

Basic Information About the Genesis Fund

What is the Origin of the Fund?

The Genesis Fund was created in 1996 by the United Church of Christ Executive Council with mission funds raised in the *Make a Difference!* Campaign among UCC members in the early 1990s.

How is the Fund Administered?

The Genesis Fund is administered by Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ. Disbursements of income from the Genesis Fund endowment are made by the Genesis Fund Committee which is comprised of seven persons who represent various settings of the UCC and who are appointed to six year terms by the UCC Executive Council.

What is the purpose of the Genesis Fund?

As its name reflects, The Genesis Fund provides seed money for faith-based projects that are clearly innovative or experimental, that clearly represent a new initiative in Christian mission, or that may be deemed controversial. Genesis Fund grants are made for domestic and international projects.

Who may apply for Genesis Fund grants?

The following entities are eligible to submit proposals:

- a. United Church of Christ local churches, associations, conferences and national bodies;**
- b. UCC-related institutions* in service to the community;**
- c. Overseas/Global Partner Churches of the United Church of Christ.**

*** Full members of the UCC Council for Higher Education, the UCC Council for Theological Education, and the UCC Council for Health and Human Service Ministries as listed in the UCC Yearbook.**

For what purposes may Genesis Fund monies be used?

Please Note: *The Genesis Fund Committee strictly adheres to these funding limitations when awarding grants.*

Genesis Fund grant monies may be used for:

- a. program expenses;
- b. computer/technology equipment costs;
- c. power point /video production expenses;
- d. program-related office expenses (telephone, postage, etc);
- e. publicity/promotional costs (publication and distribution).

Genesis Fund grant monies may not be used for:

- a. staff or consultant salaries or benefits;
- b. speaker honoraria or travel;
- c. stipends or scholarships;
- d. capital expenses (buildings, major repairs, furnishings)
- e. administrative costs or fees.

What criteria is used in making funding decisions?

Priority is given to funding new projects that expand direct service to meet human need or that enable effective public policy advocacy.

All proposals considered must be for projects clearly related to actions of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ within one of the following programmatic areas: **environmental stewardship**; the **rights and freedoms of all persons**; and the **fair use of economic resources**. Applicants are asked to identify the one category in which they wish their proposal to be considered.

In considering grant proposals, the Committee takes into account the United Church of Christ's commitment to becoming a church that is multi-racial, multi-cultural, open and affirming, and accessible to all.

When are Grants made from the Genesis Fund?

Grants from the Genesis Fund are made on a biennial basis. Grant applications are received *only in odd numbered years*. Funding decisions are be made in accordance with the following schedule:

March 15th	Completed applications due in office by 5 p.m. (EST) (<i>this is a firm deadline</i>)
June-August	Genesis Fund Committee Reading Period
September	Genesis Fund Grant Making Meeting
October 1st	Funding Decisions announced and funds released.

What is the Funding Cycle?

Grants are made in October of odd-numbered years. Year I of the funding cycle is from October 1 to September 30 (e.g., October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2006); Year II of the funding cycle is from October 1 to September 30 (e.g., October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007). Every new funding cycle begins October 1st in odd-numbered years.

Is there an application form?

Yes, for the convenience of the Genesis Fund Committee, applications for all Genesis Fund grants – domestic or international – must be made on the appropriate Genesis Fund Grant Application Form. All sections of the form must be completed, including both income and expense budget figures for a two-year period. The application shall include a plan for sustaining funding for the project and have the appropriate endorsement. **Endorsement requests** (see application form) shall be made to the appropriate Conference Minister, Covenanted Ministry Executive or Global Ministry Area Executive by no later than **February 1st** of the application year in order to meet the March 15th deadline. **Incomplete applications will not be considered by the Committee.** *It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all aspects of the application are complete.*

Applications for **projects of Overseas/Global Partner Churches** must be made through the appropriate Area Office of the UCC/Disciples of Christ Common Global Ministries Board. When an application for an international project grant is received, it is sent by the Genesis Fund Administrator to the appropriate Area Office of the Common Global Ministries Board for review and endorsement. This is done to honor and safeguard relations with our Overseas/Global Partner Churches. **If endorsement is not given by the Area Office, the application will not be considered by the Committee.**

Are the Genesis Fund Application Forms available on-line?

Yes. The Genesis Fund Application Forms are updated periodically. The updated forms

can be found on the United Church of Christ website <www.ucc.org> after October 1st of each year. Click the “Wider Church Ministries” icon to go to the WCM home page. Then click “Genesis Fund.”

Is the Genesis Fund Administrator available for consultation?

Yes. The Genesis Fund Administrator is available for consultation throughout the year (see below).

What are the terms of Grants that are given?

A project may be funded only once. Grants may range from \$2,000 to \$8,000.

Domestic

grants will be given over a two year time period, with at least one-half of the funds being awarded in Year I and the remainder being awarded, *as matching funds*, in Year II.

By September 1st of Year I (10 months after the grant is made), grantees shall:

- 1) Provide the Committee with evidence that matching funds for the balance of the grant ($\frac{1}{2}$ of the original grant total) have been raised to support the project. Grantees are encouraged to secure matching funds from one or more UCC-mission partners (local church, association, conference, UCC-related institution or national body). Genesis Fund grant money that has been matched (up to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total grant) shall be released after October 1st, which marks the beginning of Year II.
- 2) Provide the Committee with a completed Grant Progress Report form (sent to the grantee when the grant was made), stating how the grant funds have been used to date.

By September 1st of Year II, when the two-year funding cycle is ending, the grantee shall provide the Committee with a completed Grant Report and Evaluation form (sent to the grantee when the grant is made), stating how the grant has been used, the degree of impact or success of the program funded, with available supporting documentation.

Does Genesis Fund grant money not used for the purpose intended have to be returned?

Yes. Genesis Fund grant monies, or any portion thereof, that are not utilized for the purpose intended by June 30th of the year following Year II of the two-year grant period, shall be returned to Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ for reinvestment in the *Make a Difference!* Genesis Fund endowment. (For example, for the

2-year funding cycle October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2007, the deadline for returning unspent grant monies would be June 30, 2008.) It is the responsibility of the grantee to notify Wider Church Ministries if the grant funds, or any portion thereof, have not been used or if it appears that the funds will not be used within the given time frame.

Exceptional Mission Opportunity Grants

Exceptional Mission Opportunity grants are made only in circumstances where adherence to the biennial Genesis Fund funding cycle would result in a significant missed opportunity for ministry and/or where the issue to be impacted by the new initiative seeking funding is time sensitive. Grant funds come from available accumulated reserves of the *Make a Difference!* Genesis Fund endowment.

A requests for Exceptional Mission Opportunity grants may come from one or more of the Covenanted Ministries of the United Church of Christ or from the Cabinet of the Council of Conference Ministers of the United Church of Christ. A special Genesis Fund application form, available from the Genesis Fund Administrator, shall be completed for Exceptional Mission Opportunity grant requests. Exceptional Mission Opportunity grants

shall be considered by the Genesis Fund Committee only upon unanimous recommendation by the Collegium of Officers of the United Church of Christ, with the concurrence of the Chair of the UCC Executive Council. Such grant requests may be received and considered at any time during the year to enable timely funding.

Who administers the Genesis Fund?

Oversight for the administration of the *Make a Difference!* Genesis Fund/Caring for Community is provided by Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

For application forms and needed clarifications, visit the Wider Church Ministries website <www.UCC.org/wcm/genesisfund> or contact:

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