GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The Mustard Seed Foundation is a Christian family foundation established in 1983 under the leadership of Dennis W. Bakke and Eileen Harvey Bakke. The Foundation was created as an expression of their desire to be faithful stewards of the financial resources entrusted to them, to bring together the Christian members of their extended families into common ministry, and to advance the Kingdom of God. The Foundation provides grants to churches and Christian organizations worldwide that are engaged in Christian ministries including outreach (evangelism), discipleship, and economic empowerment. The Foundation welcomes grant applications from churches representing Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant traditions. All persons receiving Mustard Seed grants must proclaim faith in Christ, affirm the basic tenets of orthodox Christianity, and desire to serve and witness in Christ’s name.

In addition, the Foundation offers scholarships through different programs. The scholarship application forms and processes are different than the grant application guidelines. Please see our website for details on our scholarship programs. This form cannot be used to apply for a scholarship.
APPLICATION AND GRANT-MAKING PROCESS

Please consider our granting categories and priorities before submitting an application. In order to make a formal grant request to the Foundation, the applicant must submit a complete grant application using the format stipulated in this document. The applicant will be contacted if additional information is required. Most complete applications are reviewed within three months of receipt, and applicants are typically notified only after the review process is complete. If you are interested in applying for a multiyear grant, please specifically state this in the application and the duration for which a grant is sought. Any grant application requesting funding for more than one year should also be accompanied by project budgets for each year funding is requested. Worldwide, our average annual grant is a little over $5,000, though tend to range between $1,000 and $30,000 (per year, if multiyear) depending on context and type of initiative.

GRANTING CATEGORIES

Most of the projects we fund fit within one of the three granting categories below.

Outreach: Sharing the gospel of Christ among all peoples
Grants in this category are awarded to projects whose purpose is sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. These efforts are focused on winning non-Christians to Christ and introducing them to the basic tenets of faith. Of particular interest are projects that establish new churches or new ministries among non-believers.

Empowerment: Building up the resources of the Church one person at a time
Mustard Seed Foundation defines empowerment as giving decision-making power to the poor. Grants in this category seek to give hope and dignity to disadvantaged believers through income generation. Revolving loan funds created for and run by church members to start small businesses are examples of typical empowerment projects.

Discipleship: Enabling Christians to be better ambassadors for Christ
Grants in this category support projects that aim to educate Christians to better engage in ministry. We seek to support projects that help Christians become more mature believers and prepare for ministry. Discipleship grants are usually smaller than those awarded in other granting areas. Conferences or retreat activities are typically not given a high priority.
GRANTING PRIORITIES

Grant requests submitted to the Foundation are viewed in light of the following priorities by which grant decisions are made. All prospective grant applicants are strongly urged to pay close attention to these priorities when deciding whether to submit an application.

Small and Startup
As our name implies, the Mustard Seed Foundation provides seed funding for startup projects. We give priority to projects that are grassroots or plan to become locally managed and sustained. We do not provide ongoing support for projects that were started more than three years ago.

Individuals in Community
We seek to partner with local congregations that identify, equip, and support their members who are called to specific areas of ministry in the church, the marketplace, and the world. The projects we support are typically started through the visions, callings, and giftings of individuals who are then supported by their local church. We believe it is a fundamental responsibility of every local congregation to nurture, encourage, and support the visions of their members that are God-given and kingdom-oriented.

Dynamic
We look for creative initiatives that offer innovative approaches to local church-based ministries. We desire to support dynamic projects that show the love of Jesus in word and action. Therefore, we typically do not fund individuals who are serving in administrative roles, or projects for debt relief, land or building purchases.

Local Church Accountability and Financial Support
We recognize the Church as God’s primary representative in the world. We also believe the local congregation of believers is His primary representative within a particular geographic area. Therefore, we consider local church accountability and financial support primary indicators of the priority, integrity, and sustainability of a particular project. A church must be willing to invest financially in a project for Mustard Seed to consider funding that project. We do not consider in-kind contributions alone as local church financial support. Projects initiated by parachurch organizations or denominational bodies will only be considered if there is clear evidence of financial support from a local church or multiple congregations.

Partnership
Mustard Seed seeks to help launch projects as a minority partner, providing funds over a limited time period and in a way that encourages self-sufficiency and reliance on the local church. Therefore, we will typically only fund up to 50 percent of the total cost of a project in any given year.

