

WORLD ACCREDITATION DAY

# CREDENTIALS IN ACTION:

Finding the Right Path Across  
Grants and Fundraising



PRESENTED BY:



IN COLLABORATION WITH:



# WELCOME!

Thank you for joining us.

## Cynthia Allen, ICE-CCP President, SeaCrest Consulting

- President, SeaCrest Consulting
- Partnered with more than 270 credentialing organizations
- Prepared more than 490 accreditation applications
- Monitor interpretation of standards and evolution of best practice
- Specialize in developing credentialing strategy, starting new programs, “renovating” programs, achieving accreditation



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## FACILITATOR



**CYNTHIA ALLEN,  
ICE\_CCP**  
President,  
SeaCrest



**LAKEESHA MORRIS-  
MOREAU, MSW, GPC**  
President,  
Grant Professionals  
Certification Institute  
(GPCI)

## FEATURED SPEAKERS



**TIP TUCKER KENDALL,  
CAE**  
Executive Director,  
National Grants  
Management Association  
(NGMA)



**RENO DESCHAINE,  
CAE**  
CEO,  
CFRE International  
(CFRE)

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## MEET THE PANELISTS

*Real Journeys. Real Impact.*



**KRISTIN RAACK,  
CFRE, GPC**

*Founder & Principal,  
AltruNext*

-  25+ years of experience in grant development, fundraising strategy, and leadership
-  Holds both CFRE and GPC credentials – advancing credibility and public trust.
-  GPA-Approved Trainer and AFP Certified Facilitator, frequent speaker including 10+ appearances at GrantSummit
-  Senior Campaign Advisor, Capital Campaign Pro.

**JULIE ASSEL,  
CGMS, GPC**

*President/CEO, Assel Grant  
Services*

-  20+ years of experience as a grant professional
-  Holds both GPC and CGMS credentials.
-  Approved trainer with GPA; teaches at national, regional, and local conferences.
-  She and her team have brought over \$540 million to nonprofits, educational institutions, healthcare systems, and government agencies.



# BEFORE WE BEGIN

To help us have a smooth and engaging experience today, please keep the following in mind:

- ✓ Use **Q&A** to submit your questions
- ✓ The **Chat** is open for comments and engagement.
- ✓ **Polls** may appear throughout the session.
- ✓ This session is being **recorded**.
- ✓ **Slides** and the **recording** will be shared after the webinar.

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Thank you for  
being here and  
for your  
**commitment to  
stronger careers  
and communities**

# CREDENTIALS IN ACTION:

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## Today's Agenda

00:00 - 05:00

### Welcome + Session Overview

Introduction, housekeeping, Intro to World Accreditation Day, session goals

05:00 - 12:00

### Accreditation & Professional Certification

What accreditation is, why it matters, and how it supports quality and accountability

12:00 - 19:00

### GPCI + Grant Professional Certified

Role of GPCI, competencies, eligibility, and certification maintenance

19:00 - 26:00

### NGMA + Grants Management Credentials

NGMA's role, grants management competencies, audiences, and maintenance

26:00 - 33:00

### CFRE + Fundraising Certification

CFRE's role, fundraising competencies, eligibility, and recertification

33:00 - 48:00

### Perspectives from Multi-Credential Professionals

Panel discussion with professionals who hold two or more credentials

48:00 - 60:00

### Question & Closing

Q&A with speakers and key takeaways



Submit your questions  
anytime through Zoom  
Q&A.





# Session Goals

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What accreditation means in the context of professional certification

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The difference between certification and certificates of completion

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The primary competencies associated with GPCI, CFRE, and NGMA credentials

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Eligibility considerations and intended audiences for each credential

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How certification maintenance supports continuing competence and ethical practice

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How credentials can complement one another across the funding lifecycle



# What is accreditation and why does it matter?

The process by which an agency having authority grants time-limited formal recognition to an institution, organization, business, credentialing body or other independent entity after verifying that the aforementioned has met predetermined and standardized criteria.

