

Maritime Conference
Principles and Guidelines for Mission Support Grants

Approved by Conference Executive April 20, 2012

PURPOSE

Mission Support Grants (MSG) come from money designated for mission in Canada through the Mission and Service Fund of the United Church. The money is shared between the Conferences across the country to be distributed annually for mission and ministry in the name of Jesus, the Christ.

The principles, priorities, and guidelines provided in this document are intended to guide the Conference **Financial Support Committee** (FSC) in its decision-making regarding distribution of Mission Support Grant funds in Maritime Conference. This work is mandated to the Conference and Presbyteries by *Sections 467 and 387* of The Manual of the United Church of Canada. The FSC will adhere to the Policies and Procedures for the Mission Support program of the General Council (MSG 3, 5,&7).

To be an effective guideline for the committee the principles, priorities and guidelines should be reviewed regularly by the FSC and affirmed by Maritime Conference at least every 3-5 years to ensure that they adequately reflect the needs and the context of ministry within the Conference. It will be the responsibility of FSC to bring recommendations for changes in this document to the Conference Executive or the annual meeting of Conference for their consideration and approval. At any time the Maritime Conference may direct the Committee to follow new directions or priorities in its decision-making on behalf of the Conference.

PRINCIPLES

The Financial Support Committee feels that the principles for mission and ministry in Maritime Conference flow primarily from these words of the New Creed:

“We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus...”

To this end, the FSC will give preference to ministries which seek to: (in no particular order)

- proclaim God’s love through living Jesus’ example of radical hospitality, inclusion, and care,
- improve the circumstances of people who are poor, vulnerable, and marginalized,
- build right relations between diverse peoples and the earth,
- help to strengthen communities to be healthy, safe, and sustainable,
- teach and nurture Christian faith and practice.

GUIDELINES

At this time the primary mission units of Maritime Conference are described as Pastoral Charges and Community Ministries. There is a wide spectrum of ministries that fall within these categories. Funding is provided in the following categories:

CATEGORY 1: CONGREGATIONAL AND PASTORAL CHARGE MINISTRY

- a) New Church Development Ministry
Congregations, Missions, and Pastoral Charges that have been identified by their Presbyteries as a New Church Development or Church Redevelopment project may be considered for Mission Support funding for a maximum of ten years from date of original application.
- b) Bridge Funding or Crisis Intervention Assistance
Pastoral charges having difficulty with core expenses, and therefore, are unable to meet existing financial obligations may be considered for funding for up to 2 years. Funding is intended to allow a time of discernment, healing, or exploring options. The pastoral charge will not be eligible for further bridge funds for five years.
- c) Transformational Ministries
Pastoral charges seeking to develop new directions for their ministry may be eligible for funding for a maximum of 3 years. Applicants will need to demonstrate a clear vision, a strategy with distinct and measurable goals, support from their governing body, and a long-range plan for financial sustainability.

CATEGORY 2: COMMUNITY MINISTRIES – MISSIONS, OUTREACH MINISTRIES, AND SOCIAL ISSUES PROJECTS

- a) Community-based Outreach Ministries/Projects
- b) Congregational-based Outreach Ministries/Projects
- c) Chaplaincy

All grant applications will be considered on a case by case basis annually. Approval in one year does not mean guaranteed approval in subsequent years.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Committee

The role of the Financial Support Committee is to review applications recommended to them by Presbyteries and make decisions regarding how the Mission Support Grant funds will be distributed annually on behalf of Maritime Conference. The FSC will base its decisions on the principles and priorities affirmed by Maritime Conference.

Presbytery

Presbyteries will be responsible to receive applications from ministries and projects within their bounds, review them carefully, and decide whether to recommend them to the FSC within the timelines established by the Conference committee and related Conference staff. They must remember that each project or ministry supported by a Mission Support Grant is an expression the United Church of Canada living out the gospel in this place and time. The Presbytery should have a clear understanding of the nature of the ministry(s) and its own relationship with the organization, and should play a role encouraging connections that foster strength and health for the ministry.

Conference Staff

The role Conference staff who relate to the Financial Support Committee is to facilitate their work by

- receiving, reviewing, and following up on applications to ensure they meet eligibility requirements and that all necessary information is in place for the FSC to be able to make informed decisions.
- maintaining up-to-date understanding of the policies and procedures of the General Council related to the Mission Support Grants processes.
- manage the timelines for applications
- manage accountability requirements of the mission units (eg. timely receipt of financial audits or required statements)
- equipping committee and presbyteries with knowledge and tools to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.