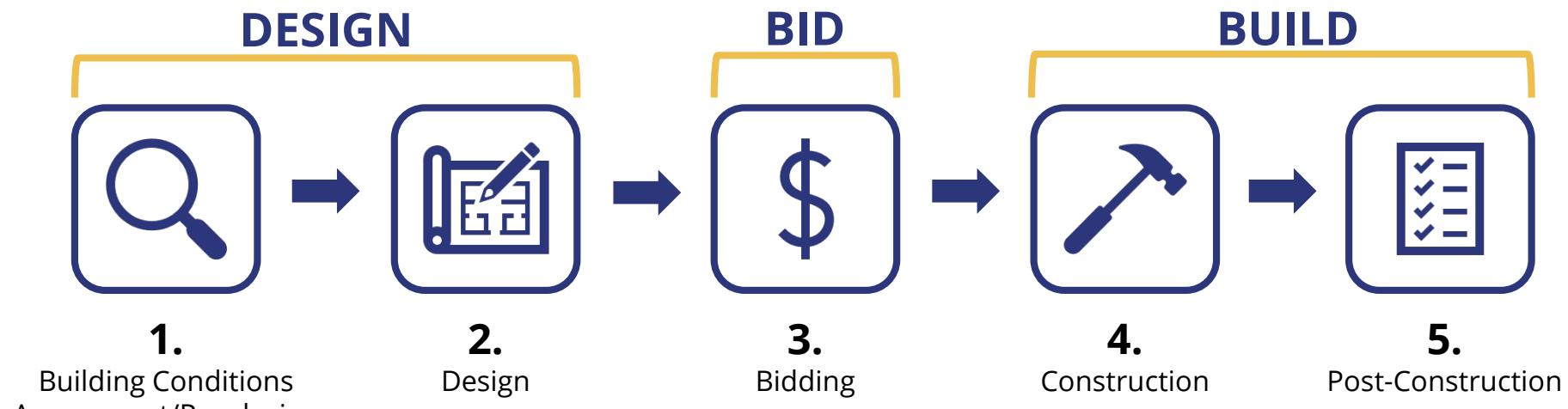


In general, the masonry walls are in fair to good condition, with isolated areas of inappropriate treatment (repointing) and deteriorated mortar joints.

The photos to the left illustrate a variety of conditions that should be addressed over time. It is recommended that a detailed masonry plan and maintenance strategy be prepared. Masonry work can be "triaged" such that emergent issues

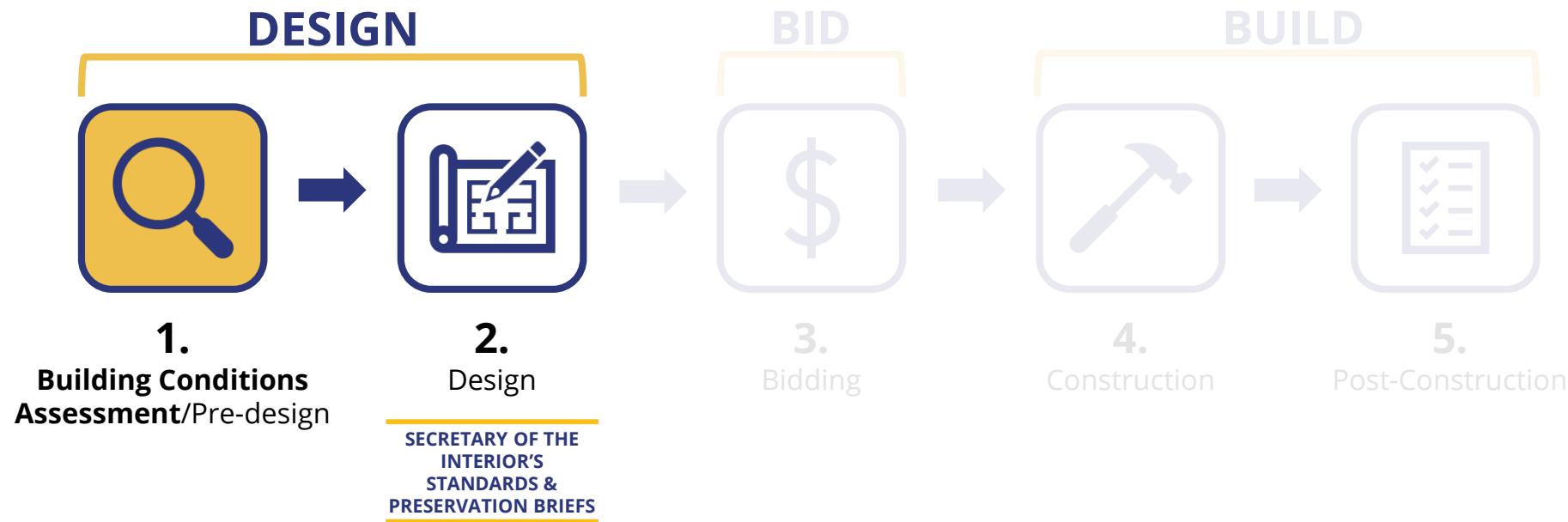


How is a Capital Project Completed?



