

Companion Relationship Grant Guidelines

The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

Companion Relationships

Each of us is a missionary through our baptism, called to assist God in God's mission of reconciliation. Our diocese affirms that mission work is best carried out through relational partnerships marked by mutuality, collaboration, and friendship. Companion Relationship grants provide financial support for congregations embarking on new relationships with partner communities from around the world or sustaining such a relationship over several years.

Companion relationships are a journey into God's mission, through formational pilgrimage and relationship-building with communities from contexts different from our own—whether by virtue of culture, geography, background, or experience—with the purpose of accompaniment, understanding, reconciliation, and justice. Applicants and their relational partners are committed to accompanying one another, understanding one another more deeply, and celebrating one another's gifts as they turn toward the justice that will bring peace to their communities.

Applicants are warmly invited to consult diocesan staff and the Global Mission Commission on relationship discernment and development. Contact [Martha Gardner](#), missioner for networking and formation, for more information.

Eligibility

Any church, school or organization the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts (DioMass) may apply for funding for establishing a new companion relationship with a global partner community or for sustaining such a relationship over several years.

Churches must meet all diocesan compliance requirements listed in the application in order to receive grant funds.

The application must be approved by the clergy-in-charge and warden or vestry clerk or, for schools and organizations, head of school/organization head and board chair or equivalent.

When multiple churches or organizations seek to enter into a shared companion relationship, one must serve as the applicant and custodian of funds. If a grant is awarded, the custodian must meet diocesan compliance requirements and is formally responsible for submitting a final report.

By accepting grant funds, DioMass applicants also agree to speak to the diocesan Global Mission Commission about their companion relationship upon request. DioMass applicants that have previously received a diocesan SDG grant or Companion Relationship grant must submit all required reports to be eligible for further funding.

Companion Relationship grants require matching funds from the DioMass applicant. The percentage match required is based on the annual budget of the DioMass partner: 50% for budgets of < \$500,000; 75% for budgets of \$500,000 - \$1,000,000; 100% for budgets > \$1,000,000.

Companion Relationship grants are limited to one grant per year for a maximum of five years, with a maximum grant of \$12,000 in the launch year and \$6,000 in succeeding years.

Requirements and Recommendations

A statement of how a proposal aligns with our diocesan [Mission Strategy](#) is part of the application.

We particularly invite both congregations serving communities of color and congregations with small budgets and/or part-time clergy to consider applying for a grant. While all applications will be reviewed first on their merits, consideration will be given to historical obstacles to funding access when determining an equitable distribution of funds.

Applicants planning to travel and/or host travelers from their partner community must describe how travelers will prepare, what they will do on the trip, and how they will reflect and debrief upon returning home. Companion Relationship grant funding may be used for travel expenses. When applicants are traveling, use of local room, board, transportation, and translation services is strongly recommended for the benefit of the partner community.

Applicants must provide matching funds, as noted above, not only as a grant requirement, but as a way to encourage active engagement and faithful giving from congregations.

Applicants must describe their awareness of God and their own role in God's mission. The companion relationship should invite participation from congregation and community members in a variety of ways, including prayer. As endeavors undertaken in Christian community, all global partnerships offer the opportunity for spiritual growth and re-dedication to God's vision. We commend the study resources provided in The Episcopal Church's [Global Partnerships Digital Toolkit](#).

Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the history, culture, and root causes of the challenges faced by the global partner community, especially the role of the United States (past and/or present) when applicable. For resources, visit the [Global Episcopal Mission Network](#) website.

Grant recipients must submit a report within one year of receiving their award and before submitting another global partnership grant application. A reporting form is included at the end of the application packet. By accepting grant funds, applicants also agree to speak to the Global Mission Commission about their mission relationship upon request.

Application Process

While there is no deadline for application, we encourage applicants to submit applications as early in the calendar year as possible. Companion Relationship grants are limited to one grant per year for a maximum of five years, with a maximum grant of \$12,000 in the launch year and \$6,000 in succeeding years.

If requests exceed available funds for the year, the grants committee will not be able to fund every proposal in full. Applicants whose proposals are not funded will receive feedback and may reapply the following year.

The Global Mission Commission reviews applications and may contact applicants with follow-up questions during their deliberation process.

Applicants may be asked to make a presentation on their mission relationship in person or through Zoom video conference.