CONGREGATIONS
WITH COMMUNITY

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

We are excited about your interest in the Congregations with Community Grant. Congregations with Community envisions a surge of partnerships between congregations and communities, strengthening our social fabric through collective action. Over the next three years, we will grant 109 awards to congregations/communities across the state of Indiana.

We award grants in three rounds. Please see below the timeline for this round.

GRANT APPLICATION & AWARDING	**NOW - APR 2025**	Attend one of the Grant Information Sessions which is **mandatory** to receive an invitaton to complete the grant. Check for dates & times with Community Engagement Advisor. Receive an Invitation to Complete the Grant.
	APR 25, 2025	Submit First Draft by Friday, April 25, 2025.
	MAY 19, 2025	Second Draft due by Monday, May 19, 2025.
	JUNE 13, 2025	Submit Final application by Friday, June 13, 2025.
	JULY 11, 2025	Application decisions shared by Friday, July 11, 2025.
GRANT USE	**JULY 31, 2025**	Grant check is delivered by Thursday, July 31, 2025.
	AUG 2025-AUG 2026	**Mandatory** Quarterly Check- ins (Electronic) and Collective Sessions (Virtual & In-Person).
GRANT END	**AUG 31, 2026**	Grant Cycle ends on August 31, 2026.
	SEPT 18, 2026	Final reports are due Friday, September 18, 2026.

Grant Criteria

Congregations with Community (CWC) is a division of The Center for Congregations, funded by Lilly Endowment for the state of Indiana. CWC's mission is to energize collaboration between congregations and community partners with shared values to address social opportunities as one unified voice. One of the ways we foster collaboration is through our grant. The CWC grant has the following criteria:

Grantees

Grants are awarded to Christian & Jewish congregations, or a Community Development Corporation (CDC) birthed by that congregation in the state of Indiana.

Community Partner

The congregation must partner with another community entity. Community entities can include another congregation, non-profit organization, school, foundation, community development corporation council's task force and more.

One NEW Community Issue:

This grant is intended to address ONE community issue. We know that there are a variety of community issues to address but this grant is designed to have greater impact by focusing on one issue. Community issues can include the environment, housing, homelessness, teen pregnancy, employment, and a host of other issues.

Matching Grant

A matching grant means that congregations/community entity will be responsible for funding a percentage of their project. The match is 30% of the grant amount (not the total project amount) or 5% of the congregation's annual budget, whichever is less. Congregations can request $35,000 - $100,000 from CWC to fund their grant-eligible projects. *Grant funds can only be used for 30% of capital and/or overhead expenses when developing budgets for your project. An example of this can be found within Section Five, on page 10 of this guide under the question "What is the total cost of your project?".*

Eligibility

If you currently have a Special Grant Initiative (SGI) from the Center for Congregations, you are **ineligible** for the CWC grant. If you currently have a Resource Grant or Equity Grant from the Center for Congregations, you are eligible.

Grant Cycle

The grant cycle will last 12 – 15 months from receipt of grant funds. Although our goal is that each project continues after the grant cycle, we will track project progress and grant fund expenditures across the 12 – 15-month grant cycle.

Grant Criteria

Project Team   Congregations must develop a committee of three to five people to oversee the project. Project team members should consist of at least one leader from the congregation and one leader from the community entity. Project team leader must be from the congregation staff.

Participation   Project teams will be **required** to participate in quarterly check-ins and periodic development sessions. Participation in a 1) Grant Information Session (dates to be shared soon) and 2) Meeting with a Community Engagement Advisor (including both congregation and community partner) must be completed before receiving grant application.

Please note: If the lead pastor or executive director is not part of the team, her/his support must be demonstrated by being signatories on the grant application.

Nonrenewable   Once a congregation has received this grant, they cannot receive it again.

Grant Application Questions and Tips

CWC has provided you with the application questions and a list of tips. Please download this document for your reference and share it with your project team. If you have additional questions at any time, please reach out to your Community Engagement Advisor (CEA).

The grant application is divided into six sections.

SECTION ONE
Congregation & CDC Information

Grants are awarded to Christian or Jewish congregations, or a Community Development Corporation (CDC) birthed by that congregation in the state of Indiana. This section is intended to capture information about your congregation or CDC. If you are a CDC, you can provide information about the congregation the CDC originated from.

