



The A – Z of Becoming a CFRE

Ashley Gatewood, MA, PCM
Communications & Marketing Director

What is the Certified Fund Raising Executive Credential?

Only globally-recognized, accredited certification for fundraising professionals

Since 1981

Grounded in best-practice, ethical fundraising

Benefits

89% - Provided enhanced professional opportunities

92% - Increased on-the-job confidence

93% - Would recommend it to a colleague



CFRE-certified
fundraising
professionals earn
5 – 16% more
than non-certified
colleagues

Source: 2022 AFP Compensation & Benefits Report



Steps

1. Complete Online
Application

2. Pass CFRE Exam




About the Application

Most Items Expire
After 5 Years

Application Itself
Won't Expire

Log In & Out as Much
as You Like

Start Your Application, for Free!



CERTIFIED FUND RAISING EXECUTIVE


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The CFRE's distinction as the global standard for nonprofit certifications sets it apart from other memberships and designations.

Daniel Prohaska, MA, CFRE
Charleston, SC United States

Latest News

February 1 — CFRE International office closed February 17

January 7 — CFRE International announces 2020 board of directors

Application Deadline

Days	Hrs	Mins
70	10	05

Deadline: April 15, 11:59 p.m. ET



My CFRE Account



My Education Finder



Requirements



CFRE Central Community

[Privacy & Cookies](#)

80 Points

Education

Fundraising Education

1 Point

Per Hour in a
Session

2 Points

Per Hour Presenting
Existing Material

3 points

Per Hour Presenting
New Material

Academic Degrees

10 Points
Bachelor's
Master's
Ph.D.
JD

5 Points
Associate's

Any Year, Any Major
Degree Not Required

Relevant Non-fundraising Education

Up to **10 points**

Service Learning

Up to **10 points**

1 point per year per org as a volunteer

2 points per year per org as committee or board member



What Education Qualifies?

Webinars

Lunch & learns

Conferences

Audio/video recordings of conferences

Workshops

Master classes

Panel discussions

Roundtables

Academic courses

Authoring

Certificate courses

Role

Attending

Start Date

03/31/2019



End Date

04/02/2019



Fund Raising Related*

Yes



Continuing Education Selection*

- ☒ Conference
- ☐ Class or Seminar
- ☐ Webinar
- ☐ Workshop

Organization*

AFP

Name of Course*

AFP ICON

Presenter*

Various

Hours Earned*

13.75

Enter Name of Conference

Enter "Various"
Don't list every presenter

Conference Entry

36 Points

Professional Practice

Professional Practice

36 Months
In Last 5 Years

1 Month =
1 Point

Full-time =
At Least 50%
Fundraising

55 Points

Professional Performance

Professional Performance

55 points in last 5 years
1 point = US\$25,000

Events report gross
Fundraising is a team sport
Can earn points via Communications &
Management projects



Initial Certification Cost

US\$700 AFP members

US\$875 Regular rate

The background features three large, overlapping triangular shapes that meet at a central point. One triangle is teal, another is dark grey, and the third is red. The teal triangle is positioned in the upper left, the dark grey triangle is in the upper right, and the red triangle is in the lower left. The text is placed to the right of the central point where the triangles meet.

Application Fee Includes

Application Review

All Testing Fees

Digital Badge

Printing and Mailing Your Certificate

No charge to re-submit



Annual Test Windows

January 15 – March 15

Deadline: January 15

April 15 – June 15

Deadline: April 15

July 15 – September 15

Deadline: July 15

October 1 – November 30

Deadline: October 1

Exam Scoring

Score Range
200 - 800

Passing Score
500

No Curve

Six Knowledge Domains

Topic	Number	Percentage of Exam
Current and Prospective Donor Research	26 Items	15%
Securing the Gift	39 Items	22%
Relationship Building	51 Items	29%
Volunteer Involvement	10 Items	6%
Leadership and Management	31 Items	18%
Ethics, Accountability, and Professionalism	18 Items	10%



Test Content Outline for CFRE Exam

Domain 1: Current and Prospective Donor Research (15% — 26 items)

Tasks

1.1 Develop a list of prospective donors by identifying individuals, groups, and entities (such as foundations, corporations, and government agencies) with organizational linkage, ability to give, and interest in the cause for further research and cultivation.

