

THE VISION FUND

Seed Grants for New Initiatives in Youth and Young Adult Ministry

- Up to \$3,000 per application
- Additional matching grant of up to \$3,000 available for approved applications



To Support First Third Ministry
in The United Church of Canada

August 2016

The Vision Fund Seed Grants for New Initiatives Criteria for Evaluating Applications

Assessment of Applications

Each application is assessed on the content of the project or program as well as the context from which it comes. Priority funding consideration is given to innovative youth and young adult ministry projects. The number of youth participating in the project is not considered a deciding factor, but youth involvement in the application process is. Special circumstances are considered and evaluated on individual merit.

Vision Fund Committee

The Vision Fund Committee is made up of members of the Permanent Committee: Programs for Mission and Ministry, which has oversight of many program areas of the church, including Youth and Young Adult ministries.

Current members of the Vision Fund Committee are Alana Martin (Maritime Conference), John Durfey (Hamilton Conference), and Phares Sekalala (Toronto Conference). Staff support is provided by Amy Crawford and Maria-Elena Oliva.

Criteria

Specific criteria for evaluation include:

- Youth and young adult involvement in the planning and decision-making process.
- How the project works toward the Youth and Youth Adult Ministry Vision.
- A clear and direct benefit to youth and young adult ministry in the United Church and/or local community.
- A clear and direct benefit to the life and work of a United Church of Canada congregation, pastoral charge, group of congregations, or accountable body.
- Clearly demonstrated support by the community.
- Consideration of the project's environmental impact.
- Approval by the governing body of the congregation, pastoral charge or accountable body.

Funding for Staff

It is difficult for the fund to support staff positions. If the application is for staffing, the following criteria must be addressed:

- Selection and hiring must follow guidelines outlined in *The Manual* and any specific policies of the local presbytery.
- Job descriptions must be clear and reasonable and must be included with the application.
- Plans must be in place for continued (multi-year) support and funding of the position outside of the application.

Funding for Exposure and Education Trips

One of the most popular applications for the Vision Fund is for “mission trips,” or “education and exposure trips,” the preferred term. (The United Church has spent many years building relationships with partner organizations around the world. Because of this, we have been encouraged to be cautious with the language of “mission” and the history that is attached to this word.)

Because many churches look to the Vision Fund to provide resources for education and exposure experiences, the following parameters must be followed for trips:

- Applicants must contact with the People in Partnership staff (pip@united-church.ca) of the Church in Mission Unit. They can be of great assistance in preparing for the trip and in advising on practices that will be helpful (and not so helpful) when planning for such an important experience.
- Priority will be given to trips involving United Church partners.
- Priority will be given to exchange programs.
- A church can receive funds for an education and exposure experience no more than once every 4 years

Many congregations conduct regular exposure trips with their youth and young adults. Even though a different destination may be chosen each time, and different groups of youth may participate in each trip, this is still considered *one form* of youth ministry for that congregation. It is a criterion of the Vision Fund seed grants that the fund will not become a regular source of income for any repeat program/project. We do, however, recognize the importance of these experiences in young people's lives and that with the turnover in youth ministry participants, education and exposure trips may need to occur regularly. In order to fulfill this need, a faith community may apply for trip funding every four years.

Funding for Technology and Other Equipment

Applications for purchasing technology or other equipment are acceptable provided they are primarily designated for youth and young adult activities and a clear program is supported by the technology or equipment.

Additional Matching Grant

When a project has been approved, you can apply separately to have your local fundraising matched, up to an additional \$3,000.

Submit the additional application for a matching grant *only if*

- your original grant application has been approved
- you are undertaking local fundraising



**The Vision Fund
Seed Grants for New Initiatives
APPLICATION FORM**

Part I

Project name: _____

Contact person: _____
(The individual who is the best contact person for questions about the project.)

Phone (contact person): _____ E-mail (contact person): _____

Applying body: _____
(The congregation, education centre, campus ministry, and so on to which the cheque would be made out.)