We will also need the Congregation's EIN number and ask that you upload your congregation's tax exemption status letter.

In this section, we will need:

1) Congregation Name
2) Website URL
3) Social Media Addresses
4) Address
5) Phone Number
6) Email Address

To verify the congregation's federal tax-exempt status, provide ONE of the following:

1. A copy of the IRS/Department of Treasury letter designating the congregation's 501 (c) 3 status.

2. A copy of your denomination's IRS ruling letter (likely several decades old) and a copy of your denomination's directory, listing your congregation as an active congregation (no more than 3 years old.

3. Completed Confirmation of Nonprofit Status form.
(If you cannot provide #1 or #2, talk to your Community Engagement Advisor (CEA) to receive this form.)

Additional Information:

Please provide information on the number of congregants, average worship attendance, denomination and race/ethnicity. If you are a Community Development Corporation, we will collect 1) the number of staff and 2) the number of clients served monthly (average).

Grant Application Questions and Tips

SECTION TWO
Community Partner Information

The congregation must partner with a community entity. Community entities can include another congregation, non-profit organization, school, foundation, community development corporation council's task force and more. This section is intended to capture information about the community entity.

If you have questions about who can be a community entity, please contact us.

Community entities must be registered as a business or non-profit in the state of Indiana. We will collect the community entity's EIN and ask that you upload your community entity's tax exemption status letter, if applicable.

In this section, we will collect:

1) Community Partner's Name

2) Website URL

3) Social Media Addresses

4) Address

5) Phone Number

6) Email Address

To verify the community entities' federal tax-exempt status, provide ONE of the following:

1. A copy of the IRS/Department of Treasury letter designating the congregation's 501 (c) 3 status.

2. A copy of your denomination's IRS ruling letter (likely several decades old) and a copy of your denomination's directory, listing your congregation as an active congregation (no more than 3 years old.

3. Completed Confirmation of Nonprofit Status form.
(If you cannot provide #1 or #2, talk to your Community Engagement Advisor (CEA) to receive this form.)

SECTION THREE
Project Team Information

Congregations must develop a committee of three to five people to oversee the project, made from members of the congregation and their community partner. Project team members will consist of at least one leader from the congregation and one from the community entity. Project teams must be available to participate in quarterly check-ins and periodic development sessions. Place an asterisk (*) by the project leader.

Note: If the lead pastor or executive director are not part of the team, her/his support must be demonstrated by being a signatory on the application.

	Name	Organization	Title/Role	Phone	Email
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

SECTION FOUR
Project Description

In this section, share your project's focus. This section can take a considerable amount of time preparing as you think through the goals of your project. This section includes the following questions:

What ONE social opportunity will you solve or address?

This grant is intended to address ONE community issue. We know that there are a variety of community issues to address but this grant is designed to make greater impact by focusing on one issue. Community issues could include the environment, social justice, housing, homelessness, teen pregnancy, literacy, employment, and a host of other issues.

Why are you choosing to solve or address this issue? (300 words or less).
Answer the following questions:

a. When did your church start addressing this issue and why?
b. How is this issue affecting your community? (include any statistics from Census Bureau and other reputable sources, share personal stories, etc.).
c. Why did you select this community partner? How long have you been in partnership with this community partner?

How will you solve or address it? Please list your goals/objectives using S.M.A.R.T. goals.

In this section, think about what you want to accomplish in this project and how you will accomplish it. When developing your goals and action steps, use goals that are S.M.A.R.T. S.M.A.R.T goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. This section can take a considerable amount of time preparing as you get clear about your objectives.

Read the following article to get a better understanding of how to write goals that are S.M.A.R.T. This article will provide examples of S.M.A.R.T. goals but feel free to reach out to your CEA for help.

How to write SMART goals, with examples (mindtools.com).

How will your congregation or CDC participants be involved in the implementation of this project? (300 words or less)

It is important that your congregants participate in the efforts to solve this problem. The grant's goal is that the congregation be a part not just financially but also by engaging in the work of the project. How will your congregation be involved?

SECTION FIVE
Project Budget

This section can take a considerable amount of time preparing as you "plan the event before the event". Items listed in the budget will align with the goals shared in Section 4 – Project Description. This section includes the following questions:

What is the total cost of your project?
The total cost of your project will be determined by the total cost of the various activities and events that you create to meet your project goals. Again, please ensure that the activities and events listed have been mentioned in Section 4 – Project Description.

