

Vision Fund: Grants for Flourishing Ministry Programs in Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Program Description



"The sower sows the word."
Mark 4:14 (NRSVue)

Preamble

Donations to the Mission and Service of The United Church of Canada support Grants for Flourishing Ministry Programs. The aim of the Flourishing Ministry program is to support the growth of ongoing ministry programs that empower youth and young adults as they partner with others to enliven and transform The United Church of Canada in service of the vision of God.

In 2023, The General Council Office conducted a review of its grants and granting functions to ensure that all United Church grants are aligned with the new Strategic Plan and to support the organization in achieving its goals. Vision Fund grants will continue to support first third ministry with members, ministries, and partners of The United Church of Canada.

The objectives of the Strategic Plan include:

- **Invigorate Leadership:** Adapting and Innovating for Bold Discipleship
- **Embolden Justice:** Collaborating to Mend Church and World
- **Deepen Integrity:** Living Climate Commitments
- **Journeying Indigenous Pathways:** Attending to the Calls to the Church
- **Strengthen Invitation:** Humility and Confidence in Sharing Faith
- **Nurture Common Good:** Equity and Sustainability in Resources

Before applying, please consider how your program or project supports The United Church of Canada's Strategic Plan objectives:

- **Invigorate Leadership:** Does the project provide a leadership development opportunity for young people? Have young people been involved in creating and designing the program or project? Does the program or project engage young people in vocational discernment?
- **Embolden Justice:** Does the project or program engage young people in learning about, advocating for, or initiating a justice activity? Does the project or activity align with calls from global or ecumenical partners to create a more just world? Have you consulted with Indigenous, racialized, or LGBTQIA+ communities as the project has been developed?
- **Deepen Integrity:** Does the project or program assist young people in leading the church toward a reducing carbon outputs? Does the project or program support young people

in using their voices to advocate for ecological justice? Does the project or program assist young people in responding to climate disasters? Does the project or program allow young people to reconnect with the earth?

- **Strengthen Invitation:** Does the program or project assist young people in sharing their faith and commitment to The United Church of Canada? Does the program or project seek to renew existing ministries with young people? Does the program or project seek to create a new community of young people? Does the program or project seek to reach out beyond those currently involved in the community or organization's existing participants?

Eligibility

We welcome applications from faith communities in Canada. We encourage groups that are not connected to a specific congregation to apply (e.g., camps, education centres, campus ministries, community ministries), but a relationship to some accountable United Church of Canada group is required. The committee will only consider applications for innovative, ongoing programs serving youth and young adult ministry. If you have any questions about the eligibility of your group or your project, contact the Program Assistant at visionfund@united-church.ca.

Funding

Eligible programs may apply for up to \$25,000 per year for three years. Due to budgeting constraints, grants will be awarded once per year and capacity to continue will be determined annually.

Evaluation

Applications are assessed according to three criteria:

1. Project feasibility

Is there a clear plan for the project? Are adequate resources in place to implement the plan?

Have you provided a clear description of your project and a complete budget so that the committee can evaluate the feasibility of the proposal? The committee can only make a decision based on the information that you provide in your application.

Your project plan must also include a Duty of Care Plan and an Accessibility and Inclusivity Plan. See below.

2. Project outcomes

How will the project benefit youth and young adults, your faith community, and the broader world?

Have you clearly explained how your project will make a positive impact for youth, your community, and the broader world? Consider how your project will serve the calling of The United Church of Canada, as expressed in A New Creed (1968, rev.): "to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil."

3. Project purpose

How does the project support the Strategic Plan of The United Church of Canada?

Have you clearly explained how your project is aligned with at least one objective of the Strategic Plan as outlined in the Preamble above?

Priority funding consideration is given to flourishing first third ministry projects. The number of youth participating in the project is not considered a deciding factor, but youth involvement in planning and organizing the ministry is required.

Funding for Staff

Funds from Flourishing Ministry Grants are not intended to support current staffing requirements. Applications to fund existing personnel will be considered only if funding is requested to enable staff to dedicate more time to the youth and young adult ministry program. If the application includes funding for staff, the following must be addressed in your project description:

- Selection and hiring must follow guidelines outlined in *The Manual* in addition to any local policies.
- Job descriptions must be clear and reasonable. Include these in your application.
- Plans must be in place for continued (multi-year) support and funding for the position beyond the period funded by the Flourishing Ministry Program Grant.

Please contact the Program Assistant at visionfund@united-church.ca if you intend to request funding for staff positions.

Duty of Care Plan

Our churches are, and must continue to be, God's house—places where people of all ages can come together for worship, faith formation, and service knowing that they are safe and secure in a community of faith. A Duty of Care Plan will help you ensure that all members of Christ's body—particularly those who are most vulnerable—are protected.

For more information on The United Church of Canada's standards for Duty of Care, please consult the [Duty of Care webpages](#) and the "[Duty of Care with Children's Ministries](#)" PDF (in downloads on the Screening of Volunteers and Leaders page).

Accessibility and Inclusivity Plan

Jesus welcomed everyone, whether poor, rich, or just getting by; ill or healthy; self-made or educated; popular or a loner; secure or full of doubts. The United Church of Canada prides itself on welcoming everyone the way Jesus did, regardless of age, race, class, gender, orientation, or physical ability. Developing an Accessibility and Inclusivity Plan will help your program dismantle barriers to full participation and create safe, trusting spaces that reflect the diversity of Christ's body.

For more information on accessibility and inclusivity, consult the following webpages on united-church.ca:

- [Disability, Accessibility, and Inclusion](#)
- [Gender, Sexuality, and Orientation](#)
- [Intercultural Ministries](#)

Preparing Your Application

Application forms are provided as editable files in Microsoft Word format. Please use these files for your application.

It is important that you provide complete responses to all questions. If an application is incomplete, the committee may not be able to give it full consideration. If you do not have access to Microsoft Word or you require assistance with completing an application, please contact the Program Assistant at visionfund@united-church.ca.

Project Budget

The project budget is often the most important part of an application. A properly prepared budget shows the committee that you have put thought and effort into your project. It shows that you have considered in detail the variables that affect your program. It also shows at a glance what the money will be spent on and where it is coming from.

For example, a three-year budget for a program may look something like this:

Income			
Grant from Vision Fund	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Other grants	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fundraising			
Local fundraising	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Registration fees for events	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Other sources			
Gift from local church	\$6,000	\$0	\$0
Total	\$37,000	\$27,000	\$27,000
Expenses			
Travel			
Bus charters	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Events			
Outdoor safety training	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Site access fees	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Equipment purchase	\$10,000		
Salary and honoraria			
Part-time youth outdoor outreach worker, 750 hours @ \$20/h	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Other			

Total	\$37,000	\$27,00	\$27,000
Income less expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0

Please note that the Vision Fund is unable to provide funding for projects that result in a profit (i.e., income less expenses is more than \$0).

Authorization Form

To submit an application to the Flourishing Ministry Grant program, you must include a signed authorization form. Please include a scanned or photographed copy of a signed authorization form when you submit your application form. Applications submitted without an authorization form may not be considered by the Vision Fund Committee.

Submitting Your Application

Please e-mail all required documents to visionfund@united-church.ca before the due date announced on the website as a Word (.docx) or PDF (.pdf) file. As the committee meets very soon after the due date, late applications may not be considered until the next meeting of the committee.

If you do not have access to e-mail or require assistance with submitting an application, please call the Program Assistant at 416-231-7680 or 1-800-268-3781, ext. 4186.