



## **SOURCES OF FUNDING**

The following information is provided as a general, partial guide to sources of funding for historic preservation projects. This information should be considered a starting point for a more in-depth examination of funding opportunities and should be used in conjunction with materials offered by local, regional, statewide, and national preservation organizations. In addition, there are other financial incentives not specifically for preservation projects that might be sources of funding; for example: museum, library, performing arts, housing, energy conservation, community planning, and senior citizens programs. These sources can be investigated depending upon the current or intended use of the historic property.

### **Funding Assistance for Not-For-Profit Organizations & Municipalities**

Various options exist for funding "public benefit" historic preservation projects. There are several public and not-for-profit (NFP) grant programs that offer funding for preservation planning and development projects, and these can be incorporated into private fundraising strategies. Most public and some private grant programs require that the historic property be eligible for or listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, or designated a landmark under a local preservation ordinance at the time of application.

### **Fundraising Strategies**

Seeking the financial assistance of one or more sources for a preservation project is a viable strategy. For this approach, a well-developed project proposal should be prepared for potential sponsors. Individuals, organizations, corporations, and companies based in a community or region may be sole or multiple source contributors. The project proposal should include: the project vision (such as public education, cultural enrichment, or heritage tourism), a brief history of the property (emphasizing its prominence and role in the community), a concise description of its current or intended use (highlighting specific functions and activities relative to the project vision), an outline of the scope of work with cost estimates, and a project schedule.

**The Foundation Center**, a national NFP organization, is a useful source of information and assistance about foundations and corporate donors, both regionally and nationwide. The center collects, organizes, analyzes, and disseminates information on foundation and corporate philanthropy. It offers free public access to this information in four center-operated libraries across the country and through a nationwide network of cooperating collections. For information, visit [fdncenter.org](http://fdncenter.org).

### **NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP)**

The state **Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)** offers funding through linked grant programs including parks, recreation, and historic preservation activities. The EPF is administered by OPRHP and assists municipalities and NFP organizations in the acquisition, development and improvement of parks and historic properties. The matching grants can be used for acquisition, restoration, preservation, rehabilitation, and improvement of historic properties. Applications are received once a year and projects are selected based on a competitive rating system. **For**

information, visit [nysparks.com/grants/grant-programs.aspx](http://nysparks.com/grants/grant-programs.aspx). For technical preservation assistance for grant projects in eastern New York, contact Stacey Matson-Zuvic at 845-786-2701 ext. 220; for western New York, contact Chris Capella-Peters at 315-492-1756.

OPRHP, through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), also administers the federal **Certified Local Government (CLG)** program, which supports local preservation activities and establishes a link between municipalities and state and national preservation programs. To become a CLG, the municipality must enact appropriate (SHPO-approved) local preservation legislation, establish a local historic preservation plan and appoint a qualified citizen body to administer the law, and enter into a formal partnership with the SHPO. Once enrolled, the municipality can apply for special funding set aside for CLG communities. Most CLG grants are used for planning and public education projects. For information, visit [nysparks.com/shpo/certified-local-governments/](http://nysparks.com/shpo/certified-local-governments/) or contact Julian Adams at 518-237-8643, ext. 3271

### **New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA)**

To support quality design throughout New York State, NYSCA provides funding for a variety of preservation activities, including design services and building condition studies, through its Architecture, Planning and Design/Capital Projects Program. Applicants must be NFP organizations or municipalities. For information, visit [nysca.org](http://nysca.org).

### **New York Landmarks Conservancy**

The New York Landmarks Conservancy is a New York City-based NFP preservation organization that administers several funding programs, one of which is open to eligible applicants anywhere in the state. The **Sacred Sites & Properties Fund** provides matching grants for the preservation of historic religious properties, owned by a religious organization, in New York State. Grants are available to all denominations for repair and restoration work. The **Robert W. Wilson Sacred Sites Challenge** is a program that awards matching grants for significant historic church restoration projects. For information, visit [nylandmarks.org](http://nylandmarks.org).

### **The National Trust for Historic Preservation**

The National Trust is a national NFP membership organization that provides a range of preservation services across the country, including grant programs. The trust also offers publications that provide useful information about fundraising strategies. For information, visit [preservationnation.org](http://preservationnation.org).

### **Preservation League of New York State**

Since 1993, the Preservation League, a statewide NFP membership organization, and NYSCA have co-sponsored the **Preserve New York** grant program, which provides support for three types of projects, including cultural resource surveys, historic structure reports, and historic landscape reports. Municipalities and NFP organizations are eligible applicants, but religious institutions are not eligible to apply. The program provides only partial support on a competitive basis. For information, visit [preservenys.org](http://preservenys.org).

### **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**

The Advisory Council offers an online guide to various historic preservation programs and services; visit [achp.gov](http://achp.gov).



## **Funding Assistance for Private Owners**

Generally, there are few sources offering preservation funding assistance to private property owners and to owner-occupants in particular. Most public agency and private foundation historic preservation funding programs are available only to municipalities or NFP organizations. However, there are some sources of funding available for private property owners.

Owners of residential and commercial properties might be eligible for federal, state, or local funds distributed through municipal agencies. Assistance may be in the form of loans or grants and eligibility is dependent on locally established criteria consistent with public program policies. While age and condition of a property may be considered in these programs, the focus might be providing affordable housing, creating employment opportunities or investing in local communities rather than preserving historic and cultural resources. Information about these programs can be obtained from municipal departments of planning, community development, or economic development.

In addition, private lending institutions may offer assistance to target areas within older neighborhoods or rural districts. As with the public sources, these programs are not likely to focus on the historic nature of the property and selection criteria may reflect other priorities. Nevertheless, historic and cultural resources may benefit from such programs.

Owners of income-producing historic commercial, office, industrial, or residential properties listed on the **National Register of Historic Places** may be eligible for a preservation tax credit if they are planning rehabilitation work. The **federal historic rehabilitation tax credit program** allows a 20% tax credit for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties. The work (both interior and exterior) must meet federal preservation standards and be approved by the SHPO. For information, visit the SHPO website at [nysparks.com/shpo/tax-credit-programs/](http://nysparks.com/shpo/tax-credit-programs/) or the National Park Service tax credit website at [nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm](http://nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm)

In addition, owners of National Register-listed properties may be eligible for a federal **facade easement** program that provides a federal tax advantage to those who sign a voluntary legal agreement that protects the historic or cultural resource. Under the terms of an easement, a property owner grants a portion of, or interest in, his or her property rights to an appropriate organization, and in doing so may obtain a tax benefit.

Through the **state preservation tax credit programs**, income producing properties that qualify for the federal preservation tax credit and are located in distressed census tracts are eligible for an additional state income tax credit. In addition, owner-occupied properties that are listed on the **New York State Register of Historic Places** (the state counterpart to the National Register) and located in distressed census tracts are eligible for a 20% tax credit for qualified rehabilitation costs through the **New York State Historic Homeowner Tax Credit Program**.

**For information about federal and state preservation tax credit programs, the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places, and other state and federal preservation programs and services, visit [nysparks.com/shpo/](http://nysparks.com/shpo/) or call 518-237-8643.**