Full mailing address (applying body): _____

Presbytery/district: _____ Conference: _____

Has this project received Vision Fund money in the past? yes no

If yes, when, for how much, and what elements of the project have changed? _____

Amount requested: _____

Project/program timeline: _____

Name and phone number of a member of your faith community not directly supporting this application:

Date of Approval by Pastoral Charge/Equivalent

Print Name of Chairperson

Signature of Chairperson

August 2016

The use, retention and disclosure of personal information collected through this process is done in compliance with all applicable federal and provincial privacy legislation and adheres to the principles of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (S.C. 2000, c. 5).

Part II

On a separate page, please answer the following (include questions in your response):

1. Please describe the project/program, including your purpose and goals. (What do you hope to accomplish?)
2. How do these goals relate to the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Vision (see below)?
3. Who will benefit, and how will they benefit? (Congregation/youth and young adult/community; include number of youth and young adults who will benefit. If this is a joint application between church bodies, mention how many per group.)
4. How many youth and young adults will be involved in this project?
5. How have youth and young adults been involved in the planning and decision making?
6. What environmental implications have you considered for this program/project? Please provide an environmental plan.
7. How will you evaluate the project/program and report back to the Vision Fund Committee?
8. If you are planning a trip, please refer to the guidelines online. Search www.united-church.ca for “vision fund seed grant evaluation.”
9. Please provide a complete budget for the project.

Youth and Young Adult Ministry Vision

As accepted by the 36th General Council

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less apart of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as [God] chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. (1 Corinthians 12:14–20)

As a part of the body:

- We believe youth and young adult ministry is an essential part of the church,
- We believe that youth and young adults need to gather separately within the church and together with the whole church,
- We believe that youth and young adults are active, vital participants in youth and young adult ministry,
- We believe that, for youth and young adult ministry to be effective, this ministry needs to be done in partnership with the whole church,
- We believe youth and young adults bring to the church a variety of special gifts because of their life experiences,
- We believe youth and young adults in the church, and beyond, hunger for spiritual nurture and pastoral care,
- We believe the church has much to offer to, and receive from, youth and young adults.

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young... shall see visions, and your old... shall dream dreams. (Acts 2:17/Joel)

We have a vision of a church that...

- I. Recognizes that youth and young adult ministry must be owned by and integrated into all parts of the church community.

- II. Provides a Christian environment where youth and young adults are welcomed, heard, valued, nurtured, and supported both personally and spiritually as equals in local congregations, church courts, at camps, and on campuses.
- III. Provides opportunities and resources for youth and young adults to gather in faith, friendship, and community locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- IV. Continues to identify, develop, and update the youth and young adult ministry network across the church to facilitate the sharing of ideas, resources, and people.
- V. Provides training and continuing education to support ministry with youth and young adults for paid accountable ministers, and specific training programs for youth and young adult ministry leaders (lay and ordered).
- VI. To provide leadership opportunities and training for youth and young adults that nurtures both their leadership skills and spiritual life.
- VII. Provides programs and opportunities with a global perspective that develop and encourage the mission and outreach awareness of youth and young adults, both in Canada and around the world.
- VIII. Respects, values, and ensures youth and young adult ministry within the Intercultural and Diverse Communities network, the All Native Circle Conference, and le Consistoire de Laurentien, while recognizing and valuing the gifts their ministries bring to the whole church.
- IX. To encourage worship that inspires youth and young adults' participation and spiritual development.
- X. Ensures appropriate and safe pastoral care for youth and young adults, including those outside of church membership, especially in times of change, challenge, and crisis. This care recognizes the diversity of our life experiences and commitment to the inclusion of marginalized youth and young adults.
- XI. Honours and respects all expressions of faith that are searching and questioning, and that draws from and challenges our traditions and historical faith in God and Jesus Christ, so that we can be both rooted and dynamic.
- XII. Recognizes and responds appropriately to issues of particular importance to youth and young adults.

