

Purpose & Guidelines for the Ministry Innovations Task Force 2016

The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta
The Right Reverend Robert C. Wright, Bishop
The Reverend Canon Alicia Schuster Weltner, Canon to the Ordinary
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Ministry Innovations Task Force (“MITF”) Purpose

In partnership with the bishop, clergy, and people of the Diocese of Atlanta, the MITF will review proposals and allocate funds through an “MITF Grant” process to encourage, and develop a culture of ministry experimentation and innovation in fidelity with the teachings of Jesus and our baptismal promises.

Members of the MITF are appointed by the Bishop to serve a two (2)-year term. The MITF will convene to hear proposals no fewer than three (3) times annually.

Guidelines for Application for MITF Grants

1. Eligibility: Any baptized member(s) of the Diocese of Atlanta (the “Applicant” or “Applicant Team”) in good standing with the written support of their respective Rector/Priest in Charge and Vestry may apply for Innovation funds. If a parish or parishes in the Diocese of Atlanta seeks an MITF Grant, members of such parish or parishes of the Diocese of Atlanta may apply for an MITF Grant on behalf of such parish(es), provided that such parish or parishes are in compliance with the Fair Share policy of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta as set forth in the Canons of the Diocese, Canon 20, Section 2 (<https://www.episcopalatlanta.org/Diocese/Governance/Diocesan-Canons-and-Constitution/The-Canons-of-the-Diocese/Canons-20-35-/>). For the avoidance of doubt, applications *may* be submitted on behalf of a parish or parishes, but this is not required; applications may reflect projects to be undertaken through efforts and collaborations outside of the parish structure.

2. Ministry Innovation: A “Ministry Innovation” is the undertaking of a non-traditional ministry enterprise by a Convocation, parish(es), or other worshipping community(ies), or members of the Diocese of Atlanta for the express purpose of engaging with people and communities in order to equip, serve, and heal the world. A Ministry Innovation shall be among people not presently connected to any parish or ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta and may introduce concepts and practices that are new to a community, new to the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, or some combination thereof. Exclusively liturgical offerings by a parish are not eligible for an MITF grant unless the liturgical offering is offered in a location or among a community other than such parish.

3. Grant Cycle: If funding is granted for a Ministry Innovation, such funding shall be provided for a one (1)-year period, starting and ending dates of which shall be mutually agreed to by the MITF and the Applicant/Applicant Team. No Ministry Innovation shall be eligible for more than three (3) years of funding. No Innovation will receive full funding in any application year.

4. Application Requirements

a. One-page Innovation Description: The Applicant/Application Team shall submit a one-page typed description as a Word document or PDF to innovate@episcopalatlanta.org as soon in their innovation development process as possible to allow the MITF to give early feedback and suggestions that will increase the likelihood of the full proposal's success.

After initial contact with the MITF through the one-page Innovation Description and feedback on it, innovation proposers/applicant teams should prepare an application including the following:

b. Research: (approximately 500-1000 words) Briefly present data demonstrating needs and trends in support of the proposed Ministry Innovation. Such research shall include, at a minimum:

- i. competitive landscape research (does the Ministry Innovation duplicate existing efforts in the community?);
- ii. results of directly engaging with community to determine interest in the Ministry Innovation (such as conducting a survey in the community);
- iii. demographic information and/or census data (if relevant).

c. Purpose: Provide a clear statement of the simple purpose of the Ministry Innovation Reflecting the collective mind of the Applicant Team and, if the Applicant/Applicant Team is applying on behalf of a parish or parishes, the Rector/Priest in Charge, and Vestry of such parish(es).

d. Theological Reflection and Articulation of Potential for Spiritual Growth: Provide two brief reflections of no more than 500 words each on:

- i. the theology supporting the Ministry Innovation and
- ii. the various aspects of spiritual growth that are anticipated for all parties to the Ministry Innovation.

e. Communication: (not more than 500 words) Prepare an outline of a communications strategy for sharing the story of the Ministry Innovation. How will the

Applicant/Applicant Team promote and increase awareness of the Ministry Innovation with the following audiences:

- i. the community to be served by the Ministry Innovation
- ii. the Diocese of Atlanta
- iii. the general public
- iv. other audiences?

Identify the intended media to be used for each audience: Social media? Press? Others?

f. Partnership: (not more than 500 words) A Ministry Innovation will seek partnerships from within and beyond the Diocese of Atlanta for financial, in-kind, and intellectual contributions. Please provide a brief description of such partnerships already secured and to be pursued.

g. Budget: Prepare a Ministry Innovation budget proposal including the following:

- i. proposed budget for initial one-year MITF grant
- ii. brief proposed plan for financial sustainability of the Ministry Innovation within three (3) years. (*Consider: where might the Applicant Team secure alternate funding? Could the Ministry Innovation become self-sufficient?*) .

h. Metrics/Evaluation Rubric: (approximately one (1) page) To help assess how the Ministry Innovation is going (what is working? What might be adjusted?), provide a proposed evaluation rubric for the Ministry Innovation (the “Evaluation Form”). This rubric will be finalized in partnership with the MITF for use in reviewing and adjusting the Ministry Innovation as set forth in paragraph (5)(a) below. For sample rubrics, please contact innovate@episcopalatlanta.org.

i. MITF Grant Application Deadlines/Review Timeline:

The MITF will receive proposals for funding for Ministry Innovations in three cycles annually: 1) by or before January 1, 2) by or before May 1, and 3) by or before September 1.

Applicants/Applicant Teams will be notified of the MITF’s decisions within 45 days of application deadlines.

Announcements of upcoming proposal deadlines will be communicated, at a minimum, via *Connecting*, Clergy News, Facebook, and the diocesan web site. The current MITF purpose and guidelines will be available on the diocesan web site.

5. Review and Reporting Requirements

a. Evaluation of Funded Ministry Innovations: The Evaluation Form shall be completed by the Application Team and provided to the MITF two (2) times per year, on a schedule mutually agreed upon by the MITF and the Applicant/Applicant Team prior to initial MITF Grant funding. Within 60 days of receipt of the Evaluation Form by the MITF, the Application Team shall meet or teleconference with members of the MITF for discussion and evaluation of the Ministry Innovation. The Evaluation process is intended to provide opportunity for conversation and exchange of ideas to support refinement and success of the Ministry Innovation.

b. Annual Council Reporting Requirement: The Applicant/Applicant Team shall provide a written report, including a detailed accounting of all monies, to the MITF by October 1 of each calendar year for the MITF's report to Annual Council in early November.

Revision of MITF Guidelines

These MITF Guidelines may be reviewed and revised on an annual basis by the MITF in consultation with the Bishop as needed to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the MITF application and evaluation process.