

# **Oregon Country Fair Bold Steps Application**

## **A) Social Equity**

- 1) Charitable Programs - The OCF has three main charitable programs that touch on different areas of need, distributing approximately \$50,000 annually in grants and donations.

The Bill Wooten Memorial Endowment Fund - Schools and other non-profit groups in the region served by the Fern Ridge School District are invited to apply for an Endowment Fund grant. Founded in 1992, this program is dedicated to arts and environmental education programs in the Fair's home community of Fern Ridge.

The Jill Heiman Vision Fund - Established in 1996, this fund exemplifies the principles of grass roots community action that are integral to the Fair. Fair members vote each year on a funding category. Donations are dedicated to meeting basic needs and go to non-profit groups throughout Lane County.

The OCF Board of Directors offers donations to various non-profit groups and programs through its own donation fund. This program reaches a wider geographic base and has funded activities throughout the state and nation. Its recipients range from local school garden programs to Hurricane Katrina relief work.

- 2) Education & Training Programs - The OCF has two primary areas that focus on education and training.

The OCF has an internal education budget that is used for year round organizational development work. The educational and training topic areas range in subject from enlightened personnel policies to sustainable practices and non-profit effectiveness. This budget is accessible to anyone in the organization.

The OCF has undertaken external education work as well. Our organization was asked to develop a workshop for the U of O Continuing Education department. This workshop, now in its third year, focuses on greening events. Developed by the Fair's General Manager with help from the Assistant Manager, the course material utilizes the Fair's experience to further the triple bottom line approach to sustainability for an ever widening network of practitioners.

3) Diversity Programs – The OCF has two notable areas of diversity program work.

The OCF Board of Directors has recently adopted a sweeping goals document that is the culmination of three and a half years of work toward realizing our Visions for the future of the organization. The first of the nine identified goals areas is devoted to diversity. *Goal I – Increasing the diversity of all aspects of the Oregon Country Fair community.* Implementing these goals is a core aim of the organization over the next ten years. The Fair's commitment to a diverse future puts this goal at the top of our list.

Culture Jam is the Oregon Country Fair's exciting week-long summer youth gathering located on a parcel of land at the site we call Alice's Wonderland. Culture Jam is committed to serving youth from diverse cultures and economic backgrounds, partnering with the City of Eugene to provide full scholarships to at least 10 youth of color. It is within this rich mix of difference that much of the electricity of our creativity is launched. The Culture Jam experience is for those who want to take an active role in creating a positive future and have a great time in the process.

4) Employee Benefits – The OCF has a thoughtful and generous benefits program that consists of the following -

Full Healthcare Insurance Plan – This includes wellness care and Dental

HSA Account – The Fair fully funds \$2,000 a year for full time employees

TSA Retirement Savings – The Fair contributes up to 7% of employee income annually

COLA and Step Table living wages increases

Flexible Work Schedules

Yearly Holiday Bonus Plan

3 month sabbatical every seven years at full salary

## **B) Environmental**

### 1) Recycling/Waste Reduction/Composting

Recycling - In 2000, the OCF Board of Directors set the goal of a waste free Fair. Our policy as stated in our Guidelines: "To reduce the amount of waste generated by our event, minimize impact upon the land by removing all extraneous materials from it and to set an example that future generations will be proud to follow." This mission has led the OCF to evolve an award winning recycling program. This program and our "pack it in, pack it out policy" has allowed us to achieve amazing annual recycling rates and to edge ever closer to our "Leave No Trace" ethos.

Waste Reduction/Zero Waste - While the Fair's impressive recycling program is saving thousands of kilowatt hours and many tons of carbon in avoided resource extraction tonnage hauled to landfills and production of product and packaging, the OCF has made the commitment to go even further down the path toward Zero Waste and true sustainability by going durable and biodegradable. With durable and compostable dishware, the purchase of thousands of plates, forks, bowls and spoons is avoided each year. Currently, the Fair owns 150,000 durable forks and spoons alone for the food booths to provide to customers. We are considering replacing bowls and small plates in the future.

Composting - The OCF has been actively composting food scraps, compostable dishware and even corn based plastic water bottles for many years now. Over the last six years the Fair has been experimenting with large scale event wide composting and we have recently refined our process with a new sort line and compost processing area. This year's compost is by far the best finished product we have ever produced and comes through the lessons we have learned from our previous composting endeavors.

