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**Mustard Seed Grant Fund**

**Guidelines**

*What is the kingdom of God like? It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed into the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.*

Luke 13:19

**Background and Eligibility**

The Mustard Seed grants are a competitive grant program of the Diocese of Virginia available to churches, college chaplaincies, related organizations, committees, and regions.

**What kind of projects does the Mustard Seed Grant program fund?**

The general purpose of Mustard Seed grants is to strengthen the ministries of the Diocese of Virginia. Mustard Seed grant projects should advance the mission of eligible organizations by enabling growth through development of new programs, ministries and initiatives; expansion of existing programs; or expansion or improvement of facilities in order to facilitate ministry growth.

**Four priority areas for Mustard Seed Grants**

Youth and College Ministries

Grants are awarded to support the tools or supplies needed for special or “one-off” youth group or campus ministry projects. This may include – but is not limited to – money toward the purchase of supplies to support youth or young adult mission trips, supplies to aid in creating youth/young adult space in an existing parish, or toward the start (or re-start) of a youth or young adult program. Travel expenses, food, or salaries are NOT eligible expenses. Applicants must also demonstrate how this grant will spiritually feed the youth or college students in their program. The Office of Christian Formation will evaluate these grant proposals.

Local Outreach

Grant projects will be considered that are designated to help churches and regions develop their outreach programs. New outreach programs and expansion of existing programs are acceptable focuses for grant proposals. Involvement of the congregation in carrying out the project activities is highly encouraged. Churches and regions may co-sponsor applications. The Committee on Mission and Outreach will evaluate these grant proposals.

World Mission

Grants are made to support mission efforts that better lives by strengthening developmental infrastructures and institutions in foreign countries where church mission work will be carried out. Applications should clearly explain how the proposed project will enhance the world mission ministries of the church, region, or college chaplaincy submitting the grant proposal. Note: Requests to fund parishioners’ mission trip expenses are NOT eligible. Those requests should be submitted to the [Fund for World Mission](http://www.thediocese.net/Ministries/MissionOutreach/Grants/). The Committee on Mission and Outreach will evaluate these grant proposals.

Strengthening Existing Churches

Grants are considered for projects that will strengthen the ministry of the eligible organization. It may include: programmatic expansion, leadership development, facilities expansion and improvement, and technology enhancement. A Committee of the Diocese will evaluate these grant proposals.

**Application Process**

Applicants for Mustard Seed grants **must have** all the following reports submitted to the Diocese. *The chart below, and the note thereafter, describes which reports are required of each applicant.*

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| **Eligible Applicant** | **Definition of Applicant** | **Required Reports** |
| Church | A parish or mission church of the Diocese of Virginia. | * Record of Audits * Record of Parochial Reports * Record of Financial Support |
| Region | The Diocese has 16 regions, determined by geography. Each region has a Regional Council, composed of members elected by the churches in each region. Each region has an elected President, who is a layperson, and an appointed Dean, who is a clergy person. | * Current Year’s Regional Budget approved by Executive Board * Current Year’s Regional Report approved by Executive Board |
| Committee | A group dedicated to creating resources and programs to benefit the life of the Diocese around a specific topic. | * Current Year’s Budget approved by Diocesan Council * Current Year’s Annual Report submitted to Diocesan Council |
| College Chaplaincy | A campus ministry sponsored and supported by the Diocese of Virginia or church within the Diocese of Virginia. | * Application for financial support through Diocesan Council * Latest Budget approved by Diocesan Council |
| Related Organizations | Related organizations are those whose charters or statements of purpose have been reviewed and approved by the Executive Board and whose status as a related organization has been approved by Annual Convention. | * Annual Report submitted to Diocesan Council |

**Note: History of Financial Support and Required Reports**

* Churches are required to have a record of financial support to the Diocese of Virginia. This is defined as a three-year history of material gifts demonstrating an intentional financial commitment to the Diocese. This determination will be made at the discretion of the Executive Board, which may use the “Virginia Plan” (as adopted in 1999 by the 204th Annual Council) as one factor to make that decision.
* Record of audits is defined as a three-year history of submitted audits. Since audits are due August 31 of the current grant year then the three previous years’ audits are required. For example, if the grant year is 2019, then audits must be submitted for 2017, 2016, and 2015.
* Record of parochial reports is defined as a three-year history of submitted reports. Since parochial reports are due in early March of the current grant year, the current year and the two previous years’ reports are required. For example, if the grant year is 2019, then the parochial reports must be submitted for 2018, 2017, and 2016.