Submitting Your Application

Applications may be mailed to:

The Vision Fund
The United Church of Canada
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

Applications may be faxed to 416-231-3103, attn: Vision Fund
or emailed to: visionfund@united-church.ca

For More Information

Contact Amy Crawford:
Toll-free: 1-800-268-3781
Phone: 416-231-7680 ext. 4186
E-mail: visionfund@united-church.ca

The Vision Fund

Seed Grants for New Initiatives

Application Guidelines

The 35th General Council of The United Church of Canada (1994) established a “youth and young adult fund to which congregations could apply for partial financial support for locally-generated youth and young adult ministries and programs.”

This document will help you navigate the process toward a successful application to the Vision Fund. It explains why the questions on the application form are asked, and what kind of information we hope to glean from your answers.

The first step is to make sure you are using the current application form. The easiest way to do this is to download a copy from the website. The Seed Grant application form, guidelines, and matching grant application form are on www.united-church.ca (search “vision fund seed grant”).

The application form is reviewed every year, and each question is there for a reason. Please answer all the questions—it helps the committee tremendously to have a full application when making a decision.

Part I

Project name: This helps in sorting the various applications.

Contact person: It is necessary to have a contact person for the committee to communicate with if there are questions concerning the application. Also, if the application is granted, it is necessary to have someone to send the funds to.

Applying body: This is the congregation, education centre, campus ministry, and so on to which the cheque would be made out. The fund accepts applications by faith communities in Canada, recognizing that this includes groups outside congregations (e.g., camps, community ministries).

Presbytery/district and Conference: In years when money is tight, the committee tries to allow for an even geographic distribution of grants. If near the limit of the budget, an application is more likely to be considered from a region that is underrepresented.

Has this project received Vision Fund money in the past? It is the policy for Seed Grants that the money granted be treated as seed money. The idea is that the money may be used to kick off a program that, once underway, will be able to sustain itself. For this reason the committee usually tries to give out the money to new projects first.

Amount requested: By policy, the Vision Fund can give grants of up to \$3,000 to successful applications. In addition, the fund can give an additional grant up to \$3,000 under the Matching Grant application. (To qualify for a matching grant, the applying body has to show evidence of its fundraising an amount equal to or greater than their request of up to \$3,000.)

Project/program timeline: We need to know when the event is going to happen, and it helps in the budgeting process to know when the money should be granted.

Name and phone number of a member of your faith community not directly supporting this application: The vast majority of applications reviewed by the committee are for legitimate projects from legitimate sources. However, occasionally an application is received that seems a little off for one reason or another. For this reason, it is helpful to be able to speak with someone not directly involved in the project who knows about it and is able to confirm its validity.

Part II

The second part of the application provides a detailed description of your project so the committee can make an informed decision. Remember that the only thing the committee knows about your undertaking is what you put in this application. The committee typically has several of these applications to review, so answer the questions clearly and concisely.

Please answer the questions in the order they are asked, and include the question as the heading for your answer.

1. Please describe the project/program, including your purpose and goals. (What do you hope to accomplish?)

The committee is looking for a brief description of the event, including the reason you believe your project is necessary. A single statement that describes the project without giving too much detail is ideal. Here are some examples:

- “We are putting together a wilderness retreat. We hope that by surrounding ourselves with nature we will be better able to understand God’s world and our role in it.”
- “We are raising funds to go on an exposure and education trip to Bolivia because we feel it is important to share our strengths with people who can benefit from them, and at the same time we hope to learn from the Bolivians.”
- “We are attempting to start a youth band at our church to help bring the energy and power of contemporary music to our Sunday morning services.”

These statements are not meant to limit the type of application submitted; we fund many types of projects. The first question is meant to tell the committee what you want the money for and why you think it is a good idea.

2. How do these goals relate to the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Vision?

The Youth and Young Adult Ministry Vision is printed on the application form. It was from this vision that the 35th General Council established the Vision Fund in the first place. The more your application relates to this vision, the more likely it will be successful.

