

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.
Guidelines for Use of the Mission Initiative Fund

The Common Budget Covenant, I. Plan Design, C. Mission Initiative Fund, states:

The Mission Initiative Fund provides funds for launching new ministries and denomination-wide mission activities that are beyond normal operating budgets. Under the United Stewardship Plan, one percent of gross United Mission dollars shall be allocated to this Fund.

To administer the Mission Initiative Fund, the following guidelines have been adopted by the ABCUSA Finance Committee and the Board of General Ministries:

1. Proposals for grants may be submitted by any participant in United Missions Denominational giving. Proposals from non-participants shall be received only when sponsored by a participating organization.
 - 1.1 Electronic requests for transmission, or written requests, must be received in the Treasurer's Office of the American Baptist Churches by:

April 1 for the June meeting, or

September 1 for the November meeting of the ABCUSA Finance Committee,

when the grant request will be heard.

The chair of the ABCUSA Finance Committee has the option to make exceptions to this rule in emergency situations. The Committee may review the request by conference call for pre-screening to determine that the request is within guidelines.
 - 1.2 An advocate must be available when the Committee reviews the request in order to explain the request, provide additional information required and answer questions raised by the Committee. Conversation with the advocate may be by conference call, at the Committee's discretion.
 - 1.3 Mission Initiative Fund Grants must be requested prospectively; grant requests will not be considered for projects which have already begun.
 - 1.4 Grants will rarely be considered for groups which have already received funding from the Mission Initiative Funds.

- 1.5 Grants may not be given to organizations that are not in compliance with the Common Budget Covenant, including providing audits to ABCUSA. Grant payments may be discontinued if a grant recipient fails to comply with the Common Budget Covenant during the term of the grant.
2. The Mission Initiative Fund shall be used for the following needs and types of categories of Projects and/or programs:
 - 2.1 Unforeseen emergencies, the major causes of which lie beyond the control of the organization(s) requesting assistance.
 - 2.2 Commissions or task forces created by action of the Board of General Ministries. These may be funded for limited periods when funds are not available from the regular allocations.
 - 2.3 Seed money for developing and trying out new projects or programs. Such proposals should request funding for a limited period, not to exceed three years, without the expectation for renewal, and would be expected to demonstrate benefits and potential for continued funding within the regular budget of the sponsoring organization.
 - 2.4 Denomination-wide programs or emphases which are assigned by the Board of General Ministries for a specified time period. Amounts allocated for such program assignments should not be expected to provide the total funding. Instead, they should supplement funds which the board accepting the assignment allocates from its own resources. An exception to this general rule may occur when the program assigned is not related to the particular board's current functions.
3. The Mission Initiative Fund shall not be used to cover budget deficits of Common Budget Covenant participants except for unforeseen deficits of an emergency nature.
4. The objectives of the projects or programs shall be clearly stated and shall align with the goals and objectives of ABC.
5. The grant request shall begin with the total amount requested and the period over which it is sought. Additionally, the proposal shall include a budget for the project, including disclosure of all other revenue sources that are partners in funding.
6. The proposal shall include an evaluation process. A written progress report shall be made to the ABCUSA Finance Committee annually on the anniversary of the grant. The report should include an accounting of all monies received and a

program update for the disbursement period. A report of findings or final evaluation, addressing the measurable objectives incorporated in the proposal, and an accounting of all funds shall be provided to the ABCUSA Finance Committee within 30 days upon completion of the project or approved grant period.

7. All grant monies must be used or returned to the ABCUSA Treasurer by the end of the approved grant period. For example, if a \$30,000 grant is to be disbursed over a three year period, \$10,000 each year, the recipient has until the end of the first year of the request to use the \$10,000 granted in that year. The second year award of \$10,000, must be used by the end of the second year and the third year award must be used by the end of the third year.
8. The ABCUSA Finance Committee may, at its discretion, make exceptions to the guidelines in unusual situations and report such actions to the Board of General Ministries.

The Board of General Ministries has delegated to the ABCUSA Finance Committee the responsibility for administering the Mission Initiative Fund within these guidelines with the understanding that the ABCUSA Finance Committee shall report its actions to the Board of General Ministries.

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