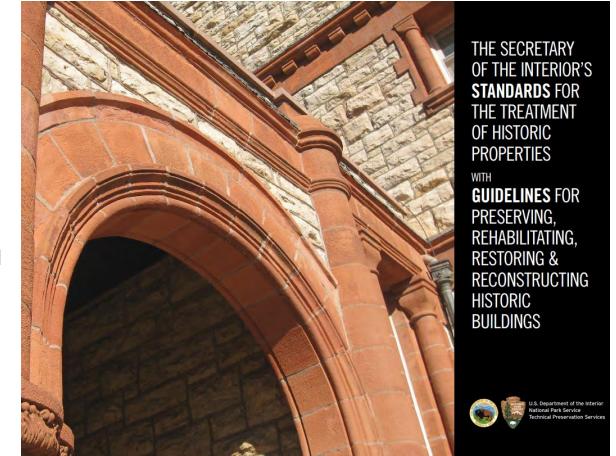
SECRETARY OF THE
INTERIOR'S
STANDARDS &
PRESERVATION BRIEFS

How is a Capital Project Completed?



Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
1. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
1. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
1. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
1. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
1. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
1. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
1. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
1. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
1. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.



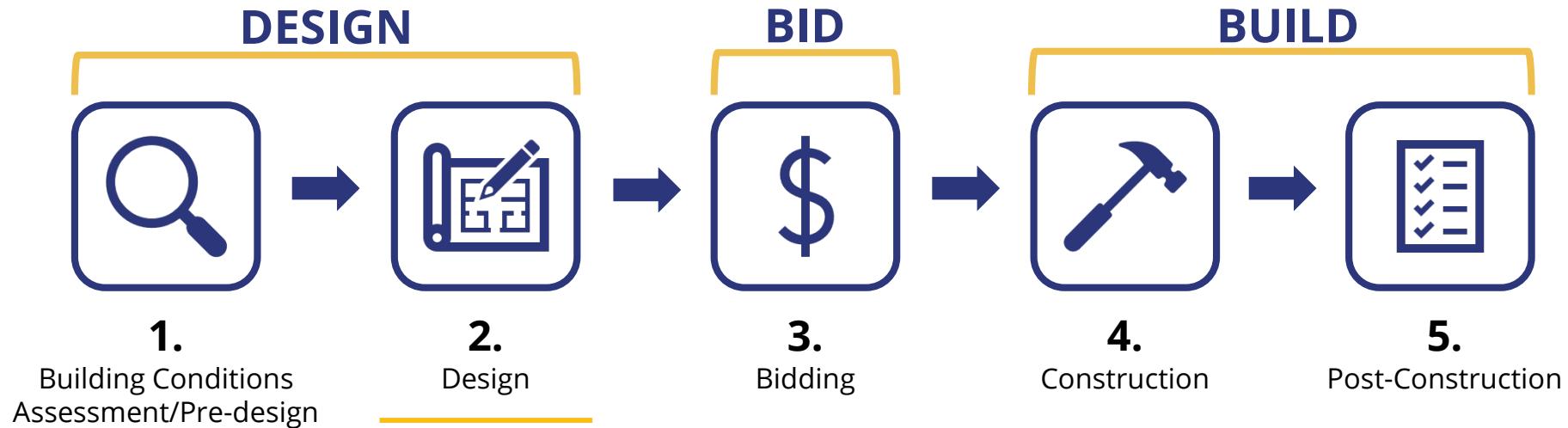
PRESERVATION

REHABILITATION

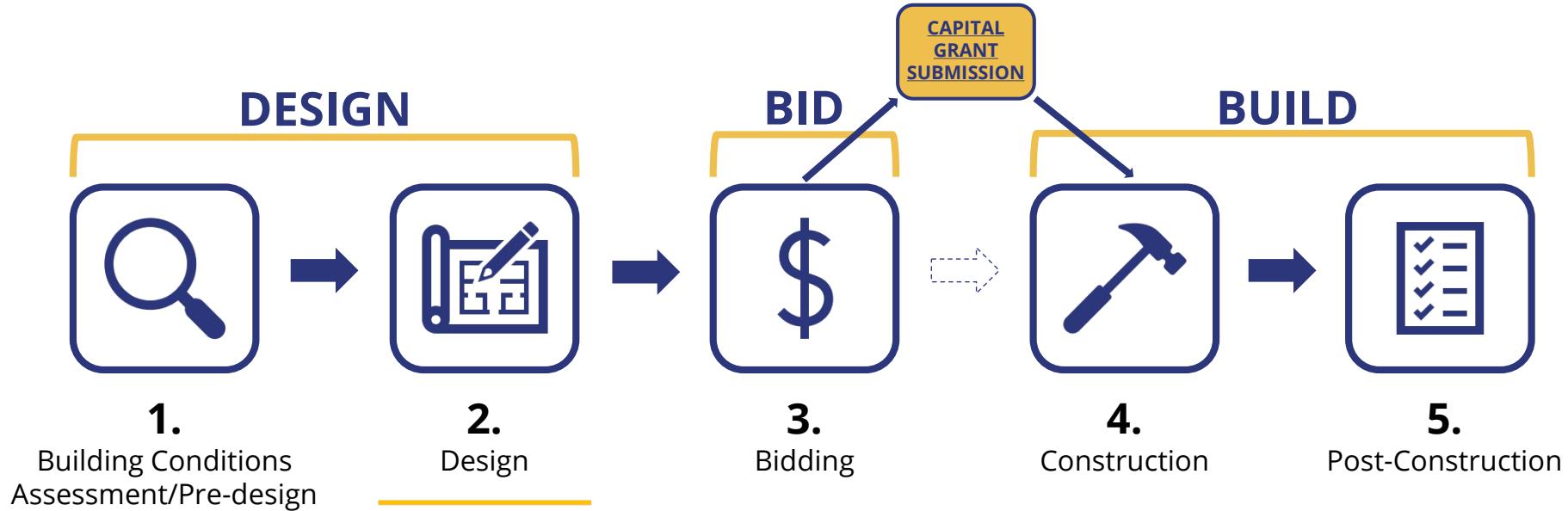
RESTORATION

RECONSTRUCTION

How is a Capital Project Completed?



How is a Capital Project Completed?



SECRETARY OF THE
INTERIOR'S
STANDARDS &
PRESERVATION BRIEFS

Application Process



Application Timeline 2026

Application

January 13
Application Opens

March 3
Application Due

Late June
Notifications

Additional Information Form

June 23
Additional
Information Form
Opens

July 14
Additional Information
Form Due

Early October
Final Notifications

Basic Eligibility

- Property must be located in the United States or its territories;
- Property must have been originally built as a house of worship;
- Property must be owned and occupied by an active congregation (or held in trust by its denominational body);
- Applicant must be the congregation or a closely affiliated nonprofit;
- If applicant is a congregation, it must be at least 3 years old.

Evaluation Criteria

- Historic, Cultural, or Architectural Significance
- Community-Serving Congregations
- Project Scope and Need
- Fundraising Readiness
- Healthy Congregations
- Strong Applications

Historic, Cultural, or Architectural Significance

Successful applicants are able to demonstrate their significance by answering questions such as:

- How does your congregation's history relate to historical themes or events that shaped American history and/or religion?
- In what ways has the congregation served or represented specific cultural, ethnic, or social groups in your community?
