

Mission Initiatives Committee (MIC) Grant Guidance

Process and Reporting Overview

January 2024

Introduction

During each annual Diocesan budget cycle, the Mission Initiative Committee (MIC) seeks proposals from *established churches and programs*¹ for strategic ministry funding allocated in annual Diocesan budgets.

- **Role of the MIC.** Diocesan Council has tasked the MIC with facilitating the grant request process and making recommendations to Council regarding congregations, programs, and chaplaincies that receive funding through the annual diocesan budget under the “Mission Initiatives” category. This entails developing/maintaining applications, establishing guidelines to promote alignment with Mission Strategy, and recommending funding. Additionally, the MIC receives reports, provides evaluations, and makes recommendations to Diocesan Council.
- **Funding Philosophy.** It is the earnest desire of the Diocesan Council that recipients of a Mission Initiatives grant work toward achieving self-sustaining status that would allow the mission to continue on its own without Diocesan financial support. There is no pre-established timetable for achieving self-sustainability. The MIC and Diocesan Council also recognize that some recipients may never achieve self-sustaining status. Each mission initiative is regarded individually, and the MIC promotes collaborative communication between the various recipients, as noted further herein, to foster the exchange of ideas and lessons learned.
- **Program Entry and Continuing Participation.** Presently, the budget for Mission Initiatives includes recipients currently supported through the Diocesan Budget, and monies for grants to first-time applicants.

Parameters for Funding Applications

- **New Applicants**
 - **Cannot be a Prior Recipient of Mission Initiative Funding.** Only congregations or programs that have not received Mission Initiative funding through the annual diocesan budget in the past will be considered by the MIC in applications for the new initiative funds.

- **Funding for 2024.** Funds have been allocated in the 2024 budget, and congregations or programs awarded a grant may also be considered for funding in subsequent years, subject to review and recommendation by the MIC.
 - **Pool of Funding.** The maximum funding allocated in the 2024 budget for new initiatives is \$30,000.
 - **Minimum Request Threshold.** The minimum request to be entertained by the MIC for the 2024 cycle is \$10,000. For smaller funding needs in 2024, please take note that Congregational Development grants (up to \$10,000), House of Mercy, and Sending Serving grants (the latter two being approved by deanery assemblies) are alternative sources of seed money for new ideas and/or projects envisioned or planned at a smaller scale.
 - **Option Year.** This application for 2024 funding will also serve as an application for annual budget funding in 2025, if requested. First year recipients are not required to file a report documenting their 2024 activities and expenditures to receive funds in 2025.
 - **Alignment with Mission Strategy.** Any proposal/application for Mission Initiative funding should be aligned with, and deemed capable of advancing, the shared goals of our Diocesan Mission Strategy, and ultimately should bring the gospel to life in our time.
- **Existing Grantees**
 - **Returning Applicants of Mission Initiative Funding.** Mission Initiatives in this category that seek further funding during the annual Diocesan budgeting cycle are required to:
 - 1) Apply for the new cycle;
 - 2) Provide a written report on how the initiative made use of previously granted funds;
 - and
 - 3) Submit a recorded report per the guidelines provided herein.
 - **Funding.** There are no specific limits on funding requests *per se* for returning applicants. The MIC will evaluate applications to make a determination of award, if any, based on merit, achievement of mission goals, creativity, impact, past funds management, and progress toward self-sustainability.

Applications and Reporting Forms

Application and reporting forms are subject to change each year and are made available via a Formstack system. Applicants will be notified when the application and reporting forms are available.

General Schedule Guidance/Expectations

- **Returning Applicants.** Applications for returning applicants will be made available in concert with the start of the annual Diocesan budgeting cycle. The availability of the application and reporting forms will also be communicated through typical Diocesan communication vehicles (e.g., FYI, etc.). For initiatives in this category, *this is an annual requirement.*
- **New Applications.** New applications for funding are made available in the months after the conclusion of Diocesan Convention. The availability of the application will be communicated through typical Diocesan communication vehicles (e.g., FYI, etc.).
- **Reporting Requirements.**
 - **Returning Applicant.** In 2024, a returning applicant that hopes to receive funding through the 2025 Diocesan Budget will be expected to report on their funding expenditures and accomplishments from the 2023 funding year.
 - **New Applicant.** A 2024 new applicant that also exercises the option for 2025, will be expected to report on their funding expenditures and accomplishments for 2024 and 2025 as part of their next application cycles.

A new applicant that exits the budgeting process before the next budgeting cycle, will be expected to provide a report on expenditures immediately in a format provided by the MIC.

A new applicant that does not exercise the initial application 'two-year funding option' will be also expected to provide a report on expenditures during the next budget cycle as an existing grantee.

- ***Initiatives Exiting the Diocesan Budgeting Cycle.*** An existing initiative that exits the budgeting process (e.g., achieve self-sustainability) will be expected to provide a report on expenditures immediately in a format provided by the MIC.

Recorded Report Guidelines.

- Brief audio or video recording no more than 4 minutes.
- For audio recordings, also provide photos or a PowerPoint presentation as an accompaniment.
- Alternatively, a PowerPoint with images and text with a recorded voice over is also acceptable.
- Focus on the following for your Mission Initiative:
 - Share how the Mission is taking flesh in the community or other context.
 - The recordings are not meant to be 'board room' presentations.
 - Submitted materials may be utilized in Diocesan presentations or featured on the diomass website or at convention to promote the accomplishments of your mission in relation to the grant.