

Instructions for Applications: Grant Cycle 2024

As a community of faith communities in the Episcopal tradition, a central mission of the Convocation is to direct its collective efforts toward developing opportunities for growth in spirituality, Christian service, formation, and stewardship. While the Convocation has relatively limited financial resources, the elected leaders of the Convocation are dedicated to the objective of directing our work toward the development of a network of knowledge-sharing encompassing all our congregations. One way in which we do this is by

using the resources entrusted to the Convocation to provide grants that fund creative initiatives aligned with our strategic plan. The initiatives we seek to support will

Propose innovative or creative ways of **helping our congregations to grow** spiritually, educationally, or in Christian service

Articulate a clear **theory of change** (what is the difference our initiative will make?)

Describe a **coherent approach** toward making that change (How will we make that difference?), and

Outline a plan for **evaluating the results** (What change did we actually make?)

The main purpose of these grants is to support the development of our mission, by enabling congregations to carry out a project they might not otherwise be able to do. The intent of these grants is to create a resource of experimentation and innovation that, through a system of sharing, can benefit all congregations. As detailed below, the Convocation is also prepared, on an exceptional basis, to provide assistance to congregations facing unexpected circumstances.

Grant Categories

1. GENERAL GRANTS

General Grants are for those applicants who envision projects intended to implement programs or ideas from which others might benefit. Specifically, we seek projects that will model ways for communities of the Convocation to:

Become vibrant congregations, which more fully proclaim and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Develop new communities, where possible in association with ecumenical partners, including indigenous language churches.

Foster ecumenical and interfaith relationships and projects.

Be progressive and prophetic Christian witnesses to secular post-Christian European societies.

Engage European policy-makers, along with other churches, in the promotion of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Note that grants provided by the Convocation are not intended to provide for the basic running costs of a community, but rather are directed toward funding programs or initiatives that can realize one or more of the above objectives. The committee will also consider grant requests for capital improvements to buildings, but looks for an understanding of how the improvements proposed directly relate to the mission and ministry of the congregation.

In evaluating grant proposals, the Committee will look for a clear, compelling answer to the following questions:

What is the difference we want to make? What is the question we are grappling with to which the project we propose is an answer?

How will we make that difference? In other words, what is our theory of change? How will the project we propose offer an answer to the challenge we have identified?

How will we evaluate the results of our work? How will we assess what difference our project actually made? This need not be something quantitative; it could be a change in depth of engagement by members of a congregation in a ministry offered to the wider community, a change in perspectives or attitudes observed by surveys conducted before and after a project, or other measures.

How will we share the insights we have gained from this project and the lessons we have learned in ways that will benefit the wider Convocation?

How is the congregation prepared to support the work of the project proposed, both financially and in other ways?

2. EXCEPTIONAL (“Emergency”) ASSISTANCE

Realizing that congregations can at times encounter unusual and unforeseen circumstances, applications for Exceptional Grants will also be considered that assist individual missions or parishes directly, but that do not necessarily contain an explicit benefit for other parishes. It is hoped, however, that the congregations that receive these one-time awards will reflect on broader learning that might be gleaned from their experience. It is also expected that applications for exceptional funding will provide a clear statement about the congregation’s commitment to strong fiscal planning going forward.

Such assistance may be made to cover a deficit in the upcoming year’s budget resulting from extraordinary costs in the current year that the congregation is unable to cover, but only after all other means of funding have been exhausted. They may also be made to assist with covering the costs associated with catastrophic failures in buildings or associated systems (plumbing, roofing, heating systems, etc.) . Normally, foreseeable events (for example, building maintenance, the cost of a rector search, or provision for a rector’s sabbatical) will not be covered.

3. DIGITAL MINISTRY ENRICHMENT GRANTS

One result of the pandemic was the creation of new communities connected to us through virtual worship, fellowship, and formation initiatives. The bishop and the Council of Advice have identified as a priority in the years to come encouraging our congregations to continue to nurture these communities and to see them as organically connected to their ministries going forward.

The Convocation has therefore again created a separate pool of funds to encourage the further development of digital ministry among our congregations. Awards will typically be of amounts **up to €1,000**, and are intended to help congregations reach “stretch goals” for the development and strengthening of digital ministry. (Depending on the project you have in view, you may need to find additional funds from other sources.) Examples of what might be supported include:

Systems to assure high-speed wifi connectivity in the church

Equipment to improve video and audio capture in the church

Display screens for the worship space

Training opportunities for digital worship leaders

Connecting online giving opportunities to a congregation’s digital presence

We invite all congregations in the Convocation to submit proposals to help strengthen their digital ministry capabilities.

Note that Digital Ministry Enrichment Grants are applied for by means of a [separate form](#), [found at this link](#). Applications are also due by Friday, 15 March 2024..

In evaluating these proposals, we will be especially attentive to how the proposed project will help congregations integrate virtual and physical communities; expand the reach of their ministries to new communities; and strengthen their ability to encourage support of both service and stewardship in the church.

Grant Request Procedures

Grant applications must be submitted to the Finance Committee, in care of the Convocation Office, 23 Avenue George V, 75008 Paris, France. Applications may be submitted via e-mail to office@tec-europe.org.

Applications for General Grants must be received by Wednesday, 15 November 2023.

All grant applications must include:

The completed **Grant Request Form**:

The form for General Grants is [found here \(editable .doc file\)](#)

The form for Digital Ministry Enhancement is [found here \(Google Form\)](#)

Grant Project Learning Report (Google Form) for any grant received the previous year (*if applicable*)

A **Brief Report** (1-3 Paragraphs) for an ongoing grant in the current year

Year-to-date Financial Statement for the current year.

Grant Expenditure Report for any grant received the previous year (if applicable), with all required receipts, etc.

Note that the **Parochial Report** for the previous year of the administering congregation must have been submitted for the grant to be awarded.

All documents listed are found on the Convocation website. Any incomplete applications will not be considered.

Reporting Requirements for Grant Recipients

Each grant recipient is encouraged to assign leadership and responsibility to a person (Grant Officer) who will oversee the project and also be a liaison to the Council of Advice. This may be the Rector, a member of the Vestry or Bishop's Committee, or another member of the congregation. The Council of Advice will assign one member to liaise directly with each Grant Officer to offer support in the submission of grant applications and in the implementation of the project. Note that the Council of Advice has recently agreed to a policy under which no grants of the Convocation will be made directly to individuals.

In order that the Convocation as a whole might learn from every Euro spent, each grant recipient, whatever the category of the grant, is required to complete a Grant Project Learning Report as well as a grant expenditure report for grants received in the previous year. The Council of Advice will collate and summarize the Grant Project Learning Reports for presentation at the Convocation Convention, in order to share best practices with the broader Convocation and to stimulate further creative approaches to ministry and mission.