- 2) Alternative Transportation - The OCF has made a commitment to provide real options in alternative transportation to and from our event. These have focused on Public Mass Transit and Ride Sharing plans.

Public Transportation - Every year the OCF works with Lane Transit District (LTD) to help Fairgoers, workers and staff make the forty mile round trip between Eugene and Veneta. This helps us minimize our carbon footprint by approximately 7% and manage the automobile presence on site. This commitment took a new step forward last year as LTD introduced the use of biodiesel on about 40% of the buses serving OCF participants. This pilot project will further the Fair's efforts to lighten our environmental impact due to air quality and health benefits from reduced diesel emissions, as well as promoting our long term partnership with LTD by encouraging their use of biofuels. We also provide a free worker shuttle bus each day of the fair to reduce VMTs.

This year the Fair has partnered with the City of Veneta to extend the Zumwalt Campground shuttle to residents of Veneta and Elmira who have not previously had access to shuttle bus service, further reducing VMTs.

The OCF has partnered with SpaceShare to help provide an online ride share and carpooling network for Fairgoers, workers and staff. This system helps connect participants by many different criteria such as geographic location, interests and other factors.

- 3) Green Landscaping - Our land is the most direct way for the OCF to address issues of stewardship, responsibility and environmental ethics. The OCF recognizes our stewardship obligation to preserve this rapidly disappearing ecosystem: Willamette Valley riparian floodplain and forest. The Fair site also serves as a critically important wildlife refuge linking the Fern Ridge/West Eugene wetlands, the Long Tom Watershed and Coast Range habitats. The following are some of our Green landscaping efforts:

Standing Membership in the Long Tom Watershed Council

Five Federal, State and Watershed Wetlands Restoration & Recovery Grants

An OCF Crew dedicated to Archaeology serves to preserve and protect the archaeological sites on our property.

The OCF identifies, maintains and protects Green Zones that are habitats that need to remain undisturbed. Many of these are in concert with the OCF's active involvement in wetland and riparian restoration and recovery projects.

The OCF site is utilized by the City and County as a seed bank for rare native species, as well as numerous wildflower and bird identification inventories.

The OCF has developed an on site organic produce garden that actively feeds volunteer staff, saves money and food miles and functions as a valuable educational tool.

The OCF holds quarterly highway pickup events that gather OCF volunteers and staff to do litter patrols on the roadways around our property and in our community.

The OCF funded and helped install a bioswale project on the grounds of the Fern Ridge Public Library.

The OCF hosted a U of O Landscape Architecture Studio the last two years. This coursework helped us rethink our land use management practices from a more dynamic and ecologically sustainable perspective.

#### 4) Energy Reduction/Alternative Energy -

The OCF's Peach Power project focuses on installing solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays to generate clean, emission free electricity on the Fair site. Peach Power seeks to eventually turn the Fair into a net renewable electricity exporter over the course of a year. Last year we installed our first fixed array that feeds back to the grid year round. This allowed us to partner with a local business to receive a sizable pass thru tax credit that helped fund the array. In partnership with EWEB, EPUD, and private businesses, many smaller temporary installations help us power stages and other equipment quietly and emission free during the Fair every year.

The OCF uses only premium renewable windpower for our purchased grid electricity needs. At our site with EPUD and at our Eugene office's from

EWEB, we have been committed to windpower since it became available in the marketplace.

The OCF is committed to using locally sourced biodiesel in any onsite piece of equipment or vehicle possible. Both of our tractors currently run the highest Sequential biodiesel blend the season will allow.

As previously touched upon the OCF has worked with LTD to get a pilot biodiesel bus project up and running. LTD now has at least ten of its buses running on a B-20 diesel blend.

The OCF's Energy Park area is dedicated each year at the Fair to showcasing and demonstrating, as well as educating Fairgoers about, renewable and alternative energy. Solar showers are available daily to the staff and the public as well as a wide range of alternative energy connections for Fairgoers to draw upon for their own projects.

#### Other Environmental Items -

Use of Non Toxics/biodegradables - The OCF uses green cleaning products, BT dunks for mosquito control, Lignan Oil for dust abatement on gravel roads.

