

## Recommendations for Establishment of a Grail Mission Fund

**Submitted by Mission Fund Task Force:** Terri Carter, Ann Heidkamp, Maureen Laflin, Thanh xuan Nguyen, Carol Skyrn

**Date:** 9/21/19

### **Background:**

In January 2019, the Grail Council established an “Exploratory Grail Mission Fund Task Force” made of up the above members, in anticipation of possible funds from the sale of land at Grailville beyond that needed to fund the on-going retirement and property maintenance needs of the movement. The Council’s charge to the Task Force was:

*“By Oct, 1, 2019 this Task Force will have explored options on how a “Mission Fund” could work effectively for Grail Teams or Grail Teams working with other non-profits, to access funding for programs or projects that can further the mission of the Grail in the USA.” \**

*\*The Task Force recommends that this be expanded to include the Grail in the US and internationally*

A list of areas to be explored included: researching funds of this type set up by religious orders and other non-profits; working with Finance Committee regarding relationship of this fund to the current asset policy, endowment fund, and a recommended spend down ratio; input from Grail membership on how fund could serve the movement; goals for the fund; types of programs/projects eligible for funding; fund administration including decision-making group and selection process; and potential names for such a fund.

On June 16, 2019 the Grail Council asked the Task Force to put its intended outreach to the membership on hold because of issues related to sale of Cornwall. They indicated that the overall charge to the Task Force had not changed but modified what was expected by Oct. 1, 2019:

*“We therefore would like you to put the reaching out to members on hold for the moment. We wonder if you have some options and how a possible “mission fund” could work, then members would have something more to chew on. Could this also include how these options will benefit the Grail over time?*

*What we would request of your task force. Is it possible for you to send to Council by October 1, or earlier if completed, some options of how a “mission fund” could work? “*

Based on this, the Task Force is presenting the results of its work in a more conceptual form than originally envisioned as a starting point for further discussion. Once the overall parameters of such a fund are decided, then the details of establishment can be determined.

This report has five sections:

1. List of information sources
2. Benefits to the Grail of establishing such a fund
3. Overall conclusions the Task Force came to from this information relevant to setting up a Grail fund

4. Draft Policies and Procedures for a Grail Fund that incorporate what we learned but which are still at a fairly conceptual level and easily modified based on additional input from the Council or Grail members.
5. Appendices – Notes from conversations with the 3 religious orders regarding their funds. If anyone from the Council wants to see the actual policies or procedures from any of these funds, they are in the Task Force records.

## **SECTION 1**

### **Information Sources:**

- Administrators responsible for the “mission fund” of three women’s religious orders were interviewed by phone or in person about the policies, procedures, and operations of their funds. Reports from these conversations are in Appendices A, B, and C. The orders were:
  - The Racine Dominicans in Racine, WI
  - The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mother (BVMs) in Dubuque, Iowa
  - The School Sisters of Notre Dame, Central Province, in St. Louis, Mo
- The Grail Finance Committee
- The International Grail Solidarity Fund information from Section 6 of the International Council Manual and discussions with Mary Farrell, International Treasurer, and Mary Heidkamp of the ILT.
- The Foundation Center and Council on Foundations
- Personal knowledge and experience of the Task Force members as Grail members, non-profit administrators, fund administrators, fundraisers, grant writers, and grant recipients. As a result of this experience, the recommendations take into account the needs of both the grantor and grantee as well as our best sense of what types of programs/projects Grail members might want to see funded.

## **SECTION 2**

### **Benefits to the Grail of Having a “Mission Fund”**

- Provide us with the ability to dream creatively and imagine how the Grail mission of transforming the world through empowered women can be embodied in projects/programs relevant to this “elbow in time” without limiting our dreams because of financial constraints
- Allow us to support current projects and programs that continue to keep the Grail mission alive and growing
- Enable us to partner effectively with other groups with similar goals by bringing financial resources into the partnership

- Allow us to attract more grant funds for current or new projects/programs by having “matching funds” available.
- Allow us to take risks – a hallmark of our history – by being able to fund riskier or less conventional programs/projects to see if they have potential.
- Being able to bring the movement together around concrete mission related “work.”
- Seeing the Grail name associated with projects we can be proud of and that introduce a broader audience to the Grail movement and mission.

