



CONGREGATIONS
WITH COMMUNITY

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

03 Introduction & Timeline

Begin your grant journey through Congregations with Community and learn more about the vision and processes behind our work.

04 Grant Criteria

Dive into the specifics of the grant, including the pieces needed to be eligible for this opportunity.

06 Application Questions & Tips

As you begin working on your application, we're here to help. The six sections below cover each section of the application, giving helpful insights along the way.

SECTION ONE

Congregation & CDC Information

SECTION TWO

Community Partner Information

SECTION THREE

Project Team Information

SECTION FOUR

Project Description

SECTION FIVE

Project Budget

SECTION SIX

Confidentiality & Disclosure

12 Cost Breakdown Worksheet Guide

Understand the inner workings of the Cost Breakdown Worksheet and see an example before creating your own.

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 - NOV 2025

Attend Micro Information Session & meet with Community Engagement Advisor. Once you have done this, you will receive an invitation to complete the grant application

Receive an Invitation to Complete the Grant

NOV 7, 2025

Submit final application

LATE NOV 2025

Application decisions shared

DEC 2025

Grant checks delivered

GRANT USE

JAN 2026 - DEC 2026

Mandatory Quarterly Check-ins (Electronic) and Collective Sessions (Virtual)

DEC 31, 2026

Grant cycle ends

GRANT FID

JANUARY 15, 2027

Final report due

**All dates are subject to change*



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.

Contribution

Your congregation/community entity is expected to contribute financially to your project. This contribution ensures shared responsibility and investment in the success of your project. Your required contribution to your project will be 1) 30% of the grant amount you are requesting, or 2) 5% of your congregation's annual budget, whichever is less.

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

If your community entity is a nonprofit, provide ONE of the following to verify the community entities' federal tax-exempt status:

1. A copy of the IRS/Department of Treasury letter designating the community entity's 501 (c) 3 status.
2. If your partner is a congregation, a copy of their denomination's IRS ruling letter (likely several decades old) and a copy of their denomination's directory, listing your congregation as an active congregation (no more than 3 years old).
3. If your partner is a congregation and they cannot provide #1 or #2, talk to your Community Engagement Advisor (CEA) to receive a Confirmation of Nonprofit Status form.



Grant Application Questions and Tips

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					



Grant Application Questions and Tips

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?



Grant Application Questions and Tips

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).

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, 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 associated with the project, proposed derived from collaboration.

Grant funds will not cover salaries for congregation or community entity staff.

Most of the grant funds must be spent on program-related activities. Grant funds can be used for up to 30% of capital and/or overhead expenses. 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.

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.



Grant Application Questions and Tips

SECTION FIVE (CONT.)

Where is your financial contribution coming from?

Congregations/community entities will be responsible for contributing to their project. Contributions will be 30% of the grant funds requested or 5% of the congregation's annual budget, whichever is less. Your total project budget must reflect both the grant funds requested plus your contribution.

For example, if you request \$100,000 from CWC and your congregation's annual budget is \$175,000, you would contribute \$8,750 (which is 5% of your annual budget) because 30% of the grant request of \$100,000 would be \$30,000 — \$8,750 is less. Your total project must be at least \$108,750. Your total project budget must reflect both the grant funds requested plus your contribution.

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.

Reach out to your Community Engagement Advisor (CEA) if you have any questions.

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.

1 ACTIVITY INFORMATION					
Event Name		Weekly Character and Leadership Development Sessions			
When		10 Sessions in the Spring, 10 Sessions in the Fall (20 sessions in total)			
For whom		We Care Indy program students			
Where		TWC Event Center, 546 Red Cross Way, Ft. Wayne, IN. 46543			
Expected Attendance		30 students per Cohort (60 total)			
	2 Item Description	3 Resource (Business name, address, website, contact person, phone, & email)	4 Quantity	5 Anticipated per unit cost	6 Total
1	Facilitator Contract	Oaks of Righteousness Consulting, LLC, www.rightconsulting.com	20	\$500	\$10,000
2	DisC Assessment	Oaks of Righteous Consulting, LLC, www.rightconsulting.com	60	\$50	\$3,000
3	Event space	TWC Event Center, www.twcevent.com	20	\$400	\$8,000
4	Meals (600 meals for Spring & Summer Sessions)	Various Vendors (Walmart, Panera, etc.)	600	\$10	\$6,000
	Total Event				\$27,000 7

The Cost Breakdown Worksheet includes the following components:

- 1 **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?
- 2 **Item Description** – What will you need? A Book? An Event location? Food?
- 3 **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.
- 4 **Quantity** – How many of this resource will you need?
- 5 **Anticipated Cost per unit cost** – What is the anticipated cost of this resource?
- 6 **Total Cost** – The quantity of the resource X the anticipated cost of the resource.
- 7 **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.





CONGREGATIONS
WITH COMMUNITY

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.