To calculate your project total, follow the instructions on the Cost Breakdown Worksheet Guide sheet (see page 12).

SECTION FIVE (CONT.)

Once you have completed the Cost Breakdown Worksheet, put the totals from each sheet in the Project Total Calculator (located on the online grant application) to get the total for your project. Fundable items for this grant include collaborators, resources, meeting costs, stipends, direct support for congregational capacity building, direct support of those who experience the challenge, microgrants, training, pilgrimages, curricula, technology, evaluation, and other items proposed derived from collaboration imagination.

There is a 30% limit on capital and/or overhead expenditures. Expenses associated with the general operating costs of the congregation/community entity such as utilities, food for food pantries, and renovations to building are considered capital expenses. Depending on the project's purpose, there may be a limit also on direct support expenses. Grant funds will not cover salaries for congregation or community entity staff. As you are developing your budget, please reach out to your CEA if you have any questions about eligible expenses.

How much are you requesting?
Congregations can request $35,000 - $100,000.

Where is the portion of your funds coming from?
This is a matching grant which means the congregation/community entity will be responsible for funding a percentage of their project. The match is 30% of the grant amount (not the total project amount) or 5% of the congregation's annual budget, whichever is less.

Share where your portion of the funds will come from i.e. your budget, a special fundraising activity, savings, other grants, contributions from other community entities, etc.

What is your congregation's current and past year's budget?
Please upload the congregation's current and past year's budget. Budget will include both revenue and expense information.

SECTION SIX
Confidentiality & Disclosure

Select Agree or Do Not Agree to allow CWC to share information about your project and/or stories of learning about the use of these Grant-funded resources in the Congregation and Community.

Cost Breakdown Worksheet Guide

The Cost Breakdown Worksheet is used to calculate the costs of the various events and activities that you organize to address your project goals. The events and activities planned should align with the activities/events you listed in Section 4- Project Description.

Each Cost Breakdown Worksheet will correspond to one activity/event in your project. Therefore, if you have 5 activities/events, you will submit 5 Cost Breakdown Worksheets. We will not accept budgets that do not use the Cost Breakdown Worksheet as provided.

❶ EVENT INFORMATION

Event Name	Leadership Retreat 202X
When	January 1, 202X
For whom	Clergy, staff and lay leaders
Where	Main Street Church
Expected Attendance	10

	Item Description ❷	Resource ❸ (specific vendor or person paid)	Quantity ❹	Anticipated per unit cost ❺	Total ❻
1	e.g. Air Ticket	United Airlines	1 ticket	$400	$400
2	Guest Rooms	Holiday Inn, 625 N. Denton Dr, Columbus, IN 47201	10 rooms	$100	$1,000
	❼ Total Event				$1,400

The Cost Breakdown Worksheet includes the following components:

❶ **Event Information** – What is the name of the activity? When will it happen? Who is it for? Where will it take place? How many people will attend?

❷ **Item Description** – What will you need? A Book? An Event location? Food?

❸ **Resource** – What event location will you use? Where will you purchase the food? Please include the Business name, physical address, website, contact person name, phone and email address. We often use this information to share with other congregations and community partners.

❹ **Quantity** – How many of this resource will you need?

❺ **Anticipated Cost per unit cost** – What is the anticipated cost of this resource?

❻ **Total Cost** – The quantity of the resource X the anticipated cost of the resource.

❼ **Total Event Cost** – The total of each line item will give you the total cost for this event/activity.

*Once you have completed the Cost Breakdown Worksheet for each of your activities, you will add each event (event name) and the total cost for the event to the Total Project Calculator on the online grant application. Upload all completed Cost Breakdown Worksheets to the online grant application for review by your CEA.

Cost Breakdown Worksheet

EVENT INFORMATION

Event Name	
When	
For whom	
Where	
Expected Attendance	

COST BREAKDOWN

	Item Description	Resource (specific vendor or person paid)	Quantity	Anticipated per unit cost	Total
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
	TOTAL COST				

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDE
CONCLUSION

Please reach out to us through our website or your CEA if you have additional questions while completing the Grant Application Guide.