A Challenging Landscape for Faith-Based Organizations

Today’s faith-based organizations and congregations desire to live out their faith and see their communities flourish. Yet they face an increasingly complex legal and cultural landscape. In particular, faith-based organizations want to positively impact their communities without sacrificing their religious identity. Faith-based organizations may even question their value and contribution to society. What if there was a way for faith-based organizations to live out their mission, despite limited time and resources?

Sacred Sector Community: Designed to Help You Thrive

Sacred Sector is a learning community specifically designed to equip organizations facing these challenges by empowering organizations to advance their faith-based missions, fully exercise their ability to live out their faith, and increase their impact. Sacred Sector Community does this through:

**A diverse network.** Sacred Sector has cultivated relationships with diverse faith-based organizations, consulting with them on curriculum and inviting them to share their knowledge with participants.

**In-depth resources.** Sacred Sector offers a wealth of resources to aid diverse organizations as they undertake organizational, political, legal and cultural challenges.

**Experienced facilitators.** The Sacred Sector team has decades of expertise in articulating to policy makers and the broader public the distinct, positive contributions of faith-based organizations and why they should be free to serve.

This learning community will build upon the experiences of participating groups, seeking to honor and elevate their strengths and the ways they positively impact communities across the region. We know that equipping leaders in this way leads to healthy organizational life, which ultimately results in flourishing communities.

**What You’ll Learn**

Sacred Sector Community wants to equip your organization to be confident in its distinct faith-shaped contribution to society, and feel empowered to navigate today’s challenging legal and cultural landscape. At the end of the program, your organization will be able to:

- Understand and proactively respond to public policy contexts that impact your faith-based work;
- Implement organizational best practices that advance your faith-based mission;
- Effectively communicate and adopt public positioning regarding how your organization positively and distinctly contributes to society; and
- Live out its sacred mission in every area of its organizational life.

"Before engaging with the Sacred Sector team and their resources, I did not understand what I was allowed to do on behalf of my organization, the difference between general advocacy and lobbying, and I was not sure I even could lobby on behalf of my organization as a nonprofit. It is so amazing to know that I can participate as a citizen and so can my organizations."

- Executive Director of volunteer-run prayer ministry

Sacred Sector is made possible by:
A Free, Flexible, and Customized Curriculum

Sacred Sector Community runs from February to May 2020, and will be carried out through a combination of in-person and online gatherings, written resources, and one-on-one coaching to ensure the time commitment is flexible and customizable to the discretion and availability of the organization. Participants will:

- **Receive 1-on-1 coaching from experts.** Through 1-on-1 assessments, participants will explore areas of greatest need and set goals to track progress throughout the program. Sacred Sector staff will work with your organization to create customized, hybrid learning plans for organizations and congregations with fewer staff and resources.

- **Connect with leaders of other faith-based organizations.** Sacred Sector will bring together leaders from faith-based organizations and congregations to provide mutual encouragement and perspective on some of the most pressing challenges facing the faith-based sector today.

- **Participate in regularly scheduled webinars.** You will participate in interactive webinars, hear from subject matter experts, and gain further insight into the written resources.

- **Create an organizational assessment and implementation plan (OAIP).** The OAIP provides a framework for organizational goal-setting that involves three distinct phases, and ends with participants completing an implementation guide that is designed to help you plan the specific steps you will take to accomplish your goal. A customized plan might include:
  - Creating a customized advocacy plan,
  - Revising the mission statement and/or statement of faith,
  - Developing or adding religious elements to an employee handbook,
  - Strengthening relationships with community leaders,
  - Planning for leadership transitions, or
  - Pursuing greater financial accountability.

- **Access written resources.** Sacred Sector has developed a wealth of resources to aid diverse faith-based organizations as they undertake organizational, political, legal and cultural challenges. Resources include:
  - Six Toolboxes to equip Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), which address concerns about Public Policy, Organizational Practice, and Public Positioning in each topic. The Toolboxes cover six topics: Religious Staffing, Nondiscrimination Laws, Government Partnerships, Advocacy and Lobbying, Family-Supportive Workplaces, and Positive Engagement in the Public Square.
  - The Standards for Excellence® resources, which describe how nonprofits should act to be ethical and accountable in their program operations, governance, human resources, financial management and fundraising.

**Partner with Sacred Sector Community**

We invite you to start a conversation with the Sacred Sector team to learn more about how your organization, ministry or church can take its effectiveness and impact to the next level. Contact Program Manager Virginia Creasy (virginia.creasy@cpjustice.org, 615.521.0968).

Sacred Sector Community is free for participating organizations and churches, thanks to a generous grant from the Templeton Religion Trust.

Learn more at www.sacredsector.org/community and subscribe to the monthly newsletter, Sacred Spotlight: www.SacredSector.org/subscribe.