Synod of Mid-America Innovation Fund Description, Parameters, and Application

Description

The Synod of Mid-America (SoMA) has established an "Innovation Fund" for the purposes of furthering creative ministry within the region. The intended purpose of the Fund is to support the SoMA's member presbyteries in securing creative and thoughtful Elders to facilitate visions for new congregational ministry that the presbytery might not otherwise be able to pursue.

To this end, the SoMA will provide funding for:

- a stipend of $10,000/year for an identified Elder working 20 hours/week
- pension and basic medical coverage through the Board of Pensions ($9,294/year)
- placement in the SoMA's "Gathering for Pastoral Sustenance" program
- training in evangelism and community organization
- regular consultations with PCUSA Evangelism and Church Growth Staff
- regular spiritual direction

Parameters

The word *innovation* is merely a placeholder and is intended to suggest to applicants the broad approach to ministry the SoMA wishes to support. Other words that might be used to describe this approach are *creative, new, prototypical, inventive, out of the box, different, risky, groundbreaking, cutting-edge, imaginative, generative,* or *constructive*, among others. Regardless of the specific word used, it is the SoMA's wish that the kind of ministry that is supported is ministry that has not been yet been tried in a given presbytery.

The SoMA does not expect that these ministries will run counter to the context a given presbytery wishes to serve. A presbytery's proposal must make sense for the people and place in which it finds itself. The proposals should "make sense" to a given context while also representing a "step forward."

It is the intention of the SoMA to provide monies from the Innovation Fund to support various proposals resulting in new "worshipping communities." While it is assumed that not all proposals will result in the chartering of a congregation, it is the fervent hope of the SoMA that each proposal is both creative enough to be

exciting and realistic enough to be feasible. Proposals that do not fit the “typical new church development” model are preferred. Additionally, proposals for new ministries are preferred over proposals that resemble “redevelopment” endeavors.

Proposals should take the following into account when submitting funding requests:

- Proposals should not ordinarily request the funding of existing ministries.
- Funded proposals are eligible for yearly renewal, for a maximum of three years of funding.
- Funded proposals should expect to submit to regular accountability and reporting to the SoMA
- A presbytery may have no more than one proposal considered per 12 months (proposals may be submitted at any time)

Application

In as much detail as possible, please include the following in your request for funding:

- Name of Presbytery
- Name of responsible party and all relevant contact information
- Record of proposal approval from authorized body (committee, commission, full presbytery, etc.)
- The overall vision of the new ministry
- What community it will serve and a description of said community
- A project timeline
- What qualities an identified leader brings to the ministry or what qualities will be sought in a leader
- How this proposal represents a new kind of ministry for your presbytery
- Other ways the presbytery will support this ministry