3. Who will benefit, and how will they benefit?

The Vision Fund Committee has a duty to make sure the fund is dispersed in such a way as to further the goals of the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Vision. One of the tests used to gauge the suitability of a program is to determine who benefits. When answering this question, it is helpful to be fairly specific. For example, an answer of “all of God’s creatures” is not particularly helpful to the committee, even if it is true. Something like “the 15 members of the youth group of our charge” or “the participants of the program and the new owners of the house that we built” is much more helpful.

4. How many youth and young adults will be involved in this project?

This is one indication of the scope and impact of the project.

5. How have youth and young adults been involved in the planning and decision making?

All else being equal, the committee will look more favourably on an application that comes from youth for youth, as opposed to an application that comes from an adult for youth. That is not to say an adult can’t be involved; however, it is preferred that the youth have a large role in planning the event. Ideally the application will be submitted by a youth. This shows the commitment of the youth to the project.

6. What environmental implications have you considered for this program/project? Please provide an environmental plan.

Care for the earth requires active efforts. The Vision Fund takes this principle very seriously and will consider all aspects of the project that show concern for the environment. Please visit www.united-church.ca to learn about the United Church’s work to actively care for the earth. Greening Sacred Spaces provides a carbon calculator and opportunities to offset your carbon usage: www.greeningsacredspaces.net.

7. How will you evaluate the project/program and report back to the Vision Fund Committee?

In the interests of good stewardship, the Vision Fund Committee needs to know what its money is being used for and how the event is received. Grant recipients need to report back within three months of program/project completion. We encourage **creative and interesting evaluations**. They should comment on the difference the project made and the impact the grant had on its viability.

8. If you are planning a trip, please refer to the guidelines in Evaluation of Seed Fund Applications.

Search “vision fund seed grant evaluation” on www.united-church.ca.

9. Please provide a complete budget for the project.

In some ways, this is the most important question on the application. It is also the question that is most often not answered or not answered in an appropriate manner. **Failure to attach an appropriate budget may result in a delayed or denied application.**

A properly prepared budget shows the committee that the applicants have put thought and effort into their project. It shows they have considered in detail the variables that affect their event. It also shows at a glance what the money is being spent on and where it is coming from.

The committee basically looks for two things in a budget. They expect to find a list of income and a list of expenses. Usually the income is listed first and the expenses second.

For example, a sample budget for a mission trip may look something like this:

Budget for Exposure and Education Trip to Washington, DC

| Income | | Expenses | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Gift from congregation | \$ 250.00 | Plane fare | \$ 600.00 |
| Grant from Vision Fund | 3,000.00 | Room and board | 500.00 |
| Proceeds from sale of cookies | 11,000.00 | Talent show | <u>75.00</u> |
| Proceeds from cotton ball sales | <u>25,000.00</u> | Per-participant total | 1,175.00 |
| Total income | <u>\$39,250.00</u> | 15 Participants | 17,625.00 |
| | | Bus tour | 175.00 |
| | | Host gifts | 1,000.00 |
| | | New well to be donated to hosts | 10,000.00 |
| | | Leaders’ travel expenses | <u>10,450.00</u> |
| | | Total expenses | <u>\$39,250.00</u> |
| | | Net income/expenses | \$0.00 |

Additional Matching Grant Application Form

The Vision Fund Seed Grants for New Initiatives

For approved projects, you can apply separately to have your local fundraising matched, up to an additional \$3,000.

*Submit this application for an additional matching grant **only if***

- your original grant application has been approved*
- you are undertaking local fundraising*

Amount Requested: _____

Please respond to the following questions:

| |
|--|
| 1. What program/project does this matching grant request refer to? |
| 2. What was the date of the original application? |
| 3. Please name your presbytery/district and Conference. |
| 4. If applicable, what amount was granted to your program/project? |
| 5. Please describe the nature of the fundraising that occurred. |

August 2016

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6. Please list the exact amounts raised.

7. How did the fundraising activity/ies have an impact on the program/project?

8. Any final comments?

Thank you for your application! We will get back to you with a response as soon as possible!

Applications can be mailed to: The United Church of Canada
The Vision Fund
3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

or faxed to: 416-231-3103, Attn: Vision Fund