



Thriving Congregations Initiative

Frequently Asked Questions

May we speak with someone to discuss ideas, receive feedback on a proposal, or obtain further clarification about this initiative?

The Thriving Congregations Initiative is a national competitive initiative, and the Endowment anticipates receiving a high volume of proposals. Regretfully, Endowment staff is unable to provide feedback on ideas or proposals. Please look to the [Request for Proposals](#) document for guidance as you shape your proposed program. Questions for clarification about the initiative may be directed to thrivingcongregations@lei.org.

Should we wait for a response from the Endowment about our interest form before working on the proposal?

No. The interest form is simply a way to share with the Endowment that your organization intends to submit a proposal. Please go ahead and begin working on your proposal.

May an organization with an open Endowment grant apply for the Thriving Congregations Initiative?

Yes. An organization with an open grant from the Endowment may submit a proposal. Organizations that received grants in the first invitational round of the Thriving Congregations Initiative in 2019 should not apply again.

May an organization submit a proposal for a program that would work with congregations in different denominations and a variety of faith traditions?

Yes. The Thriving Congregations Initiative seeks to support congregations from all denominations and faith traditions. An organization may submit a proposal for a program that would work with congregations in different denominations and traditions, if such a program is appropriate for the organization's mission.

May an organization submit a proposal for a program that would work with congregations outside of the United States?

Charitable organizations in the United States are eligible to apply for the Thriving Congregations Initiative, and proposals should be for programs with activities supporting Christian congregations in the United States.

When should we propose to start the grant?

The Endowment anticipates notifying organizations of funding decisions in the fall 2020. Organizations should discern and propose to the Endowment when they would like to start their program after that time. Funding decisions will be based on the capacity and readiness of the organization to develop and sustain the proposed program.

Does the Endowment anticipate offering this opportunity again next year?

No. At this time, the Endowment does not plan to offer this opportunity next year.

May an organization submit multiple proposals?

No. Each organization may submit only one proposal that presents the organization's best idea.

Is there a page limit for appendices?

No. But the Endowment prefers that organizations include all information in their proposal narrative and adhere to the 12-page limit.

Will the Endowment provide guidance about how to present the grant budget?

Please see the [Guide to Budget Preparation](#), which is provided on the [website](#). The guide includes helpful information about the budget and templates to assist organizations in preparing their budgets. Please consult with your organization's financial officers for guidance when preparing your budget.

May an organization use grant funds to advocate for legislation that supports the mission of a church and/or the improvement of life for citizens (i.e. affordable housing, alleviation of poverty, education of children)?

No. Grant funds cannot be used for political activity per federal tax regulations. Please consult your organization's legal counsel for clarification.

Is the letter of intent required?

No. A letter of intent from your organization is not required, but it will help the Endowment know about your interest and prepare to receive your proposal. The Endowment, therefore, strongly encourages organizations to submit letters of intent. Please submit your letter of intent by **April 17, 2020**. If your organization, however, is unable to submit a letter of intent by the deadline, you may still submit a proposal by the proposal submission deadline of June 1, 2020.

Where can we get information about formatting proposal documents as a PDF?

The Endowment asks organizations to upload their proposals through the website as a single PDF file. Please consult your IT support for advice, if needed.

Where can we learn about related grant opportunities?

Please see the Endowment's website for more information about other grant initiatives. For more information about Thriving Congregations Initiative, please refer to the [Request for Proposals](#) or the [news release](#).