



Liberty Tree Campus Initiative Grant Announcement Request for Proposals (RFP)

Application Deadline for Spring 2009 Program: March 20, 2009
Application Deadline for Summer or Fall 2009: May 15, 2009

I. Introduction

First Amendment education is in abysmal shape – with little or no real formal instruction 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 will provide \$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. The program hopes to see a Liberty Tree, like the one in Boston, planted on participating campuses as a symbol of the importance of the First Amendment to an educated public.

For example, the Liberty Tree Initiative participated in a pilot campus program at Miami University of Ohio. More than 300 students and educators attended the First Amendment Town Hall Meeting. The free-wheeling session was hosted by Ken Paulson, former editor of *USA Today* and president of the Newseum in Washington, D.C., and included a representative of the local media, a well-known media attorney, and an expert in freedom of information issues. Paulson also teamed up with a nationally renowned musician to share music that had been banned, censored or sounded a call for social change as another way to take a fresh look at the First Amendment. In addition, students developed their own website on First Amendment issues and created an exhibit on-campus depicting First Amendment heroes. Finally, a Liberty Tree was planted on campus to celebrate the importance of the First Amendment.

III. About the Grant

- Ten (10) 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 can be scheduled for Spring 2009, Summer 2009 or Fall 2009. We are looking for several programs for Spring 2009, so we'll put these proposals on the fast track. If you need more time, don't worry. We expect to host the majority of programs in the Fall of 2009.
- 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. Jon Bougher is a Master's student helping with project administration. Their contact information is on the last page of this announcement.

IV. Guidelines

- The applicant must be 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 web site.
- 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 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.

V. Time Line

We have two timelines. The first one is for programs that can be scheduled during this spring semester, before May 15, 2009. The deadline for those proposals is **March 20, 2009**. These applicants will be notified within two weeks of the submission deadline.

If you're proposing a program for the Summer and Fall of 2009, the deadline is **May 15, 2009**. All programs must be completed by December 1, 2009. You must indicate your time frames on your application.

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 web site.

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 for Spring 2009 must be submitted (via email and postmarked) by **March 20, 2009**. No late submissions will be accepted.
- Proposals for Summer or Fall 2009 must be submitted (via email and postmarked) by **May 15, 2009**. No late submissions will be accepted.

For further information and to submit a proposal, contact:

Jon Bougher (jonbougher@gmail.com) or

**Prof. Sandra Chance (schance@jou.ufl.edu)
College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida
3208 Weimer Hall
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-8400
Phone: (352) 392-2273
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Liberty Tree Campus Initiative Project Application

Application Deadline for Spring 2009 Programs: March 20, 2009

Application Deadline for Summer 2009 or Fall 2009 Programs: May 15, 2009

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 innovative 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.