

# Vision Fund Seed Grants for New Initiatives in Youth and Young Adult Ministry

## Program Description



“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works.”  
Matthew 5:16 (NRSV)

### Preamble

Donations to the Mission and Service of The United Church of Canada support the Seed Grants for New Initiatives in Youth and Young Adult Ministry. The aim of this program is to support new initiatives that empower young people as they partner with others to enliven and transform The United Church of Canada in service of the vision of God. Funding of up to \$5,000 is available for individual projects.

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 the 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 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?

The committee will only consider applications for new or substantially changed programs serving those in the first third of life (children, youth, young adults, and their leaders). If you have any questions about the eligibility of your group or your project, please contact the Program Assistant at [visionfund@united-church.ca](mailto:visionfund@united-church.ca).

## 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 new or substantially changed programs serving youth and young adult ministry. If you have any questions about the eligibility of your group or your project, please contact the Program Assistant at [visionfund@united-church.ca](mailto:visionfund@united-church.ca).

## Evaluation

Applications are assessed according to three criteria:

### 1. Suitability

Is there a clear plan for the continuing education program? Is the need for this training clearly described?

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

### 2. Outcomes

How will the program or project benefit your ministry with young people, your faith community, and the broader world?

*Have you clearly explained how your project will make a positive impact for young people, 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. Alignment

How does the project support ministry with young people in The United Church of Canada and align with the Strategic Plan?

*Have you clearly explained how your project supports the Strategic Plan of The United Church of Canada as outlined in the Preamble above?*

Priority funding consideration is given to innovative first third ministry projects. The number of young people participating in the project is not considered a deciding factor, but youth involvement in planning and organizing the project is required. If you are applying for funding for an existing program, you must clearly describe how the program will be changed and explain why Seed Grant funding is required to support this change.

#### Funding for Staff

Funds from Seed Grants may not be used to support existing staff. In exceptional circumstances, the committee may consider applications for partial funding for new or temporary staff. Please contact the Program Assistant at [visionfund@united-church.ca](mailto:visionfund@united-church.ca) if you intend to request funding for new or temporary staff.

#### Funding for Pilgrimage Experiences

A pilgrimage is a short-term intercultural immersion experience, usually one to two weeks long, within Canada or globally. It may be referred to in your context as a mission trip, an immersion experience, and education and exposure trip, an exchange, or a service learning opportunity. The United Church of Canada [Principles of Global Partnership](#) should inform your goals and objectives. You must follow these guidelines if you intend to apply to the Vision Fund in support of a pilgrimage experience.

- Applicants must connect with People in Partnership staff ([pip@united-church.ca](mailto:pip@united-church.ca)). These staff are a great resource for planning your pilgrimage.
- A church or faith community can receive funds for a pilgrimage no more than once every four years. If your church or faith community has previously received funding for a pilgrimage, you must demonstrate in your application that new youth and young adults are involved in planning, organizing, and participating in the experience.

Because Seed Grant funding may at times be limited, priority will be given to trips involving United Church of Canada partners. Priority will also be given to exchange programs (both sending and receiving).

#### Funding for Technology and Other Equipment

Applications to support purchasing technology or other equipment will be considered. However, your application must clearly demonstrate (a) that the technology or other equipment will be used primarily to support activities with young people, and (b) that a new or substantially changed program with young people will be supported by the technology or other equipment.

### Additional Matching Grant

If you have undertaken local fundraising activities in your community, you may apply for an additional matching grant of up to \$3,000. To be eligible for a matching grant, young people must be substantially involved in fundraising activities, and a substantial part of the fundraising activities must already be complete. You may apply for an additional matching grant when applying for a Seed Grant; however, matching grant applications will only be considered if a Seed Grant is awarded. Proof of funds raised may be required.

### Preparing Your Application

Application forms are provided as editable files in Microsoft Word format (.docx). 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](mailto: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 you event. It also shows at a glance what the money will be spent on and where it is coming from.

For example, a sample budget for a short-term pilgrimage may look something like this:

<b>Income</b>	
Grant from Vision Fund	\$3,000
Other grants	
Gift from congregation	\$250
Fundraising	
Proceeds from sale of cookies	\$11,000
Proceeds from cotton ball sales	\$25,000
Other sources	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$39,250</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Travel	
Air fare: 15 x \$600	\$9,000
Room and board: 15 x \$500	\$7,500
Leader’s travel expenses	\$10,450
Events	
Talent show: \$75 x 4	\$300
Bus tour	\$1,000
Salary and honoraria	\$0

Other	
Host gifts	\$1,000
New well to be donated to host	\$10,000
	Total
	\$39,250
	<b>Income less expenses</b>
	\$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).**

### **Environmental Impact**

Our faith calls us to live with respect in creation as faithful stewards of shared resources. Some projects—especially those involving international travel—have substantial environmental impacts. An environmental impact mitigation plan will help you to minimize the environmental impact of your project.

### **Authorization Form**

To apply to the Seed 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 the Program Assistant at [visionfund@united-church.ca](mailto:visionfund@united-church.ca) before the due date announced on the website as a Word (.docx) or PDF (.pdf) file. Since 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.