How to Use Our Online Grant Application System

A. Use Google Chrome (please do not use Internet Explorer).

B. Go to our website, www.afmfl.org.

C. Click on the *"Current Partners"* button in the *Apply for a Grant/Submit a Report* section on the right hand side of the home page.

D. If this is your first time the organization is using our online application system, click on *"create new account"*. Complete all required fields. If your organization already has an account, logon to the system. There is a link on the logon page to retrieve your password if necessary. If the person completing this application is external to your organization, they should sign in using the organization's credentials, not their own.

E. Once you have logged on, click on *"Apply"* link on the left side of the page. Select the appropriate application and begin!

F. Respond to all questions in the spaces provided.

G. You may print out the questions in order to share them with colleagues or to work on the responses off-line. Simply click the *"Print Question Legend"* link at the top of the application.

H. Applications can be saved, allowing you to return to your work later by clicking on the *"Save as Draft"* button at the bottom of the page. When you logon again, your saved application will appear on the *Application Status* page as *"Draft"*. Click *"Edit Application"* to resume your work. Please save your work frequently.

I. To complete and then upload required forms (forms vary by application), follow these steps:

    1. Download the form using the link provided in the online application.
    2. Save the document to your desktop … be sure to rename the document and save it somewhere you will remember (not as a temporary file).
    3. Complete the saved form(s).
    4. If the form requires a signature, you will need to print out, secure original signatures and scan the document to your desktop. If you do not have access to a scanner, use the *Fax-to-File* tool found on the left side of the screen in the online application. Follow the directions provided. This tool uses your fax machine to make pdf documents.
    5. Go back to the application, click *"Browse",* locate your saved file and open it.
    6. The document will be uploaded after you click *"Save as Draft".*
    7. Follow these steps for each individual document

J. When you are certain your application is complete, click *"Submit Application"* on the top left hand side of the page.

K. Successfully submitted applications will appear as *"Submitted"* on your *Application Status* page. An indication of *"Submitted"* does not necessarily mean your application is complete, only that it has been successfully transmitted. You will receive an e-mail confirmation within a week of submitting your application.

L. DO NOT USE ALL CAPS (please).

Grant-Writing Tips

- Start early!

- Submit your proposal BEFORE the deadline – allowing for unexpected personal or business challenges as well as delivery difficulties

- "Know" the funder…do your homework…understand what interests the funder

- Read through all materials before beginning to write

- If the proposal requirements are complex or extensive, make a checklist or work plan for yourself

- Work with a team … get folks involved in the project together … talk it through

- Ask questions

- Follow directions carefully (submission and formatting details such as page numbers and margin size as well as content)

- Be positive, proactive, and realistic!

- Follow the "4 C's" – be clear, consistent, concise and creative!

- Avoid acronyms and "lingo"

- If you experience "writer's block" or find yourself continually rewriting a section of the narrative, stop working on the proposal and go clear your mind – take a walk or work on a completely different project for awhile before coming back to the proposal

- Have someone who wasn't involved in preparing the proposal, or who isn't familiar with your organization and/or program, read the application before you submit it

We hope you will find these tips useful whether developing a proposal for Allegany Franciscan Ministries or any other funder. The term "proposal" above refers to any kind of application, RFP, funding request, etc.