1.2 Implement, maintain, and utilize a secure data management system to ensure data privacy, store information on current and prospective donors, and enable segmented retrieval and analysis.

1.3 Collect and analyze current and prospective donor information (such as demographics, psychographics, interests, values, motivations, culture, ability, giving and volunteer history, relationships, and linkages) to select potential donors for particular projects and fundraising programs.

1.4 Qualify and rate current and prospective donors on linkage, ability, and interest to prioritize and plan cultivation and solicitation.

1.5 Communicate and validate relevant donor information with key organizational stakeholders to establish a plan of action for engagement, cultivation,

foundations, governmental agencies, and gaming

- Types of information needed to identify prospective donors and determine specific fundraising strategies
- Donor profile components
- Indicators of the donor's ability to give, organizational linkage, and interest in the cause
- Donor giving patterns such as recency, frequency, renewal rates, and monetary value
- Data analysis techniques such as statistical analysis, data mining, and segmentation
- Data gathering techniques such as surveys, focus groups, interviews, and social networking
- Elements of a comprehensive data management system including data capture, storage, retrieval, maintenance, and security
- Prospective donor screening, qualifying, and rating methods
- Motivations, practices, and policies of various funding sources
- Prospective donor information sources such as people, written or published sources, and electronic or online sources, and their uses and limitations
- Elements or components of a fundraising

Resource Reading List



Fundraising Basics: A Complete Guide, 3rd ed. (2009) by Barbara Kushner Ciconte and Jeanne G. Jacob



Excellence in Fundraising in Canada (2011) by Guy Mallabone



Achieving Excellence in Fundraising (5th ed.) (2022) by Genevieve G. Shaker, Eugene R. Tempel, et al

[Edit](#)

Complete Reading Resource List

Each of these resources covers one or more of the six Knowledge Domains of the CFRE exam. Knowledge Domain Codes contained in the table are the following:

KD1 = Current and Prospective Donor Research

KD4 = Volunteer Involvement

KD2 = Securing the Gift

KD5 = Leadership and Management

KD3 = Relationship Building

KD6 = Ethics, Accountability, and Professionalism

[Edit](#)



CFRE Exam: 200 Questions

Multiple
Choice

Best
Answer

4 Options per
Question

Best
Practice



How It Works

4 Hours

Ties back to Test Content Outline

Backwards & forwards

Score range 200 – 800

Passing score 500

Scoring info on CFRE website

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a light blue background with several geometric shapes: a large teal triangle at the top left, a dark grey triangle at the top center, a red triangle at the bottom left, and a red triangle at the bottom right. Overlaid on these shapes are four highlighters: a blue one, an orange one, a purple one, and a pink one, all with black caps and positioned diagonally.

Example Study Schedule

2 Hours Per Day, 4 Days Per Week

Week 1: Glossary + Current and Prospective Donor Research

Week 2: Securing the Gift

Week 3: Relationship Building

Week 4: Volunteer Involvement

Week 5: Leadership & Management

Week 6: Ethics, Accountability & Professionalism

Week 7: Re-review Weakest Knowledge Domain

Week 8: Review Glossary + Notes Final Time



Practice Question #1

When a donor wishes to make a planned gift/bequest to the endowment fund, the fundraising officer should FIRST:

1. Offer to contact the donor's financial organization and advisor.
2. Explore what the donor wishes to accomplish with the gift.
3. Identify and share with the donor the organization's future needs
4. Introduce the donor to various planned giving options.



Practice Question #2

Foundation prospects for an organization are best identified by the geographic scope of the foundation, its granting criteria, and the foundation's:

1. Board.
2. Capacity for grants.
3. Most recent award.
4. Previous giving history.

CFRE Exam Study Plan Template

Creating your study plan for the CFRE Exam



There isn't a set number of hours to study for the CFRE Exam that will guarantee you a passing score. Everyone's background is different, which means how long everyone needs to study will be different.

On average, people who successfully pass the CFRE Exam have studied at least 40 hours. If you have been in fundraising for fewer than five years, you will likely need to study longer as the exam is written at the five-year practice level.

Following the steps below is not a guarantee of a passing score on the CFRE Exam.