The OCF has created a Woodstock area for lumber reclamation that allows us to reuse before recycling.

Paper use reduction measures - The OCF has switched to online media wherever possible. Our many different applications (entertainer, crafter, food booths), the Fair Family News publication, our Guidelines and By laws, our Construction and Land Use Management manuals and other OCF publications can all be found electronically on line.

The OCF Board of Directors has passed a sustainable purchasing policy that requires staff, coordinators and volunteers to purchase locally first whenever possible then regional, statewide and nationally. The Board has also directed that organic products of all types get first consideration in purchasing decisions.

## **C) Economic**

## 1) Organizational Mission Statement -

The Fair was established to promote the value and practice of “right livelihood,” or as founder Bill Wooten put it, “to support the work of the hand and the heart.” As stated in Article II of the Bylaws of The Oregon Country Fair - The purpose of the Oregon Country Fair shall be to educate and inform the public about choices in personal and community lifestyle through the promotion and preservation of the work of individual crafts persons, artists, artisans, musicians, and performers, displays in a traditional fair setting, psycho-spiritual rejuvenation, and the creation of a public forum encouraging the exchange and discussion of ideas about alternative community organization, use of economic resources and appropriate technology.

The Fair helped support the establishment of the statewide Microenterprise Network, and has provided many small business people with the opportunity to earn a living from their artisanal food and hand made crafts. The Fair fees for our more than 800 vendors are based on recovering direct costs only; we charge 0% of vendor revenues.

For many years the Fair provided a Business Directory of Fair businesses, distributed free of charge all over Oregon. This year we are in the process of moving to an electronic only version of this Directory as part of our effort to use less paper.

## 2) Marketing Plan -

The OCF marketing plan emphasizes social values. We believe that affordability and accessibility are two key components of social equity in the world of events. To those ends the OCF has kept the cost of tickets to attend our event quite low by industry standards. We also offer a discounted three day ticket that encourages return participation. We offer discounted admissions for alter-abled and elderly fairgoers as well as free admission for children 10 and under to keep the event affordable for families of all sizes and ages.

The OCF does not have direct sponsors, but rather seeks to develop marketing partners and partnerships based on shared values. The OCF created a partnership with LTD and several other marketing partners to advertise on the sides of biodiesel buses. This partnership of fifteen local and regional businesses supports the use of alternative fuels for our event and in our home town and helps keep the LTD service to the Fair free for all. Based upon the success of this program last year we will be doing again in 2008

The OCF has had an active partnership with local PBS affiliates KLCC and KRVM in the community for many years. This partnership has made free public broadcast of the entertainment from Main Stage, Blue Moon and Shady Grove a local radio staple for many years.

### 3) Organizational Vision Statement -

Our Vision Statement as stated in our Guidelines - The Oregon Country Fair creates events and experiences that nourish the spirit, explore living artfully and authentically on Earth and transform culture in magical, joyous and healthy ways.

The OCF Code of Conduct -

We are an association of equals. Each and every member of our community is entitled to respectful and equitable treatment by all other participants. We should all act responsibly towards one another wherever we gather.

The OCF is committed to the principles of non-violence. Mental, verbal, physical or sexual abuse will not be tolerated.

We share reverence for the land. Stewardship is everyone's responsibility. Please help protect the plant and animal life whose space we share, and work to extend this practice beyond the OCF and into daily life.

As Bill Wooten, one of our founders wrote: This is a community of choice of reason rather than by the chance of birth. Reason is found more each day on the side of cooperation, conservation, and community. Reason stands with those who reduce their wants and simplify their needs, who lessen demands upon the world's resources. Reason stands with those who do not ask the world to do for them what they can do for themselves. Reason stands with those who treat neighbors as friends, friends as brothers and sisters, and this earth, as our one and only home. Let us so stand together. It stands to reason, to endure is to prevail.

### 4) Chamber or Business Group Membership -

The OCF is a member of the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce.



The OCF is a member of Lane Arts Council, and Oregon's Microenterprise Network

The OCF is a member of the Long Tom Watershed Council, and Cascade Pacific RC&D

The OCF is a member of the Convention and Visitors Association of Lane County. The OCF was the recipient of the CVALCO Blue Heron Tourist Destination award for 2007.