

Questions and Responses Regarding the Application for New Ministry Partnership and Support

Q: Must this be a new ministry? We have a ministry in place that needs to be expanded.

A: Resolution AO73 asks that “each Mission Enterprise Zone feature a strategic plan to start or redevelop a congregation that is intentionally multicultural, incorporating the presence and leadership of under-represented generations, socio-economic groups, races, ethnicities and/or languages.”

So the resolution makes room for both of the options you’ve named: starting a new ministry as well as redeveloping an existing ministry, as long as that congregation can demonstrate the collective commitment to incorporate the *presence* and *leadership* of under-represented generations, socio-economic groups, races, ethnicities and/or languages.

There are many Episcopal churches that would experience some measure of benefit from expansion or revitalization. This funding is for those ministries that can offer a strategic plan to live fully into AO73’s description.

Q: The application form is online. Do I need to complete it all in one sitting and then send it in?

A: No, you can print out the [PDF form](#) as a guide for your fact-finding and planning process. The form has instructions attached to each field that you can treat as a tutorial for each question. First, print out the PDF version, then gather up all of the information in a Word document so that you can copy and paste your answers in the dialogue boxes.

Q: We want to start a Latino/Hispanic ministry and physically build a church, since we have been given land. Can these Mission Enterprise funds be used for “brick and mortar” projects?

A: Your request might not rank as a high-priority application simply because many dioceses have money available for brick-and-mortar projects, but have little or no money available for the other costs of new ministry development, such as funding leadership and organizing/planting/gathering community. So the answer to your question is not no, it’s just a reminder that the hope is to offer funding in places where there is no funding available outside of this First Mark of Mission possibility.

Q: What about forming a new Spanish-speaking congregation at the facilities of an inner-city Anglo church?

A: This scenario sounds like a good fit for matching funds from the First Mark of Mission fund. The Rev. Anthony Guillén is ready to consult with you and share our best learnings for ministry ventures such as the one you describe from across the Episcopal

Church, as well as the Lutheran Church. You can reach Anthony at aguillen@episcopalchurch.org.

Q: Can each diocese partner with only one congregation, or can they partner with more than one for the matching grant of First Mark funding and partnership?

A: Resolution AO73 calls for Enterprise “Zones.” The zone can be “defined as a geographic area, as a group of congregations or as an entire diocese.” In other words, spiritual leaders are encouraged to ask, “How are we called to bless what the Spirit’s up to in our context? What kind of a networked approach to ministry collaboration would serve this best?”

Q: Is it possible to present a proposal that involves inter-diocesan (e.g., three dioceses) collaboration for a missioner for marginal communities (e.g., Hmong & Southeast Asian communities scattered as neighborhood clusters in random diocesan contexts)?

A: Not only is it possible – it is encouraged! Pursuing ecumenical partnerships (inter-denominational) and inter-faith partnerships is also encouraged. The goal here is to join God in “mission and evangelism that engages under-represented groups, including youth and young adults, people of color, poor and working-class people, people with a high-school diploma or less, and/or people with little or no church background or involvement.”

The hope is that we can demonstrate the practices of mission and evangelism more than the development of resources or the creation of positions. The hope is that if a missioner position is funded, it is for the sake of sponsoring and sustaining worshipping communities in those neighborhood clusters. It is also the hope that comprehensive reflection and observation can be offered to the wider church from leaders in these Hmong & Southeast Asian communities.

Q: Is it true that the maximum match that a qualified diocese and congregation can receive is up to \$100,000 per diocese?

A: Yes.

Q: Are funds available for funding a weekend coffee house in a rural setting with no liturgical presence within a 50-mile radius that contains 34,000 people?

A: Yes, as long as it is “intentionally multicultural, incorporating the presence and leadership of under-represented generations, socio-economic groups, races, ethnicities and/or languages.”

Q: Does re-planting a church count as a new church start? (We are basically planting a new church out of an old one.)

A: Yes, it does. The plan and the actual strategy proposed in the application will verify for the Executive Council subcommittee that this is a new church start, instead of a redevelopment.

Q: Would it be acceptable to apply for a Mission Enterprise Zone that is sponsored from a group of churches that are in the process of redevelopment?

A: Yes, as long as the plan is to offer ministry with “under-represented groups, including youth and young adults, people of color, poor and working-class people, people with a high-school diploma or less, and/or people with little or no church background or involvement.”

Q: I get the point of having matching grants as far as diocesan buy-in is concerned. What about underfunded dioceses, however? How does this avoid being a rich-get-richer and poor-stay-poorer situation?

A: The original hopes for this First Mark of Mission funding were to fund ministry in places where it could not normally happen for the lack of local resources. If you are in a setting where you will struggle to raise the matching funds, let’s have a conversation. Invite your bishop or your diocesan leadership team to contact Tom Brackett at tbrackett@episcopalchurch.org to explore creative approaches to make the funding happen.

Q: For those of us who are getting established in a new context right now or would need a bit more time than between now and September 28, 2013 to find partners and funding, is there another grant cycle this triennium?

A: After collaboration with our Lutheran peers, we have decided to make this a “rolling application” process. We will continue to receive applications after the Executive Council meets in October. Our hope is to release funding as soon after review as possible. In short, the rest of the triennium will be “open season” until the funds run out. The sooner you apply, the more likely it is that there will be funds to release.

Q: Is a new community alongside an existing community a “plant”?

A: It could well be. Whether or not it qualifies for AO73’s description of a Mission Enterprise Zone or a new church start depends on how it plans to live into its call.

Q: Do entitled, post-Christian, spiritual-but-not-religious Californians count as an under-represented group in the Episcopal Church?

A: Please don't be limited by the idea of “under-represented groups.” People who don't go to church, never did, or left a while ago are absolutely people with whom we need to be in relationship.