**Grant Process and Timetable – *(Applicants may apply for either MS or PJL – not both)***

Applicants may submit only *ONE* proposal per grant cycle. Successful grant applicants should expect to receive award checks in late spring, and grant activities must be completed and monies expended within 12 months of grant receipt. Final reports – narrative and financial –are required at the end of the grant cycle. Current grantees must wait one year before applying for additional grants. In other words, if you received a grant in 2018, you cannot apply for another grant until 2020.

**The Grant Application Process**

**Step 1: Letter of Inquiry**

In a **one-page** letter, describe your proposed project, who will benefit, who will be involved in implementing the project, how much it will cost overall, the amount of funds you have on hand for the project, and how much you anticipate requesting as a grant. Include your telephone number and e-mail address and the best time of day for you to be reached.

**Deadline: February 11, 2019** (postmark or delivery) sent to:

Office of Mission, Outreach, and Diversity

Diocese of Virginia

110 W. Franklin Street

Richmond, VA 23220

Faxed or emailed letters are permissible, but must be received by the deadline. Fax: 804-644-6928. E-mail: mabryant@thediocese.net.

Within a week of receipt of your letter of inquiry, we will let you know if your grant idea falls generally within the program’s guidelines and whether you should submit a full proposal.

**Step 2: The Full Proposal**

**Do not** submit a full proposal unless you have been advised to do so.

**Deadline:** Must be postmarked no later than **March 15, 2019** or hand-delivered to the Diocese of Virginia no later than 4:45 p.m., March 15, 2019. Faxes and e-mail attachments are permitted if received by March 15, 2019, but original paper copies with signatures must also be received by the Diocese.

**Number of copies:** One original set.

**The Elements of a Full Proposal**

1. Official application cover sheet. Available on the diocesan website or request by e-mail or phone—800-DIOCESE x1017 or [mabryant@thediocese.net](mailto:mabryant@thediocese.net) . Note: cover sheets must be signed by the rector/vicar/priest-in-charge and senior warden.

2. 1,000 word narrative covering the following topics:

a. Description of project (what are your goals and what will you do to achieve those goals?)

b. What problem or need will your project address?

c. Who will direct the project and who will be involved in carrying out the project activities? How does the parish or region demonstrate its support for the project? The applicant must show substantive involvement in the operation of the organization and provide documentation.

d. How will you evaluate the project’s success? If applicable, how will the

project be continued after grant funding is expended?

e. How will the project benefit your organization and the Diocese?

f. Description of entity submitting application (church, region, etc.)

3. Project Budget (presented on separate pages from the narrative)

a. Project Expenses

b. Project Revenues

Include services and equipment that you expect to be donated, and financial support from your church, individuals and businesses, foundations, and so forth. Indicate which funding has been received, which has been promised, but not yet paid, and which funding has only been applied for.

c. If the grant is supporting a project of an outside organization, the project budget and organization’s budget needs to be included.

4. Project Timetable

5. Required reports as described in the chart on page 2 and the related Note.

*A word about other attachments: Photographs and other illustrative materials may be included, but might not be distributed with the proposal materials provided to members of the grant committee. Tell your story and make your case in the narrative section. Please do not send DVDs, CDs or videotapes. Materials sent with grant proposals will not be returned.*

**Size of Grant Awards**

For the 2019 grant cycle, Mustard Seed grants will not exceed $2,000. All grant requests should document significant financial commitment and volunteer participation on the part of the applicant.

**Activities or Budget Line Items *NOT* Typically Funded**

* Annual operating support
* Support for mature programs
* Financial support for specific individuals, rather than programs
* Loans
* Building repair and maintenance that would normally be considered “routine”
* Multi-year requests
* Travel expenses for individuals participating in mission trips
* Requests from churches intending simply to redistribute grant money to other organizations or individuals (pass-through grants; re-granting)
* Sponsorships of festivals or one-time events that are organized and offered by other organizations
* Salaries

If you are in doubt about the eligibility of a contemplated expense, please ask before including it in your final proposal project budget.

**Reporting of Grant Expenditures and Project Activities**

All grant recipients are required to submit a final report on at the end of the grant cycle. The final report will include a narrative discussing the project’s implementation and results and a financial report detailing all project expenditures.