*Source: Institute for Credentialing Excellence*

Key points:

- Independent, objective group
- Verified compliance with industry standards



# Certification vs. Certificate

## Certification


- Goal is to validate the participant's competency through a conformity assessment system
- Assessment is best used to assure baseline competencies and to differentiate professionals; independent of a specific learning event


## Certificate


- Goal is for participants to acquire specific knowledge, skills, and/or competencies
- Assessment is used to evaluate mastery of the intended learning outcomes; linked directly to the learning event


## CERTIFICATION — "Can this person **perform**?"


## CERTIFICATE PROGRAM — "Did this person **complete training**?"


 **What It Is**  
A credential awarded based on demonstrated competency  
Requires passing a psychometrically validated exam  
Often requires experience + continuing education to maintain


 **Why an Individual Chooses It**  
Validate expertise to employers, clients, and the public  
Stand out in competitive job markets and advancement  
Signal commitment to the profession long-term


 **Why an Employer / Board Values It**  
Assurance the person can actually do the job  
Reduces risk — third-party validation of competency  
Hire, promote, or require with objective confidence

 **Best Fit When**  
Role requires proven performance or public trust  
High stakes: licensing, compliance, client-facing work  
Org needs defensible hiring/promotion criteria

 **What It Is**  
Awarded for completing a defined course or curriculum  
Demonstrates training completion, not ability testing  
Typically, no maintenance requirement after completion

 **Why an Individual Chooses It**  
Build or update knowledge quickly on a specific topic  
Explore a new area before committing to full certification  
Add credentials to a resume at a lower time/cost investment

 **Why an Employer / Board Values It**  
Confirm a team member received specific training  
Fulfill compliance or onboarding documentation needs  
Support continuing education or professional development goals

 **Best Fit When**  
Goal is knowledge transfer, not competency validation  
Lower stakes: internal training, awareness, new skills  
Time/cost constraints make full certification impractical

SCOPE	EARNED BY	DURATION	SIGNAL
Profession-wide competency	Exam + experience	Ongoing — renewal req.	Performance

SCOPE	EARNED BY	DURATION	SIGNAL
Topic-specific training	Course completion	One-time — no renewal	Training attendance

# How They're Built: The Six Credential Dimensions

DIMENSION	CERTIFICATION <i>'Can this person perform?'</i>	CERTIFICATE PROGRAM <i>'Did this person complete training?'</i>
 <p><b>PURPOSE</b> <i>Why does it exist?</i></p>	<p>Protect the public and profession by confirming a practitioner meets a defined standard of competency</p>	<p>Transfer knowledge on a specific topic or skill set to a defined learner audience</p>
 <p><b>PROGRAM</b> <i>How is it developed?</i></p>	<p>Built on a Job Task Analysis (JTA); content validated by subject matter experts and psychometricians</p>	<p>Curriculum designed by content experts; scope and depth set by the issuing organization</p>
 <p><b>GUIDELINES</b> <i>What governs it?</i></p>	<p>Governed by third-party accreditation standards (e.g., ISO/IEC 17024, NCCA); transparent policies required</p>	<p>Governed solely by the issuing organization; no universal external standard or oversight required</p>
 <p><b>ASSESSMENT</b> <i>How is it earned?</i></p>	<p>Rigorous, psychometrically validated exam with a defensible cut score; experience requirements often apply</p>	<p>Typically, completion-based — attendance, quiz, or assignment; pass/fail thresholds vary widely</p>
 <p><b>AWARD</b> <i>What is conferred?</i></p>	<p>A professional designation (e.g., CFRE) that can be publicly verified and is owned by the certificant</p>	<p>A certificate of completion document; typically, not independently verifiable by a third party</p>
 <p><b>RECERTIFY</b> <i>Does it expire?</i></p>	<p>Yes — renewal required on a defined cycle through continuing education, practice, and/or re-examination</p>	<p>No — award is permanent upon completion; no ongoing requirement to demonstrate current competency</p>

# Pillars of Accreditation

Impartial decision-making

Fairness & consistency for candidates

Ethics & discipline

Exam development based in best practice

Commitment to quality management

Evaluation of ongoing competence of certified individuals

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## Advancing Excellence in Grants Practice

**LaKeesha Morris- Moreau,  
MSW, GPC**

**President,  
Grant Professionals  
Certification Institute (GPCI)**



Submit your questions  
anytime through Zoom  
Q&A.

# Grant Professional Certified (GPC) Credential

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# About GPCI

## **Advancing the Grants Profession**

GPCI was incorporated in 2004 as an independent 501(c)3 organization, tasked with developing and maintaining a credential for grant professionals. The first Grant Professional Certified (GPC) exam was offered in 2007.

## **Rigorous Certification Standards**

In May 2019, the GPC became the first professional credential for individuals working in the grants field to be recognized by National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). GPCI sets high standards, ensuring grant professionals demonstrate technical skills and ethical practices.

## **Competency-Based Credentialing**

The GPC credential focuses on skills assessment, not just training completion, ensuring practical expertise.

## **Recognition and Credibility**

Certified professionals gain respect from employers, clients, and funders, enhancing career opportunities.

