



AFLC HOME MISSION DEPARTMENT

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Matching Grant Overview and Policy

NOTE: It is important that you review this whole document before you proceed in filling out the matching grant application.

PURPOSE

Our primary approach is to work through local churches and districts to plant new congregations. The purpose of seed grants and sowing can be listed in the following ways:

- A. **To supplement pastoral salaries.** Starting churches often requires bi-vocational pastors or helping part-time workers such as Parish Builders, youth workers or children's ministry staffers. Seed grants can help meet those financial needs.
- B. **To help cover costs of ministry sites and rentals.** Sometimes new starts need to rent spaces temporarily, or upgrade meeting sites to accommodate new attendees or the people God is reaching. Grant monies can defray these expenses.
- C. **To sponsor discipleship and training costs.** Our job is not only to preach the Word and plan worship services, but according to the Lord Jesus Himself, "to make disciples of all the nations." These efforts sometimes require material costs and curricula.
- D. **To provide scholarships for training and conferences.** Church planting is a specialized ministry. Conferences, training workshops, and classes are advisable. Seed grants can help churches cover the costs for these opportunities.
- E. **To supply funds for outreach efforts and evangelistic meetings.** Gospel outreach, children's ministries and youth ministry work often requires monies beyond a new church's supply. Sometimes an evangelist can reach people in protracted meetings, and those efforts require special funding. These grants can fund those needs as well.
- F. **To meet administrative and office costs of the local congregations.** The costs of effective media outreach and public relations materials are also needed.

TYPES OF MATCHING GRANTS

1. **SEED GRANTS:** \$12,000.

- To give congregations and districts a chance to sow seeds for a new plant, the Home Missions Committee is offering first year applicants up to \$12,000 seed grant if matched.

2. **SOWING GRANTS:** \$20,000.

- These “sowing grants” may become available to churches and districts proven faithful with up to \$12,000 seed grants. They are invited to apply for this matching grant. As Jesus said, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.” (Luke 16:10). New planters who can match grants will be given priority. In this way a new plant can demonstrate its ability to become self-supporting as a free congregation. A sowing grant of up to \$20,000 can be given for three years. You do not need to reapply for the second and third years, but initial applications will be reviewed by the committee. The Director and staff will give a recommendation to the committee, based on stewardship and progress following the first and second years.

ELIGIBILITY

The grantee must be a sponsor AFLC church and/or AFLC district.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Fill out Application

In order to start this process, the sponsor church or district will need to fill out the Matching Grant Application. You will find the application on Home Missions website or by contacting Home Missions directly at homemis@afrc.org. This application should be submitted by sponsoring church or district.

2. Submit to Grantor

These applications will be reviewed and approved by our Home Missions Committee. Please note that the Home Missions Committee does not meet every month. It could be a few months before the sponsor church knows if they have been approved or denied.

3. Status of Grantees Application

If approved, Home Missions will contact the sponsoring church or district to inform them that they have been approved of receiving a matching grant.

4. Accountability

In order for Home Mission to send the monies to sponsoring church or district, we will need documentation of the amount that has been given. This is needed for accountability purposes. We don't require the grantee to have a specific fund amount up front before applying for the matching grant. It can come in increments or as a whole.

5. Fund Disbursement

If a sponsoring church has \$12,000 for a matching seed grant, Home Missions will match that amount in increments or as a whole. AFLC Home Missions will send the sponsor congregation a check in regular increments as they come. If the money for the whole year is donated beforehand, Home Missions will send the whole matching amount accordingly.

6. Quarterly Reports

Home Missions requires that the sponsor church in conjunction with the church plant fill out quarterly reports. One will need to be done by the church planter, the other is to be filled out by the sponsor church. This is for Home Missions to be able to see the progress. This shows Home Missions if the church plant has been a good steward of the seed grant. These report templates can be found on the Home Missions website, or by contacting Home Missions directly at homemis@aflc.org.

7. Leadership Development

- Welcome an annual visit from the Home Missions Director and/or Committee member.
- Participate in monthly calls with the AFLC Home Missions Director.
- Encourage your leaders to attend one of the AFLC training sessions such as our late January retreat in Mesa, AZ, workshop in conjunction with SIT, or a special church planting convention with the Home Mission Director.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

a) What is the duration of the matching grants?

Each matching grant has a 12-month duration. It is available to the sponsor church for up to one year.

b) Can groups with no sponsoring church receive grants?

No. The Home Missions Committee is steering away from that approach. We are hopeful that helping churches to plant churches will help us see more fruit. Plants with no sponsor can inquire with the Home Missions office for further direction.

c) If a group or a church receives a grant, do they then fall under Home Missions Committee authority and have to go through them for everything?

No. These churches are free and living congregations. We will help. But we will not dictate what only the Lord can decide for them. Our polity upholds the sovereignty of every congregation to follow the Lord as the Word and the Spirit leads them. We want them to pray, to search the Scriptures, to make disciples, and to decide on their processes, practices and constitutions. We want free and living congregations to plant free and living churches – and learn to live in the freedom of the gospel. Home Missions will come alongside of them.

As 2 Corinthians 3:17 says, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Freedom.” And as John 8:36 says, “So if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

d) How often can you apply for a grant? And how many years can you apply?

It is the goal of the Home Missions Committee to build relationships with churches who want to plant churches. In general, we hope to offer a church a matching seed grant of \$12,000 so they can test their giftings. The new starts that flourish can also apply for a sowing grant of \$20,000. Sponsoring churches can apply for as many grants as they want. It is our desire to move new churches as quickly through the process as possible from church start to plant to new church to established church. A ten-year relationship is our limit – then these churches can build partnerships with other local churches.

e) What happens if a group gets approved for a grant, but the funds don’t come into Home Missions?

The Home Missions Committee is fiducially responsible to God, the Missions Corporation, the Annual Conference and the AFLC donors for the spending of the funds. We will disperse the monies as they come and work to raise partners who can help us prepare grants in advance. We want to see the Lord’s work flourish – and we want to be good stewards of his work as well.

f) Can the sponsor church or district send matching grant monies into Home Missions?

No. You cannot send your matching grant funds into Home Missions. If Home Missions receives monies for matching grants, that will help Home Missions be able to send a matching grant. In order for Home Missions to keep things organized the best way is to collect your \$12,000 seed grant or \$20,000 sower grant and then send Home Missions documentation of those amounts so Home Missions can match it.