Urban
The Foundation has a strong interest in the unique challenges faced by the urban church. As the world rapidly urbanizes, we believe large cities are particularly strategic. We seek to encourage the establishment of new ministry in the largest urban centers worldwide. Approximately 80 percent of all grants we award support projects in urban areas.
We are eager to learn about your local community and your proposed project. Guidelines for the narrative and budget portions of your proposal are provided on the next page. Emailed submissions are highly encouraged, but they may require the faxing or mailing of required attachments. Please note that most unsuccessful grant applications are rejected because they fail to meet our stated granting priorities (e.g. local church financial investment) or lack sufficient documentation in order for us to consider awarding a grant.

A. CONTACT INFORMATION

Applicant’s Name: ________________________________________________________________

Email: ______________________________________________________________________

Church Name: __________________________________________________________________

Church Address: ________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Phone: __________________________ Fax: ______________________________

B. PROJECT INFORMATION

Purpose of project: ____________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Total amount requested in U.S. dollars: __________________________

Total duration of project: __________ When did/will the project start: ________________

How did you become aware of MSF: ____________________________________________________

My signature below confirms that my application is truthful and authentic. My signature also confirms that any potential funds awarded by the Mustard Seed Foundation will NOT be used for any political activities but will be used solely for the purposes stated on this application that are in fact charitable and religious in nature:

Signature: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Send to:

Mustard Seed Foundation
7115 Leesburg Pike, Ste. 304
Falls Church, VA 22043 USA
or info@msfdn.org

The application is incomplete without Sections A, B, C, D & E. Keep a copy of the application and send the hard copy original application to the address above (in addition to an emailed copy, if available).
C. NARRATIVE RESPONSES

Submit on separate pages, of NO MORE THAN ONE PAGE EACH, a narrative response to each of the following topics concerning your project. The proposal MUST be in this format and in English to be considered.

1. Applicant's Personal Faith Statement
The person who is administering or supervising the project should write this. Describe what you believe to be the essentials of your Christian faith. Personal testimony and doctrinal statements are appropriate secondary responses but may not take the place of a faith statement of what you believe. Do not submit a signed copy of the organization's faith statement in place of this more personal expression of your own beliefs. If you are proposing funds for an individual’s salary, please include that individual’s personal statement of faith as well.

2. Background Information
Please tell us briefly about you and your organization. Tell us the history and purpose of the organization, its typical activities, and current programs. Describe your neighborhood, community, or city to help us understand your local context. We want to be able to envision where you work in addition to the environment, issues, and opportunities presented in your city. Assume we have a general understanding of your country, but that we do not know your neighborhood.

3. Project Summary/Purpose of the Grant
Please tell us what you want to do and why you want to do it. How does your proposed project relate to the needs described in your background information? Tell us how you hope to implement the project and include the following details: people targeted, project goals, duration of project, specific means of achieving project goals, evaluation process, and the plan for sustainability. Tell us how you specifically plan to utilize the funds for which you are asking. Remember to use a narrative format rather than submitting a list of activities.

4. Local Church Involvement
Explain how your church is participating in the project. How much is the church contributing financially and how is it providing leadership and accountability to the project? How else is the church contributing? If your organization is not a church, we will look for strong financial support from your church and/or other churches in the community where the project is located. MSF values the project's accountability to a local church and believes that the church's financial involvement increases accountability and sustainability. If this is a multi-church effort, give the name and location of each church as well as the type and amount of support each church is contributing to the project.

D. BUDGET INFORMATION

5. Church Budget
Provide a detailed budget for the current fiscal year including: (a) income provided by each source, and (b) general expense categories. It is acceptable to provide a general list of income and expenses as the overall church budget. The church budget should indicate where funds for the project are allocated.

6. Project Budget
Provide a one page budget for the project which includes: (a) sources and amount of income for the project and (b) general expenses and amounts for each category. Please specify if these funds are currently available or are still being raised. Indicate how much you are requesting from Mustard Seed Foundation and the specific uses to which MSF funds will be applied. Please indicate how much income is coming (or is expected to come) directly from your church. If this is a multi-church project, please include name, location, and funds given by each church. If you are requesting a multiyear grant, please provide project budgets for each year funding is requested.

E. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

- Names of church's governing board members (Elders/Deacons, Church Council, etc.)
- Copy of official/legal documentation evidencing your tax-exempt and/or charitable, religious nature
- The organization’s statement of faith and mission statement
- Final (preferably audited) end of year financial statement from previous fiscal year

[Rev 8/08]