### **SECTION 3**

#### **Overall Conclusions Reached by Task Force**

1. A Grail Mission Fund should only be established after ensuring that endowment funds for member retirement needs and maintenance of remaining property are properly secured into the future.
2. The minimum amount of capital needed to provide a worthwhile annual amount for distribution via a Mission Fund should be in the range of \$5,000,000.
  - a. However, we recently learned that the Loveland School District sale should close in early 2020 for roughly \$7.7 million. With roughly \$2.8 million already set aside from prior GV land sales, this means a total of roughly \$10.5 million in new funds will be available from sale of land at Grailville. In this case, after protecting ongoing costs of the Health & Welfare Fund, the General Fund and Major Maintenance, it is possible that up to 75% of the new funds, or roughly \$8 million, could go to a Mission Fund.
  - b. The new Mission Fund could be started with some or all of this amount. If a portion is used to start the fund initially while the needs of the other funds are determined, additional funds could be added within 2-3 years as part of the recommended initial evaluation of the fund (see Draft Procedures).
  - c. Determination of the amount of GV land sale proceeds to use for a Mission Fund should be made in consultation with the Finance Committee, and the financial managers based on the needs and goals of the Grail.
3. There are two commonly used methods for determining how much this capital would provide annually for disbursement.
  - a. Distribution Method 1: Based on a typical formula used by foundations of distributing no more than 4 - 5% of assets\* per year, a fund of \$5 – 8 million would provide \$200 - 400,000 annually into the future with no projected end date, assuming

the fund is earning at average historical interest rates. (*Note: \* this is not just interest*).

The available \$200 - 400,000 would have to cover the administrative costs of the funds as well as the actual grants. Administrative costs include staff time for communications; documenting committee process and decisions; and monitoring grant process and follow-up. Using a typical 10% administrative cost guideline, a fund of \$5 - 8,000,000 would yield approximately \$180 – 360,000 annually for distribution as grants.

- b. Distribution Method 2: An alternative model for setting up a fund is to designate an end date for the fund – for example, 20 years - and use a formula to calculate how much to distribute each year to have used up all the assets by the end of that period. This would yield a higher annual amount for distribution but only for the designated time period. In this method, a percentage of the annual distribution amount would also have to be set aside for fund administration.
  - c. Determination of which method would be more beneficial for the Grail to use should be based the amount of money actually allocated to the fund, advice from the Finance Committee and financial managers, and the goals of the US Grail.
4. Based on discussions with the Finance Committee in June 2019, the Council would need to instruct the Finance Committee to make a deviation from the current Asset Policy to set up a Mission fund.
  5. If established, the Grail Mission Fund would be another designated fund within the overall Grail asset portfolio under financial management by Barlett Wealth Management. The religious orders contacted all followed this type of arrangement for investment of their funds.
  6. All the orders had establishment of their Funds passed by their order's most representative body of members. For the Grail, this would be the General Assembly.
  7. The Grail should use the general governance structure used by all three religious orders and this model is reflected in the Task Force's draft policies and procedures.
    - a. After establishment, operation/administration of the fund went to a smaller volunteer or appointed committee that included at least some representation from the order's executive leadership group and accountable to the representative body. This committee has some degree of administrative staff support who is not part of the decision-making.
    - b. Administrative changes (e.g. one funding cycle vs two per year, application form questions etc.) are left to the Committee.
    - c. Major changes in goals/direction/governing policies for the Funds go back to the larger representative body.

- d. All the orders indicated that they had changed the policies and procedures of their funds over time based on experience and changing conditions in the order, society, and/or economics. Therefore, it is important to include clear policies and procedures for making changes over time.
8. The three orders had considerably different ways of defining eligibility and criteria for funding to further their mission/values, indicating that there is no “right way” to do this. As the Grail we would define the funding eligibility and criteria we determine best meet our mission and goals.

