

Proposal Template Guide

Proposals for the General Council address issues of denominational responsibility that go beyond the bounds of regional councils. The following guide provides fuller detail and sample wording for the Proposal Template.

1. What is the issue? Why is it important?

Briefly describe (approximately four sentences) the issue and its significance.

Sample wording:

We believe God/Jesus/The Holy Spirit is calling us to:

- do something about...
- engage the topic of...
- respond to the challenge of...

2. What is happening now?

Provide a description of the current practice or policy in question, identifying/citing the source of this information.

3. What is the recommendation?

Describe how the General Council might respond to the issue.

To avoid being overly prescriptive, please offer multiple options of how the General Council might respond. Commentary may be offered on the projected outcome of adopting each option.

Sample Wording:

(Name) proposes that the General Council could:

A. Study/discuss the issue:

The General Council could be asked to have a conversation about a particular issue as an end in itself without making a policy decision or taking other action.

B. Act on the issue, which could include:

- General Council directing a policy/strategy be developed based on specified principles and parameters
- General Council adopting a policy position/strategy
- General Council encouraging/suggesting action by congregations and other communities of faith on the issue

Suggestions for wording of a policy/strategy could be offered as possibilities for consideration in the decision-making process but not as expectations of a particular outcome

4. Background information:

Provide details the General Council needs to make an informed decision on the proposal.

What is the history of this issue? What are key underlying theological, ecclesiological, missional, or justice considerations? What are the principles informing this issue?

5. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

Describe in broad terms how this proposal engages with the United Church's established principles and positions on equity.

Over the course of several years, General Council has made numerous commitments on equity such as the following:

- adopting [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) as the framework for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples;
- adopting the [Calls to the Church](#) from the Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle as the basis for a new relationship;
- welcoming [people of all sexual orientations and gender identities](#) into full membership and ministry in the church;
- committing to becoming [an intercultural church](#);
- committing to becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free church, where there is [full participation of people with disabilities](#);
- working towards functional bilingualism and [ensuring that Francophone ministries are an integral part of the church's identity, mission, and vision](#);
- [opposing discrimination](#) of any kind on the basis of identity; and,
- developing an anti-racism policy and committing to becoming an [anti-racist denomination](#).

Who has been consulted in the development of the proposal? Was the proposal developed “with” people, or “on behalf of” people? What might be the impact of this proposal on people and communities? Who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by this approach?

For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council:

Please select the appropriate option and provide the key discussion points for items being forwarded to the General Council:

- Agree*
- Disagree without forwarding to the General Council*
- Disagree and forwarding to the General Council*
- Take no action at this time*

Comments _____

Include points of discussion that may be helpful to the General Council in its deliberations. If forwarding without agreement, please provide the reasons why the transmitting body is doing so. Further remarks from regional councils can identify alternative options.

Who will present (by pre-recorded video) this proposal on behalf of the originating body that adopted it?

Email contact:

If you have questions regarding this proposal, please send them to: GC45@united-church.ca

A Brief Primer on Process for General Council 45

Individuals, communities of faith, networks, and clusters of the United Church may submit a proposal to their respective Regional Council for consideration.

The Regional Councils will then take ownership of the proposal, with full ability to make revisions and changes, and either forward it to General Council with agreement or disagreement (providing rationale why the Regional Council is sending a proposal with which it disagrees) or by taking no action at this time.

Similar to General Councils 43 and 44, General Council 45 will take a multi-phase approach of Learning, Discussing, and Deciding over the course of three months.

Learning and Discussion sessions will occur on-line during the month of June.

The Learning phase will focus on clarity and understanding the proposal through webinars and on-line videos provided by the proposal originator (or designate). Facilitated Discussion groups will engage the merits of the proposal offering comments, affirmations, and revisions through on-line conversation. Discussion groups are expected to consider every proposal and note takers will record comments of support, dissent, suggested revisions.

The Facilitation Group (or “Way Forward” Team) will consider all the information provided by the Discussion groups on every proposal and offer a way forward that may include a new, refined proposal that reflects the wisdom of the body.

Decision sessions will occur during the convened hybrid sessions of August 7-12, 2025, wherein the General Council’s response to the proposals will be moved, debated, refined, and voted upon, using a consensus model as much as possible, non-binding warm/cool indicators, and Bourinot’s Rules of Order.