Step 1: Determine what you need to study

- Print and review the [Test Content Outline](#).
- Underline any bullet points you are unfamiliar with, have not encountered yet in your career, or do not feel confident you could answer test questions about. Alternatively, you may prefer to test your knowledge with the [CFRE Practice Exam](#). US\$59.95 for 30 days unlimited access/\$99.95 for 90 days unlimited access. Note: The CFRE Practice Exam is not required to successfully prepare for the CFRE Exam.

Step 2: Determine the books you will use

We have identified the books on the [Resource Reading List](#) to be the best ones to help prepare you properly for the exam. Reading books not on this list as part of your preparation may not provide you with adequate information you need to pass.

- If you noticed the bullet points you underlined on the Test Content Outline are clustered into a



Study Tools

CFRE Practice Exam

\$59.95 – 30-day subscription

\$99.95 – 90-day subscription

CFRE Exam Compass Study Guide

Practice questions

Inventory knowledge

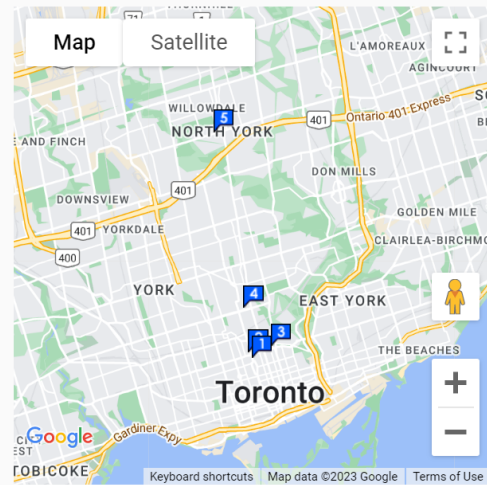
\$49.99



Two Exam Options
Your home or office
or
In-person at a
Pearson VUE test center

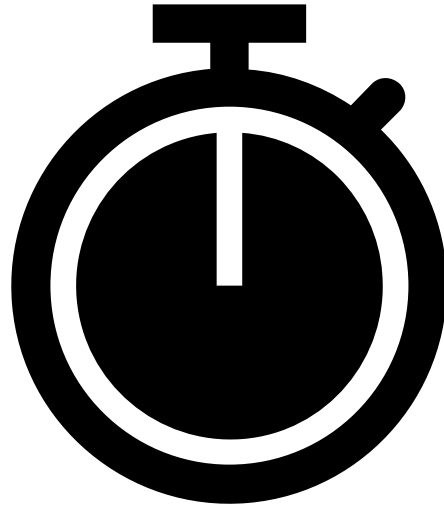
Test Centre	Distance Show km
Pearson Professional Centres-Toronto (Downtown) ON 1075 Bay Street Suite 525 Toronto, Ontario M5S 2B1 Canada Test Centre Information	1.0 mi
OLDF 87 Irondale Dr 2nd floor - Suite 200 North York, Ontario M9L2S6 Canada Test Centre Information	1.2 mi
triOS College Toronto 425 Bloor Street East Suite 200 Toronto, Ontario M4W 3R4 Canada Test Centre Information	1.4 mi
Pearson Professional Centres-Toronto (Midtown) ON 21 St. Clair Avenue East Suite 501 Toronto, Ontario M4T 1L9 Canada Test Centre Information	2.5 mi
Yukon Consulting Services 4789 Yonge Street Suite 414 Toronto, Ontario M2N 0G3 Canada Test Centre Information	7.6 mi

[Show more](#)



www.pearsonvue.com/cfre

Optional 10-Minute Break



Questions 1 - 100

10-min
break

Questions 101 - 200



When You Finish

1 Business Day
Confirmation Email

48 Hours
Score Emailed

1 Week
Digital Badge

End of Test Window
Certificate Mailed

Retaking the Exam

30-Day Wait Period

\$375 Retake Fee

Maximum 3 Attempts

On One Application

Study Thoroughly



Recertification

Every 3 years

No exam

\$408 – AFP member rate

\$510 - Regular rate

Online application

30 Points Professional Practice

40 Points Professional Performance

45 Points Education



Connect With a CFRE Ambassador

No cost

Advice directly from the source

Share@cfre.org