- If your building was designed by a notable architect, how does it rank in the body of that architect's work? Is the building an exceptional example of its style?

Community - Serving Congregations

We're looking for applicants that:

- Operate and host programming that serves non-members, or vulnerable and at-risk populations;
- Share space with non-affiliated groups and organizations, often at subsidized rates;
- Partner with other congregations, faith-based organizations, nonprofits, and/or municipalities;
- Have a widespread reputation for being a welcoming center of community life.

Project Scope & Need

We fund projects that:

- Address urgent repair needs;
- Improve functionality, accessibility, or make vacant, underutilized space usable for community outreach;
- Adhere to the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.**

*Applicants should demonstrate that urgent repair needs to the building envelope have already been identified by a building condition assessment and addressed before proposing ADA or interior rehabilitation projects.

*The National Fund scope of work is not finalized until the capital grant submission has been reviewed and approved by program staff.

Fundraising Readiness

We're looking for congregations that:

- Have begun to lay the groundwork for a major fundraising effort;
- Have established a realistic fundraising goal;
- Are willing and able to raise matching funds within the two year program period;
- Demonstrate a need for project funds that exceeds the congregation's typical donor base.

*We encourage congregations undertaking capital projects larger than \$500,000 to work with a fundraising professional.

Healthy Congregations

The National Fund prioritizes healthy, stable congregations so that our investment is truly impactful and lasting. Some signs of congregational health include:

- Tenured, well-respected clergy and capable lay leadership;
- Stable or growing membership;
- Financial strength and stability;
- Positive and supportive relationships with regional denominational offices (if applicable to your faith tradition);
- A history of weathering challenges with resilience.

