



United Thank Offering 2026 Grant Focus and Criteria

*UTO was founded to support innovative mission and ministry
that the Church budget has not yet expanded to fund.*



The focus of UTO Grants for the 2026-2029 triennium is inspired by scripture:

*"But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."
(Amos 5:24)*

and tradition:

"In love we escape from our self into one another. In the moral sphere, every act of justice or charity involves putting ourselves in the other person's place and thus transcending our own competitive particularity. In coming to understand anything we are rejecting the facts as they are for us in favor of the facts as they are. The primary impulse of each is to maintain and aggrandize himself. The secondary impulse is to go out of the self, to correct its provincialism and heal its loneliness."

*(C.S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*)*

**therefore the UTO Board seeks applications in 2026 that move beyond dialogue across lines
of difference to action undertaken together by those who are different.**

UTO will fund projects focused on justice and bridging divides.

- Applications must demonstrate how two disconnected groups will work together on the project.
- Projects should work towards meaningful change within a local community.
- Success of these projects may not be measured on the expected or hoped for outcomes, but on the learning and growth that happens as a part of the collective work or process.

UTO recognizes that there is historic and ongoing harm to marginalized people of all kinds. The trauma is broad and deep and contributes to the deep divisions of our world today. UTO seeks to fund projects that build bridges in the pursuit of a more just world.

Funding Range:

The UTO Board will accept applications from \$1,000 to \$55,000. Please note: we ask you to request only what you need for your project so that we can fund as many grants as possible. In circumstances of extreme need, applicants may request up to \$100,000; however, you must supply two budgets (one for the higher and one for the lower funding level (see example)), clearly justify on the application why the project requires additional funding from UTO, and shows an adequate level of in-kind support.

The United Thank Offering will accept:

- grant applications for NEW ministries' start-up costs or start-up costs for NEW projects/programs within an existing ministry program added for a purpose other than simply increasing the number of current program participants;
- grant applications for seed money for start-up positions, either full- or part-time, for a new ministry (see above);
- one grant application per diocese within The Episcopal Church;

- one additional application from any diocese of The Episcopal Church that receives funding from the General Convention Budget (*for a full list please see the Application Process Form*);
- one grant application per province within The Episcopal Church for a project/program in two or more dioceses of that province;
- two applications from each Province of the Anglican Communion with 5 or more dioceses which must be from two different dioceses within the province, and one application from those with fewer than 5 dioceses.
- **NOTE:** Only Episcopal institutions (parishes, dioceses, provinces, schools, seminaries, monastic communities, Episcopal organizations, and other Episcopal affiliated entities) are eligible to receive these funds. Partnerships with non-Episcopal entities are welcome and encouraged, but an Episcopal entity must serve as the recipient of the funds, project leader, active manager, owner of any materials/equipment/land purchased, supervisor of staff paid with UTO funds, and reporting agent.

The United Thank Offering will not accept:

- photos, videos or website links submitted with an application;
- incomplete applications;
- grant applications from a project site/program for two consecutive years (for example, you cannot apply for two different projects in the same building two years in a row or from the same diocese of the Anglican Communion two years in a row);
- grant applications for projects or programs that take place outside of the geographical boundaries of the applying diocese or province;
- grant applications from any Diocese of The Episcopal Church or Province in the Anglican Communion that has a past due UTO grant report;
- applications from dioceses that have not paid their full assessment or received a waiver from Executive Council, in accordance with Canon I.4.6 (f-g);
- grant applications where 51% of the budget lines attributed to UTO for funding are deemed out of criteria (*out of criteria items may appear on the budget, but must be funded through in-kind support; see sample budget for more information*);
- applications that include a vehicle (meaning anything that can be driven) but do not include a proposed bill of sale with a breakdown of costs.

A United Thank Offering grant application must:

- spend grant money as indicated on the submitted budget and return the final report within one year of receipt of the grant funds or apply 3 months prior to the deadline for an extension of up to an additional year;
- share any final virtual resources with the whole church through UTO;
- show how computer equipment, if requested in the budget, will be protected, maintained, and supported going forward (please note: UTO cannot fund service contracts for computers);
- spell out construction costs in detail (see the sample construction budget for help);
- show financial and/or other in-kind support.

The United Thank Offering will NOT fund:

- consumable items (anything that is not reusable or is given away) NOT related to direct aid or ministry within the focus. All consumable items must be used solely for the project;
- capital campaigns or debt reductions;
- operational budgets, including utilities, office supplies, and overhead costs (meaning the proposed budget and program is the same as the year before, which includes portions of salaries for individuals who are already paid full-time salaries);
- deferred maintenance (repairs or upgrades to the physical plant or facility must be tied to the specific ministry or project of the current application);
- costs associated with an existing website; however, the initial development/creation/translation of materials, videos, or a website **can** be funded;

- transportation expenses including fuel;
- contingency funds;
- rental fees for church-owned property;
- previously funded requests;
- scholarships or tuition;
- emergency response requests;
- debts incurred before the date of the grant award.

Please join the United Thank Offering Board for one of the webinars listed on the helpful hints page or email hmelton@episcopalchurch.org with questions!