



# Liberty Tree Campus Initiative Grants

## Information about the grant procedure

For information, contact:

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**Applications are closed at this time, but a new application period will be announced.**

### I. Introduction

***There is little or no formal First Amendment education at the elementary-to-middle-to-high school levels. As a result, Americans arrive as adults, either post-education or in college, with sparse academic exploration or practical knowledge needed to apply their freedom of religion, press, speech, assembly and petition.***

We know from surveys that large numbers of citizens would surrender free speech rights to government officials, that there is widespread misunderstanding of the role and operations of a free press, and ignorance of the rights of assembly and petition. Intervention and education at the collegiate level is perhaps the best and last real opportunity to expose large numbers of Americans to the core principles behind the First Amendment's five freedoms

The Liberty Tree Campus Initiative, funded by a grant from the McCormick Foundation, is designed to build awareness of the First Amendment by bringing thought-provoking First Amendment programs and speakers to campuses nationwide.

### II. About the Liberty Tree Campus Initiative

The Liberty Tree Initiative is an informal coalition of educators, journalists, librarians, artists and authors with a shared interest in building awareness of the First Amendment through education and information. It was founded in partnership with the American Society of Newspaper Editors, with help and support from the Knight Foundation, the McCormick Foundation and the First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University.

**The Liberty Tree Campus Initiative provides \$5,000** to colleges and universities to host a Liberty Tree Initiative program, tapping the talents of local and national experts and educators to illuminate pivotal First Amendment issues.

The Liberty Tree Initiative commemorates the elm tree near Boston Commons where, in 1665, America's earliest patriots first spoke of the need for a new nation founded on liberty. These programs will continue that tradition of constructive and collegial conversations about freedom in America. A Liberty Tree, like the one in Boston, was planted on participating campuses as a symbol of the importance of the First Amendment to an educated public.

The Liberty Tree Initiative provided funding for nine campus efforts this year. Berry College, Eastern Kentucky University, Winthrop University, Berry College, Elon University, Lehigh University, Winston Salem State University, California State University-Fullerton, UNC-Chapel Hill and Yale University received \$5,000 LTI grants for programs in 2009-2010. The First Amendment was celebrated in exciting and challenging ways by students, faculty, and surrounding community members. For example, Ken Paulson, president of the Newseum in Washington, D.C., and former editor of *USA Today*, narrated "Fight the Power," a music presentation that tells the story of musical censorship in the United States, at one university. On other campuses, students and faculty members protested the idea of banned books, participated in free-wheeling discussions about freedom of religion, the importance of protecting free speech on social media, and freedom of expression on the Internet. Students also developed their own websites on First Amendment issues and created exhibits depicting First Amendment heroes. Finally, a Liberty Tree was planted on many of these campuses to celebrate the importance of the First Amendment.

Ken Paulson, one of the driving forces behind the Liberty Tree Initiative, may be available to participate in similar events on your campus. Please note your interest in hosting him on your application form.

### **III. About the Grant**

- Up to twenty (20) schools will be selected by a committee composed of leading First Amendment educators, journalists and funding partners.
- Successful applicants will receive a one-time grant of \$5,000 to organize an educational program, such as a one-day conference, guest speakers, etc, focused on the importance of the First Amendment.
- Programs must be scheduled during the regular academic year – no summer sessions.
- Technical assistance will be provided via telephone and e-mail, including support in identifying and securing possible speakers, locating educational material, etc.
- Prof. Sandra Chance, a media law professor at the University of Florida, is chairing the Liberty Tree Campus Initiative. She can be reached at 352-392-2273, or [schance@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:schance@jou.ufl.edu).
- Gene Policinski, vice president and executive director of the First Amendment Center is chair of the campus programs. He can be reached at 615-727-1302, or [gpolicinski@fac.org](mailto:gpolicinski@fac.org).