# Credential Pathways



Category	Pathway 1	Pathway 2
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school diploma or equivalent (US or foreign)</li> <li>• Associate degree in any major from an accredited institution</li> <li>• Completion of a technical training course</li> <li>• Honorable completion of military training (excluding Basic Training)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>20</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor's degree or foreign equivalent in any major from an accredited institution</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>40</b></p>
<b>Professional Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 years of professional experience within the last 7 years</li> <li>• 5 successful grant proposals over the past 7 years</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>50</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 years of professional experience within the last 5 years</li> <li>• 5 successful grant proposals over the past 7 years</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>70</b></p>
<b>Continuing Education / Professional Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 50 hours of documented professional practice or continuing education within the past 2 years</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>50</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 40 hours of documented professional practice or continuing education within the past 2 years</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>40</b></p>
<b>Community Involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 50 hours of community-based volunteer services within the past 3 years</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>50</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 20 hours of community-based volunteer services within the past 2 years</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>20</b></p>

**Need 120 out of 170 Total Possible Points**

# Overview of GPC Exam & Competency Areas



GPC Exam Fees  
\$639

**Multiple Choice – 175 Questions – 4 hrs.  
(All Competencies & Skills)**

**Essay Component – 90 mins.**

Competency Area	Weight (%)
Grant Writing & Submission	23
Funding Research & Alignment	18
Program/Project Design	17
Post-Award Management	10
Ethics & Standards	10
Organizational Development	9
Funder Relationships	7
Professional Practice Advancement	6

Competency Area	Weight (%)
Persuasive Argument	34
Organize Ideas	22
Convey Ideas	18
Use of Information	12
Use of English/Grammar	10
Formatting	4

# Maintaining the GPC Credential



## CMP Maintenance Fees

**\$210**

**(every 3 years)**

### Certification Renewal Cycle

Accreditation helps professionals stand out from the crowd through credential maintenance. GPC credential holders must renew their certification **every three years** to remain current and competent.

### Continuous Professional Development

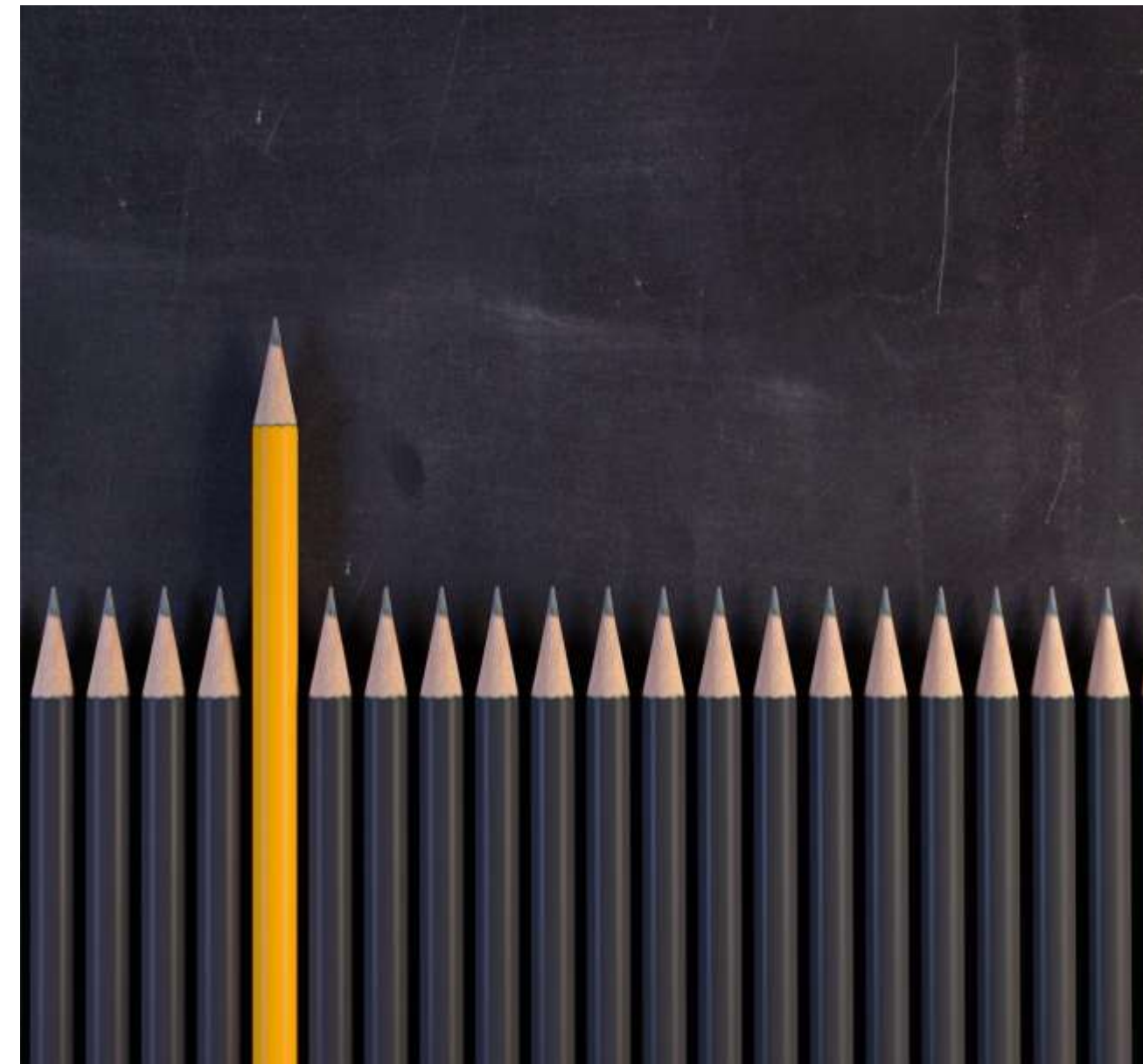
Engaging in continuing education, professional practice, and community involvement is essential for maintaining the credential. GPCs are required to document a minimum of **105 points** during each recertification period or re-sit for the GPC exam.

