



MYTH vs. FACT

MYTH: Lancaster County Community Foundation is excluding Christian organizations from participating in this year's ExtraGive.

FACT: ExtraGive continues to be open to ALL organizations, including Christian and other faith-based organizations, that meet our basic requirements. Those requirements include that the organization be a 501(c)(3) public nonprofit charitable organization, that it serves the residents of Lancaster County, that it submits an independent audit or financial review for donor transparency, and that it submits a nondiscrimination policy for donor transparency.

MYTH: The nondiscrimination policy requirement unfairly targets Christian and faith-based organizations, and was intended to exclude them from participating in ExtraGive.

FACT: We have deep respect for the positive, uplifting work of Lancaster County's faith-based organizations. Christian or faith-based organizations that want to participate in ExtraGive are welcome to do so, as long as they meet the same requirements of all other nonprofit organizations. The nondiscrimination policy is part of the Lancaster County Community Foundation's commitment to donor transparency. These policies assure donors that they are giving to organizations that align with their personal values. There are no requirements regarding the specific content of each organization's nondiscrimination policy.

We recognize and accept that some organizations may be exempt from certain legal requirements related to nondiscrimination under a "ministerial exception" or as a religious organization or religious educational institution as outlined by law. We further recognize and accept that some institutions may hold the position that they are exempt from certain legal requirements under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act or comparable state law. Those organizations can choose to state those exemptions in their nondiscrimination policies.

Public availability of this information ensures our community institutions are accountable to their supporters for responsible financial stewardship and operational integrity. Our community is better served when our institutions operate with openness and transparency.

MYTH: Lancaster County Community Foundation is attempting to force nonprofit organizations to adopt its values.

FACT: Lancaster County Community Foundation is, in its own right, a community nonprofit and public charity. We are committed to operating with transparency and openness, and ensuring our activities align with our values: Integrity, Relationships, Equity, Innovation and Courage. As Lancaster County's only community foundation stewarding our community's endowment, we believe we must hold ourselves and our nonprofit partners to the highest standards and do what we can to promote respect, safety and humanity within our community.

We recognize and appreciate that all organizations have their own values. Our policies – including those related to ExtraGive – are intended to be respectful of religious freedom and ideological differences, while at the same time aligning with the foundation's community-centered values.

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MYTH: With its Anti-Hate Policy, the Lancaster County Community Foundation is now labeling Christian and faith-based organizations as “hateful” and intends to use that distinction to exclude them from ExtraGive.

FACT: We love Lancaster County and believe deeply in our mission to help foster and build a more equitable and inclusive community, which in turn will mean a stronger, healthier future for ALL of us. And we are endlessly inspired by the hundreds of community-focused organizations that work every day to make Lancaster County an extraordinary place to call home – including Christian and faith-based organizations.

Anti-Hate Policies are a best practice to protect donors from unknowingly supporting organizations that engage in activities that are harmful to our community. Very few organizations will be impacted by the anti-hate policy, as the overwhelming majority of Lancaster County nonprofits – including faith-based organizations – adhere to this basic standard for civility, compassion and human kindness. In fact, only one organization, of the more than 500 who participate in ExtraGive, has been found by our Board to not meet those standards. But that is the lone, and exceedingly rare, exception. This decision was not based upon the organization’s religious beliefs, but instead on its active practices which have been determined by trusted professional organizations – including the American Psychological Association and the American Medical Association – to be harmful to individuals and the community.