

Communication Outreach Grants

Guidelines

1. **Purpose:** The major emphasis of communication outreach projects seeking this funding is to be evangelism, specifically spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to the general public within the Diocese of WNY. Projects that invite the public to join the church or participate in the program of a local Episcopal congregation are encouraged.

Grants are not intended for the hiring of personnel or consultants. Invitations specific to a single event are discouraged. Advertising for fundraisers will not be funded. The purpose(s) of each project must be explicitly stated in the application.

2. **Funding:** A match of funds from sources other than the diocese is usually required. Projects for which 50% or more of the total funding required is raised from sources other than the diocesan Communication Outreach Fund will be given priority status.

Matching funds can be less than 50% for proposals constituting capital expenditures. The identity of all funds needed to make the project successful must be disclosed in the application.

3. **Staff or volunteers:** Involvement of church lay people in the outreach effort strengthens its chance of success and is encouraged. The names of those to be involved in the project, along with a description of their role and other relevant information are to be included in the application.
4. **Local Evaluation and Accountability:** The proposed project must be auditable upon completion to determine the funds were spent in accord with the proposal. If the project is abandoned before completion, or the funds not spent as promised, the grant is subject to refund.

The project must identify the criteria that will be used to judge effectiveness, as well as the method that will be used to gather data to evaluate success. A closing report is required and must be filed with the diocesan Communication Office within three months after project completion. This report must assess the project's effectiveness in the manner agreed upon. 10% of the grant funds will be withheld until this closing report is received.

5. **Partnerships and collaborate efforts preferred:** Projects will be given a greater chance for funding if they are collaborative, i.e. involve more than one congregation. Projects will be given a greater chance for funding if they have either offered participation to other congregations in the deanery or are endorsed by their deanery.
6. **Comprehensive programs are preferred:** Multimedia projects should be considered when best practices in communication indicate such an approach to be more effective in achieving the desired results.
7. **Geographic coverage of diocese intended:** While individual projects are not expected to cover the entire diocese, the intent of this fund annually is to enable a variety of projects so that a majority of the diocese's geographic area will benefit. This will normally mean only one application of a congregation will be eligible for funding per year.

A congregation can submit more than one application, if it is acting as a collaborating partner on the proposal.

Decision-making & Funding Process

1. **Submission Deadline** for written proposals is 5th day of the calendar month in which the request is to be considered.

2. **Initial screening** will take place by the diocesan Communication Officer after receipt of the proposal. The completeness of the application, including statement of project purpose, adequate funding, staff/volunteers, and internal process for evaluation and whether additional weight can be assigned for preference factors such as effective collaboration and comprehensiveness of program will take place in the initial screen. In some cases, a request for proposal amendment will be made before it is sent on for independent evaluation.
3. **Independent evaluation** will begin after screening has been completed. All proposals to be evaluated will be sent out together for evaluation by a panel of three volunteer members of The Episcopal Communicators.

Independent evaluation will use the following criteria: conformance to program guidelines, use of communication best practices, proven effectiveness (whether project's techniques have been successful in other places). Proposals will be assigned a rank (priority) for funding among those bundled for evaluation that month.

If in any month there are considered too few programs for independent evaluation, the evaluation may be postponed for one month. Independent evaluation will be begun by the 15th of the month and completed before the month's end. The top project recommended for funding will be the first one considered for funding following evaluation.

4. **Discussion and award:** After evaluation, the diocesan Communication Officer will offer

any suggestions for modification or strengthening of a proposal that arise from the independent evaluation and, if all parties are then in agreement on the proposal, award its funding.

A project which is not funded due to its priority ranking in the initial month of submission will automatically stay in the process and be included in independent evaluation rankings two more times unless withdrawn. A worthy project may be temporarily deferred for funding if the main geographic area it affects has received funding within the past twelve months or if a participating congregation has already received funding for a project within the past twelve months.

Administration and Reporting

1. **Grant Size:** Grants will be based on a project's financial need and will typically range from \$250 and \$2,500.
2. **Number of grants:** It is hoped that more than five projects will be funded each year.
3. **Geography:** It is hoped that at least three deaneries will be benefited by the program grants each year.
4. **Evaluation and reporting:** Annually or more frequently all project closing reports will be reviewed at the diocesan level by the Communications Revitalization Team and a summary of the program will be provided to the Diocesan Council.

Questions?

Contact the Communication Office at 716-881-0660 x22

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Application Format

Cover Page:

Please include the following information on the cover page of your application:

1. The name of the project for which you are seeking grant funds.
2. The names of the congregation(s) sponsoring the project. When more than one congregation is involved, please specify which congregation will administer the grant funds.
3. Names of the key grant contact persons. Include mailing addresses, daytime phone numbers, email addresses and parish affiliation.
4. The amount requested.
5. A one paragraph summary of the project.
6. Dated signatures of clergy and/or warden of each participating congregation.

Project Overview:

This one to two page narrative of the project shall include the following:

1. How this project relates to the Church's mission.
2. Short and long term project goals.
3. Identification of the project's target audience.
4. Identification of media forms and outlets that will be used.
5. Description of any test projects undertaken that relate to this project and what was learned from them.
6. If known, background on similar projects successful elsewhere.
7. Project budget, including identification of all funding sources and in-kind donations.
8. Names of parishioners involved and their roles in the project.
9. Description of expected outcomes.
10. Explanation of the method(s) that will be used to evaluate the success of the project.
11. Attach copies of copy drafts or other supporting materials, if any.