

## **2026 Friends Foundation for the Aging Year-end Report & Reapplication Proposal Form**

ARCH Program (Aging Resources Consultation Help)

New York Yearly Meeting

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Amount requested: \$64,000

### ***1. What is the problem you identified? Has it changed?***

NYYM has a large and geographically dispersed population of aging Friends across New York, northern New Jersey, western Connecticut and inside of prisons. Many experience isolation and lack of practical and spiritual support in aging. The ARCH Program addresses these challenges by offering groups, workshops, talks, worship, and resources - opportunities that connect Friends across distances. Through *mutual accompaniment*, we create worshipful communities where Friends support one another, share the experience of growing older, and learn from the wisdom generated in mutuality and community. The problem has not changed, but the demand continues to grow, with more Friends seeking both consistent support groups and new resources that blend practical guidance with spiritual depth.

### ***2. What actions did you take to address the problem?***

The actions that ARCH takes to work within the framework of mutual support are multifaceted, responsive, and continually developing. Current ARCH offerings include workshops, support groups, social meet-ups, worship sharing, consultation, intra-regional connections, monthly/quarterly meeting visits, and access to resources within and outside of the yearly meeting. Up-to-date offerings can be found on the [NYYM ARCH webpage](#).

- **ARCH Groups.** In 2025 the NYYM program offered seven ARCH Groups: *Caregivers and Caretaking*, *Aging Without Children*, *Advance Planning Drop-in*, *Tiny Meetings Meetup*, *Seasons of Life 60-80*, *Seasons of Life 80+*, and *ARCH Night In*. Between the two Seasons groups alone, there are 55 participants. 126 Friends receive reminders for *ARCH Night In*, our monthly social gathering for fun and flowing conversation about growing older. In 2025 we began a new ongoing worship sharing opportunity '*The Wisdom of Aging Worship Sharing*', a monthly online gathering for Friends to worship on spiritual queries about aging.
- **The ARCH Foundations Workshop** ran in Fall 2024 and Spring of 2025, with 22 and 17 registrants, respectively. ARCH staff Kevin Lovelady, Judy Meikle, and Yana Landowne co-facilitated. One participant said the workshop provided "*A refuge from the difficulty of aging alone.*" Another noted, "*The pacing felt like we were always moving forward, but with enough time to savor each stage of the journey.*" Another realized that "*Including those being accompanied in decision-making is critical for us caregivers to understand and embrace.*"
- **Participant-led collaborations:** A key 2025 goal was to lift up the gifts of participants. Offerings included:
  - '*Self Care With Clare*', a three-part series regarding self-care as an older person, was offered in collaboration with 92 year-old ARCH participant Regina St Clare.
  - '*From Aging to Sageing*', a four-part workshop co-facilitated by a Purchase Quarter psychologist Renee Fogarty and ARCH Local Coordinator Martha Gurvich.

- 'What Friends Need to Know When Considering Hospice', a regional session led by hospice director Marie Turner and Farmington-Scipio Coordinator Julie Rudd.
- 'Death Discussions': ARCH worked with End-of-Life Doula Elizabeth Almirini (Shrewsbury Meeting) to bring her conversational version of a 'Death Cafe' as a virtual interest group for NYYM Summer Sessions.
- **Quaker Values and End of Life Decision Making Workbook:** Having distributed all 240 copies printed in January 2024, we did a reprint of 100 more in June 2025. This year, *Quaker Values and End of Life Decision Making Workbooks* reached Friends and Meetings as far as Minneapolis Friends Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Durham NC, Norwich Meeting UK, and Birmingham Monthly Meeting in Alabama. ARCH also stocks and distributes copies of *A Tender Time: Quaker Voices on the End of Life* by mail and as we travel.
- **Inside/Outside Work:** The *Letter-Writing Collective* and *Query Cohort* remain strong, connecting incarcerated and outside Friends. The *Inside Outside Letter-Writing Collective* now supports about 60 active letter-writing pairs, while the *Query Cohort Project* includes 14 Friends both inside and outside prison walls engaged in ongoing collective spiritual reflection around focused queries. ARCH Prisons Coordinator Judy Meikle holds a monthly meeting for outside participants to share stories and support. In 2025, ARCH began adapting the *ARCH Foundations Workshop* into a worksheet-based correspondence course for incarcerated Friends and their outside partners, with a pilot anticipated in early 2026.

### 3. What did you learn? Will you make any changes in the coming year?

- **Regional Models:** A monthly *Farmington-Scipio Regional Meetup* has proven to be a highly effective way for a Coordinator to support local meetings and for Friends to share regional resources. In 2026 we plan to develop this model with other Coordinators in their regions.
- **ARCH Group Replication Tools:** While ARCH Groups are designed to be simple and replicable, Friends sometimes feel uncertain about how to start them in their own meetings. In 2026 we plan to create written Guidelines for ARCH Groups, modeled after FGC's Worship Sharing Guidelines, to make the peer-led group model more accessible and portable.
- **Nurturing participant leadership:** This developing work was rich in 2025, and we will continue to partner with ARCH participants to bring their wisdom and expertise to the wider body. A second collaboration with Regina St Clare - *Doing The Decades* - will focus on personal and historical timelines and spiritual storytelling and is slated for a multi-month run. It is clear that ARCH's administrative scaffolding can support, nurture, and present these emerging leadings, and can integrate new participants into our ongoing ARCH groups.