#### IV. Guidelines

- The applicant must be a college or university faculty member with demonstrated support from your academic unit administration.
- The proposal must demonstrate an interest and ability to organize a First Amendment program designed to educate, illuminate and invigorate college students.
- The proposal should demonstrate a willingness to explore additional avenues for promoting First Amendment education on-campus, including partnering with other disciplines, such as music schools, fine arts programs, campus librarians, etc.
- The proposal should demonstrate an ability to create a web presence for First Amendment content on a campus Web site or willingness to add content to national website.
- A new program may be proposed by colleges or universities without active on-campus First Amendment programs.
- An expanded program may be proposed by colleges and universities with existing First Amendment programs.
- Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to include the planting of a “Liberty Tree” as part of their program proposal.
- The application must demonstrate a firm commitment and method of verification from the sponsoring academic unit to require student attendance at Liberty Tree campus events. Suggested methods include:
  - i. Required writing assignment in journalism classes based on attendance at the events;
  - ii. Required attendance as a replacement for in-class attendance by sponsoring departments or academic units on the day(s) of Liberty Tree events.
  - iii. Required attendance as part of a semester or academic year series of symposiums or programs within the academic unit or larger university community – if the Liberty Tree event(s) can be specifically identified as a mandatory event.
- Applications should also include innovative methods of encouraging non-compelled attendance. From previous Liberty Tree Initiative campus programs, such methods could include:
  - i. Free food or beverages purchased or donated and offered to attendees at the Liberty Tree Initiative event(s).
  - ii. Involvement of student public relations or advertising programs in promoting Liberty Tree Initiative events(s).
  - iii. Agreements with campus groups, clubs and programs (such as fraternities or sororities) to attend Liberty Tree Initiative event(s).
- The grantees will be selected based on specific criteria, including (but not limited to) uniqueness, creativity, potential for continued education, and demonstrated ability to educate on First Amendment issues.
- The grantees will be responsible for a final written and financial report to the Campus Coordinator.
- The grantees agree to be available to respond to any reasonable requests from the Liberty Tree Initiative.

Special emphasis will be placed on applications that provide specific plans involving use of on-campus news media to provide students and others in the university community with advance news and information about the Liberty Tree Initiative event(s).

## **V. Time Line**

You must indicate the time frame for your program on your application.

We recommend that you include Liberty Tree Initiative program discussions in any collegial or department curriculum or planning sessions **PRIOR TO SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION**, as a means of encouraging faculty support and inclusion in syllabi or class schedules for an upcoming academic year. Please note the results of such discussions in your application.

Our experience is that specific and identified support from administrators and fellow faculty members closest to you is essential for successful Liberty Tree events. While having a single individual responsible for the Liberty Tree program is necessary, this should not be a one-person initiative.

If the program/project proposal is approved, the Campus Coordinator will notify the applicant. When the applicant has executed the project-funding contract, the project funding will be provided.

## **VI. Proposal**

**Please include the following in your proposal:**

- An introduction to your campus, including why it would be an ideal place for a Liberty Tree program.
- Information about your interest and ability to host a First Amendment program. Include important background information regarding your ability to successfully plan, organize, coordinate and pull off a major event like this.
- An explanation of your proposed program or project. Applicants are encouraged to consider an interdisciplinary approach to First Amendment education.
- A proposed \$5000 budget for the project.
- A brief timetable for the project and its completion.
- A section on how the program/project will be publicized.
- A section on your ability to either create a Web presence or provide content for a national Liberty Tree website.

## **VII. Submission Requirements**

- Two (2) applications—one hard copy and one electronic—must be submitted to the Liberty Tree Initiative Campus Coordinator, Prof. Sandra Chance. Please send electronic submissions in Microsoft Word format.
- Proposals must be submitted (via email and postmarked) by **October 15, 2010**. Late submissions will be considered in the next year's award review session, but must be updated before the next submission deadline.

For further information and to submit a proposal, contact:

Prof. Sandra Chance ([schance@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:schance@jou.ufl.edu))  
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Liberty Tree Campus Initiative Project Application

**Application deadline: TO BE ANNOUNCED**

**ATTACH TO PROPOSAL**

**Applicant Overview**

College/University: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Please have your Dean or appropriate administrator sign this acknowledgment of support of your application.

*I support this application for a Liberty Tree Campus Initiative grant and look forward to hosting an informative, enlightening and innovation First Amendment program on our campus.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

*Position*

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Description:** Be sure and provide the following:

- I. **Background:** Please describe your college/university, student population and current and/or past experiences with on-campus First Amendment educational programs.
- II. **Overview:** Please describe the proposed program, including project concept, goals and objectives.

III. **Time Table**

IV. **Publicity Plan**

V. **Proposal for web presence or participation**

VI. **Evaluation:** How will you and your college/university evaluate the effectiveness of the program?

VII. **Sustainability:** Can your college/university sustain similar First Amendment educational efforts beyond the grant period? If so, how?

VIII. **Budget:** Your grant request will be limited to \$5,000. Please attach a program budget and narrative budget justification.

IX. **Key Staff Bios:** Please include short biographies of key faculty, staff and students who will be involved with the project. Attach resumes and/or curricula vitae, if available.