### Ethical Conduct and Accountability

Adherence to the GPCI Code of Ethics ensures trust, professionalism, and quality outcomes in grants practice.

### Value of the Credential

Maintaining the credential demonstrates excellence and professionalism, benefiting employers, clients, and funders alike.



# Resources & Next Steps



A few of GPCI's 2026 Board Members.

1. Visit [Grant Professionals Certification Institute](#) website to learn more.
2. Take the [GPC Eligibility Quiz](#) to see if you are eligible to sit for the exam.
3. Register for and attend a [GPC Fireside Chat](#) discussion.
4. Browse resources designed to help you [prepare for the GPC Exam](#).
5. Learn about available [GPC scholarships](#).

We are waiting for you to take the next step!

# Stay in touch!

 Email

[info@grantcredential.org](mailto:info@grantcredential.org)

 Website

[www.grantcredential.org](http://www.grantcredential.org)



Sign up for the GPCI Newsletter!

[www.grantcredential.org/signup](http://www.grantcredential.org/signup)



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# Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS)<sup>TM</sup>

*Advancing Excellence in Grants Management*

Tip Tucker Kendall, CAE  
Executive Director

**NGMA**  
National Grants Management Association

# CGMS Timeline



**What's New?** Digital badge with downloadable images, link to personalize credential page

**What's Next?** Update to the CGMS Code of Ethics.

# What is the CGMS?



A credential validating **comprehensive knowledge** of the grants lifecycle



Administered by the **National Grants Management Association (NGMA)**



Designed for post-award professionals across **all experience levels** and **from all sectors** (federal, state, local, tribal governments; nonprofit, higher education, for-profit, consultants)



Establishes a **nationally recognized standard** for grants management expertise



Demonstrates **professional credibility** and ethical commitment

## NGMA Strategic Goal #4

*The Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS) will be recognized as the premier credential by grant management professionals, employers, and funders.*

# Eligibility Requirements

## Education + Experience



Minimum of a **bachelor's degree** from an accredited institution of higher education or equivalent foreign degree

**AND**

a minimum of **three years** of full-time grants management experience within the last 10 years

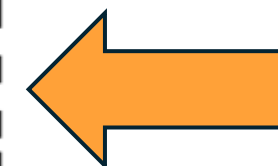
## Experience Only



No college degree, **BUT** a minimum of **five years** of full-time grants management experience within the last 10 years



Scan for more  
eligibility info!



<https://www.ngma.org/certification/eligibility>

# Exam Information

- 150 multiple-choice questions
- Covers the full grants lifecycle
- Computer-based exam
- Three-hour testing window with one scheduled 10-minute break
- Testing center or live remote proctoring

## Exam Fees

\$500 (NGMA Member)  
\$674 (Non-Member)

Retake Fee:  
\$175 (NGMA Member)  
\$250 (Non-Member)

# Maintaining the Credential



## Renewal Period

Every 3 years

## Continuing Education

60 CPE Credits

Related to grants, financial management, audit controls or the grant-making processes

## Application + Fee

Submit renewal application, CPE documentation and fee

## Ethical Behavior

Adhere to Code of Ethics

# Earning CPEs

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## **NGMA Education, including:**