### 4. How have you engaged any partners/collaborators in implementation or funding? Have you considered how to sustain the program?

- Collaboration with NEYM's ARCH Coordinator, Patti Muldoon, continues to enrich our program. Patti brings a remarkable skill set, insight, and curiosity to the work, particularly regarding matters of end of life. Patti meets monthly with the NYYM staff, consults with the director, and recently drafted a *cemetery survey* for meetings with burial grounds. New York ARCH Coordinator Yana Landowne collaborated with Patti on a '*Dances with Death*' workshop at NEYM's Summer Sessions.

- Resource sharing conversations with Sheila Sorkin, as she develops groups for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting around aging, caregiving, and disability, have been fruitful.
- The ARCH Director is in monthly conversation with NYYM's *Committee on Aging Concerns*.
- The ARCH Director is in relationship with New York Quarterly Meeting's *Concern For Quaker Living (CQL)*, and sits on the quarter's *Community Wellness Working Group*.
- ARCH staff, alongside all NYYM staff, attended the Center for White American Culture *Transforming White Organizational Culture* workshop as part of staff development in 2025.

Sustainability is supported through

- Seeking contributions for programming and resource distribution.
- Listening and responding to the needs of the body and nurturing participant leadership.
- Maintaining relationships with donors and working with NYYM to expand donor support.

**5. How do you know your actions had an impact? Please describe those who participated, outputs and outcomes. Stories or photos are welcome.**

Stories and workshop evaluation survey responses reflect increased connection, resilience, and spiritual deepening.

ARCH Group Participants:

- A 74-year-old Friend who joined the Seasons 60–80 Group *“unsure if it was for me”* now says she carves out time monthly: *“Time with this group community has become very important.”*
- A Seasons of Life 80+ participant said: *“Hearing from others in my age bracket on how they're thinking and feeling as they deal with a variety of issues is so special. It's easy to become isolated or not to share about these things, I'm grateful for the opportunity to do it here.”*

Foundations Workshop Participants shared:

- *“The workshop definitely helped provide a space for my spiritual deepening. I am more thoughtful now when providing care, see this more as an opportunity than an obligation.”*
- *“The opportunity to listen to friends who are older than me was a gift in understanding the complexity of feelings about growing older and also the different circumstances friends experience.”*

Inside/Outside Query Cohort incarcerated Friends shared:

- *“I am able to see how much we all can relate to each other through our experience(s)/stories.. It's important that we friends that carry the light we possess stay adequately sound when faced with adversity or mental weakness.”*
- *“Thank you for allowing me to provide my light. Thank you for having the eyes in order to see my light. My humility increases when my quality of leadership is acknowledged.”*

**6. Is there anything else you would like FFA to know about this project?**

ARCH Local Coordinator for Long Island, Helen Mullin, retired in February of 2025. We are discerning the best way forward for this position, with consideration of emerging interest in other regions and a changing NYYM budget.

**7. Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. Are there ways we can help beyond the grant?**

Ongoing conversation with Susan Hoskins and the support from FFA is invaluable. The Quaker Convening on Aging meetings have been important to hear what others are doing and to share ideas and resources. We are deeply grateful for FFA's partnership. Looking ahead, introductions to other funders in the aging and caregiving space would be a great help as we expand our base of support.

**8. Include a simple program budget/actual with income and expenses (eg. staff, program supplies, travel, etc) for both last year and next.**

	2026	2025 Budget	2024 Actual	2023 Actual	2022 Actual	2021 Actual	
<b>Funding Source</b>							
Grants (FFA, Other)	64,000	64,000	64,684	65,841	66,475	74,000	
Contributions Aging Concerns	12,500	20,000	12,610	29,725	29,770	25,457	
Products and Services Contributions	2,500	2,500	3,278	3,175	100	1,688	
Total	79,000	86,500	80,572	98,741	96,345	101,145	
<b>Expense</b>							
Staff Salary and Hourly Wages	98,283	95,426	90,703	89,912	98,416	88,769	
Other Wage Expenses	9,828	9,540	7,504	7,284	7,982	5,799	
Health Benefit	11,000	11,000	10,659	11,194	17,157	16,555	
Pension	4,232	3,889	3,822	3,300	3,448	3,380	
Travel and Administration (includes Staff Development)	6,525	6,525	4,419	3,811	2,576	2,526	
Workshops & Program Support	500	500	621	305		500	
Total	130,368	126,880	117,728	115,806	129,579	117,528	
<b>Funds</b>							
Aging Concerns Invested Fund	5,715	5,800	5,803	5,706	5,202	4,573	
Balance From NYYM Operations	45,653	34,580	31,353	11,359	28,032	11,809	