Strong Applications

The National Fund is a very competitive program, so we urge our applicants to put their best foot forward. Applications should:

- Be completed in full with all required attachments;
- Make a compelling case for support;
- Clearly articulate the project's goals and components;
- Include high quality, high resolution photographs that help us to fully appreciate your building(s).

Tips for crafting a strong application:

- Don't do it alone - work with a team!
- Start the application early. Don't wait until a few minutes before the deadline to submit!
- Remember to save your progress as you go, and write responses to questions in Word or Google Docs.
- Avoid using AI tools such as Chat GPT when answering questions.

Where to Find the Application

Application Deadlines & Process

Applications for the National Fund for Sacred Places are accepted annually. Typically, 30-40 grantees that meet all of the eligibility requirements and exemplify the program criteria are accepted into the National Fund program in October. All application submission steps take place through our online grants management system, [Foundant](#).

Application Launch

January 13, 2026

Applications through the Foundant grant system will be accepted from any eligible congregation.

Applications Due

March 3, 2026

Applications must be submitted in the Foundant grant system by 11:59 pm EST on March 3, 2025

Final Notifications

October 2026

Final decisions will be made with the [Advisory Committee](#), and grantees will be notified in October.

APPLY ON JANUARY 13, 2026

COMING JANUARY 22, 2026 –
APPLICATION INFORMATION
WEBINAR

VIEW SLIDES FROM 2025 WEBINAR
WITH TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

fundforsacredplaces.org

Where to Find the Application



NATIONAL FUND
FOR
SACRED PLACES

A program of Partners for Sacred Places
in collaboration with the
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Logon

Email Address*

Password*

[Log On](#) [Create New Account](#)

[Forgot your Password?](#)

Welcome to the National Fund for Sacred Places on-line portal.

New Users: Please click on "Create New Account" to complete the registration process and create your logon credentials.

Existing Users: Please enter your credentials and log in. If you forgot your password, please use the "Forgot your Password" link to the left to reset your password.

Not Sure? If you think that you or someone at your organization has already registered in the system, do not create a new account. Please contact to receive your username and password.

Accessing the Application

  APPLY

 CONGREGATION NAME ▾

Partners for Sacred Places



Search or enter Access Code

If you have been provided with an Access Code for a later program step, you may enter it in the box at the top of the page. No Access Code is needed to complete an LOI or general Application.

National Fund for Sacred Places 2026

The **National Fund for Sacred Places** (the National Fund) is a program of Partners for Sacred Places in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Fund program provides more than financial support. The program is designed to help congregations successfully navigate the capital project process through training, technical assistance, planning support, and matching capital grants.

See More



Closes

03/03/2026

 Preview

Apply



Add Collaborators

National Fund for Sacred Places

 Congregation Name

  APPLY

Application

Process: National Fund for Sacred Places 2026

 Contact Info  Request  Documents 0

Applicant:
Congregation Name
lilychamilton@gmail.com

 Organization:
Partners for Sacred Places
12-3456789
215-567-3234
1700 Sanson Street #10
Philadelphia, PA 19103


[Contact Email History](#)

 Application

 Question List 

 Due by 03/03/2026 11:59 PM EST.

 Fields with an asterisk (*) are required.

Download as a PDF

National Fund for Sacred Places

 Congregation Name 



Application

 Collaborate 

Process: National Fund for Sacred Places 2026

Contact Info Request Documents  0

Applicant:
Congregation Name
lilychamilton@gmail.com

 Organization:
Partners for Sacred Places
12-3456789
215-567-3234
1700 Sanson Street #10
Philadelphia, PA 19103


[Contact Email History](#)

 Application

 Question List



 Due by 03/03/2026 11:59 PM EST.

 Fields with an asterisk (*) are required.

How to Submit the Application

National Fund for Sacred Places

Congregation Name ▾



APPLY

- > Introduction
- > Applicant Information
- > Congregation Information
- > Case for Support
- > Historic, Cultural, or Architectural Significance
- > Community-Serving Congregations
- > Project Scope and Need
- > Fundraising Readiness
- > Healthy Congregations
- > Photos
- > Application Experience
- > Certification

i Due by 03/03/2026 11:59 PM EST.

Abandon Request

Save Application

Submit Application



Q&A



Contact Information

Partners for Sacred Places

Lily Hamilton, Associate Director

lhamilton@sacredplaces.org

(215) 567-3234, ext. 14

National Trust for Historic Preservation

fundforsacredplaces@savingplaces.org

Application due March 3rd, 11:59 PM EST