- 10 annual webinars
- Annual Grants Training
- Grants Management Body of Knowledge Training™
- Grants Management Academy on-demand and virtual courses

***CGMS accepts Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits offered by registered sponsors of the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA).***



## **Corporate Alliance Partners Program (CAPP) Education**

***CPEs must relate to grants, financial management, audit controls or the grant-making processes.***



## **Other Educational Providers**

# Closing/Contact

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Learn More



[www.ngma.org/certification](http://www.ngma.org/certification)



Questions? [CGMS@ngma.org](mailto:CGMS@ngma.org)



**Elizabeth Vilky**, Senior Director of  
Operations and Certification

**NGMA**  
National Grants Management Association



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## Anyone can call themselves a fundraiser.

CFRE provides independent verification that a professional has the knowledge, experience, and commitment to ethical practice to meet a globally recognized standard.



### FOR INDIVIDUALS

Builds credibility, knowledge, experience, and ethics, independently validated.



### FOR EMPLOYERS

A trusted benchmark for identifying and developing talent, reducing hiring risk.



### FOR THE PROFESSION

Strengthens public trust in fundraising worldwide.



## ABOUT CFREI

# The Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE)

The only **globally recognized, accredited** credential for fundraising professionals.

Established

**1981**

CFREs worldwide

**8,200+**

Countries & territories

**30+**



## OUR ROLE

# Setting the global standard for fundraising

CFRE International is an independent, nonprofit standard-setting body. **We don't train fundraisers — we certify them**, which keeps the credential objective and protects its value.



### Independent & global

An accredited certification body serving fundraisers across the nonprofit, education, healthcare, and arts sectors in 30+ countries.



### Built on public trust

Certification signals to employers, boards, and donors that a fundraiser has demonstrated competence and ethical practice.



### Accredited, not self-declared

ANAB accreditation to ISO/IEC 17024 means an outside authority audits our exam, governance, and processes.



*"Accreditation is what separates a credential from a certificate. It means someone independent is checking our work."*

## WHAT WE TEST

# Six knowledge domains on the CFRE exam

Domains come from a job analysis of practicing fundraisers, what the work requires, not opinion.



**Current &  
Prospective  
Donor Research**

1



**Securing  
the Gift**

2



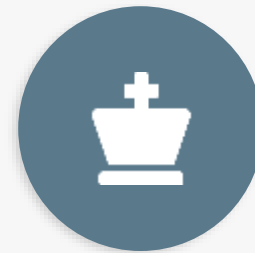
**Relationship  
Building**

3



**Volunteer  
Involvement**

4



**Leadership &  
Management**

5



**Ethics,  
Accountability  
& Professionalism**

6



## WHO QUALIFIES

# Eligibility is earned before the exam

CFRE is a mid-career credential. Candidates document three areas on their application, then sit for the exam.



### Education 80 Points

Continuing education in fundraising topics, courses, conferences, and professional development.



### Professional Practice 36 Points

A minimum of three years of paid, professional experience in a fundraising role.



### Professional Performance 55 Points

Demonstrated results, funds raised and/or completed communications and management projects.



**No college degree is required.** Eligibility is built on demonstrated experience and results.

**MORE THAN AN EXAM**

## **CFREs commit to a shared ethical standard**

Certification isn't only knowledge. Every CFRE formally agrees to abide by:

### **International Statement of Ethical Principles in Fundraising**

A global ethical framework adopted across the profession.

### **Donor Bill of Rights**

Protecting the trust and intentions of every donor.

### **CFRE International Accountability Standards**

Our own standards for honesty, transparency, and conduct.

### **Applicable laws & regulations**

Local, regional, and national rules governing fundraising.





## STAYING RELEVANT

# Certification is a commitment, not a one-time test

EVERY  
**3**  
YEARS



### **Recertify every three years**

On an ongoing cycle — certification keeps pace with the profession.



### **Continue to meet the requirements**

Re-demonstrate education, professional practice, and performance.



### **No re-examination required**

Maintenance is about continued, active engagement — not retaking a test.

**Learn more** · [cfre.org/certification](https://cfre.org/certification)



## **Additional Resources**

- > [About Certification](#)
- > [Initial Application](#)
- > [Earning Initial Certification Points](#)
- > [CFRE Exam](#)
- > [Recertification](#)

# PANELIST DISCUSSION

Practical insights from dual credential holders for professionals considering getting their own.



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## Next Steps



*Continue Your Credential Journey*

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# **CREDENTIALS IN ACTION:**

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*Thank You*

**WE APPRECIATE YOU JOINING US!**