



# United Thank Offering 2027 Grant Focus and Criteria

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



**The foci of UTO Grants for the 2026-2028 triennium are inspired by two legs of the three-legged stool of scripture, tradition, and reason.**

**In 2027, the UTO Board has chosen the following sources of tradition:**

*We are "The gifts of God for the People of God."*

*From the Holy Eucharist Rite II, the Book of Common Prayer pg. 364*

**and reason:**

*"Gratitude and reciprocity are the currency of a gift economy, and they have the remarkable property of multiplying with every exchange, their energy concentrating as they pass from hand to hand, a truly renewable resource. Can we imagine a human economy with a currency which emulates the flow from Mother Earth? A currency of gifts?"*

*From The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World,  
by Robin Wall Kimmerer, pg. 14*

**therefore the UTO Board seeks innovative and imaginative applications in 2027 that are rooted in their communities with a distinctively local response.**

**UTO will fund projects focused on connecting the unique gifts of the church/diocese/province with the unique needs of the community.**

- Applications will share the story of their community context and how they imagine their distinctive response will address the challenges faced in their community.
- Applications must articulate what the need is in the community and how the project is a unique response to that need which recognizes or addresses your specific historical, cultural and/or environmental context.
- Applications must highlight the gifts of the applying group which if funded will address the needs of the community in which they are located.
- Applications will indicate how the blessing of receiving the grant (if funded) will continue to be passed on after the funding ends (e.g. How will this project and its recipients be empowered to "pay it forward"?).

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 especially encourages projects which come from first-time grant writers and from applicant communities who are typically on the margins. Support is readily available to anyone who requests it, especially first-time grant writers.

## **Funding Range:**

The UTO Board will accept applications from \$1,000 to \$55,000. The Board is excited to say yes to as many good projects as possible, but we need your help!

Please only apply for the funds necessary to bring your innovative ministry project to life. Unlike other grant processes that arbitrarily reduce the grant award below what the budget requests in order to fund more grants, the UTO board trusts that you are asking for what is necessary and not padding your budget out of fear that some will be cut and you won't be able to do your project.

The only times that UTO will not award the full budgeted amount is if part of the budget is out of criteria.

In circumstances of extreme need, applicants may request up to \$100,000; however, you must complete the *Ida Soule Application Form* and supply two budgets (see form for details), clearly justify on the application why the project requires additional funding from UTO, and shows an adequate level of in-kind support.

## **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;
- spell out construction costs in detail (see the sample construction budget for help);
- show in-kind support, which could be financial, labor, expertise, materials, space, etc. (please see the helpful hints for more information).

## **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.

**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);
- any costs associated with developing/maintaining a new or existing website;
- transportation expenses (including fuel) for people;
- 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 at [www.unitedthankoffering.com/apply](http://www.unitedthankoffering.com/apply) or email [hmelton@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:hmelton@episcopalchurch.org) with questions!**