Some of the differences between the orders:

- a. How closely or if eligible projects had to be connected with a current member(s) of the order – direct, active connection; recommended by a member; no connection to a member, only connection to the fund’s stated goals/priorities.
- b. How they treated “legacy” projects originated by the order vs new projects created by a member(s) or with member active involvement vs projects less directly or not connected to the order at all. One set aside money for their “legacy” projects indefinitely, another did so for an extended time period but now expects them to become self-sustaining and will consider them for future grants along with all other applicants.
- c. How long they would fund projects – range was from 1 – 2 years to indefinitely.
- d. Minimum and maximum size of grants.
- e. Two orders also set aside money specifically for small grants to individual members of the order for personal ministry work/study/renewal and/or to provide emergency funds to someone they were working with in their ministry.

The Task Force has incorporated our ideas for funding eligibility and criteria related to the Grail mission and values in the Draft Policies and Procedures section of this document.

9. None of the three orders did much publicity about their funds. One of them only publishes information about their fund and upcoming application periods, deadlines and forms through their order’s member networks. The two that mention their fund on their website, require contact with the fund administrator for a pre-screening of eligibility before getting application info and forms. This limited publicity and pre-screening is done both to control the volume of applications and to ensure that those received are likely to meet the fund’s basic criteria. Given the likely small size of the Grail fund, the Task Force recommends a similar policy of limited publicity beyond Grail membership and networks.

## SECTION 4

### DRAFT US Grail Mission Fund Mission, Criteria, and Procedures

#### Potential Fund Names:

- Grail Catalyst Fund
- Grail Women Shaping the Future Fund (or Grail Shaping the Future Fund)
- Women Transforming the World Fund
- Grail Mission Fund
- Grail Future Fund

#### Vision

Called by our spiritual values, The Grail envisions a world of peace, justice and renewal of the earth, brought about by women working together as catalysts for change. The US Grail is committed to becoming anti-racist internally and externally, viewing all our activities through an anti-racist lens.

To help continue and extend this vision through use of its financial resources, the Grail establishes the US Grail Mission Fund. This fund will make grants to Grail projects and other projects which reflect the Grail mission goals in the US and internationally.

In accordance with the financial policies of the International Grail, this fund will be guided by the principles of solidarity, self-reliance, subsidiarity, accountability, prudence and creativity, as defined in section 6 of the International Council Manual.

#### Grail Mission Goals

The Grail Mission Fund will consider funding for projects that demonstrate a relationship to the Grail goals of:

“Empowering women to work for world transformation by:

- building bridges among diverse faith traditions and spiritual paths
- advancing peace, justice and a world free from military dominance
- fostering international exchange and solidarity
- challenging economic systems that put at risk the most vulnerable, especially women and children
- creating communities for a sustainable future
- celebrating the arts as a means for personal and societal transformation
- using a lens of equity and inclusion to identify and change systems of oppression

In keeping with our commitment to anti-racism, at least 30% of projects should be led by, inspired by needs of, and benefiting people of color.

In accomplishing these goals, the Grail works closely with the UN Commission on the Status of Women to ensure its projects promote the needs of and empower women to be agents of change.

As part of an international movement, the Grail is using the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to help focus its priorities for project development, selection, evaluation and funding. The SDGs are:

- GOAL 1: No Poverty.
- GOAL 2: Zero Hunger.
- GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being.
- GOAL 4: Quality Education.
- GOAL 5: Gender Equality.
- GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation.
- GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy.
- GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.
- GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality
- GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- GOAL 13: Climate Action
- GOAL 14: Life Below Water
- GOAL 15: Life on Land
- GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
- GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal

#### **Types of Grants:**

1. **One Time Event Grant** – funds for a one-time, time-limited event or activity like a workshop, symposium, speaker series, international gathering or training, performance, art project/showing, etc. One-time grant over 1 – 2 years.
2. **Project Feasibility/Start-Up Grant** – funds to help determine the feasibility of a project and/or to help a new project with start-up costs like legal costs and fees for incorporation or applying for 501c3 status. One-time grant for 1 – 2 years
3. **Project Sustainability Grant** – funds to help keep an established program going – up to x% of project's annual budget or \$x maximum. Grants can be awarded for multiple years with annual demonstration of progress and accomplishment.
4. **New Program/Project Grant** – funds for a new long-term project/organization or for a proposed expanded or new project in an existing organization. Up to \$x. Grants can be awarded for multiple years with annual demonstration of progress and accomplishment.
5. **If the fund is on a once a year funding cycle, the Grail could decide to set aside an amount as a "Discretionary Fund"** so that there is some money available for small amounts to be

awarded for worthwhile projects or for needs that come up outside of the annual distribution cycle.

6. **The Grail could decide to set aside an amount as a “Member Fund”** to which members could apply throughout the year for small grants for things like participation in conferences or programs that help them continue their learning for involvement in Grail mission related work or partnerships. Enabling members to remain vitally engaged with ideas and groups that can help the Grail further its mission and partnerships is important to the future of the Grail.

### **Eligibility to Funding**

1. Project must be organized, sponsored, or recommended by the US or international Grail movement, taskforce or committee, regional group or member(s). Priority will be given to projects organized or sponsored by a Grail entity or member(s).
  - **“Organized by”** means that the project is substantially developed and backed by a Grail entity and is called “a Grail (entity) project.” The Grail entity, through Grail members, must remain in active leadership and implementation roles throughout the grant period. This does not preclude partner organizations and non-Grail members, including program participants, from being part of the project leadership and implementation.
  - **“Sponsored by”** means that a Grail entity has endorsed a project developed by or with other organizations or sponsors. Grail members must have an active role in the leadership and implementation of the project throughout the grant period. The Grail entity should be listed as a sponsoring organization.
  - **“Recommended by”** means that a Grail entity or member(s) has a direct, on-going connection with a project related to the Grail mission goals as a Board member, staff member, active volunteer, or participant. The Grail entity or member(s) is willing to act as a liaison with the organization for the funding process, will provide a written reference, and answer Mission Fund committee questions.
2. Project must reflect relationship to at least one of the Grail Mission Goals and/or UN Sustainable Development Goals, listed above.
3. Project must demonstrate a commitment to equity and inclusion and empowerment of women in its leadership and implementation.
4. Project has a realistic budget and income/fundraising plan. Except for applicants in the one-time project category or the project feasibility/start-up category, the Grail Mission Fund should not be the sole source of income.

5. Project must have a viable implementation plan with measurable quantitative or qualitative outcomes and be willing to submit evaluation reports during and at the end of the funding period, as stipulated in the grant award letter.
6. Project should ideally be a 501c3 tax exempt organization or be associated with a qualified, non-profit fiscal sponsor responsible for the financial management of the grant. However, given the goal to support grassroots initiatives, non 501c3 organizations will be considered for one-time event grants, and project feasibility and/or start up grants. At a minimum an organizational bank account will be required.
7. Application must be completed according to the directions and submitted properly by the deadline. Questions should be directed to the fund administrator.

#### **Application Process:**

1. If the Fund has in the \$150 – 250,000 range to make grants, there should be one funding cycle per Grail fiscal year. If funds available are over \$250,000 per year consideration should be given to having two funding cycles per annum.
2. An annual timeline should be determined beginning with the date the annual allocation from the asset manager can be determined, followed by a three month period for communication about requests for proposals and submission of proposals, a three month period for Committee decision-making, and a month for communication with applicants and distribution of checks. If there are two funding cycles per year, the second cycle would begin at the end of the first cycle's decision-making period. Once this annual cycle is determined, members can plan their projects in conjunction with the cycle.
3. The application process should be kept relatively simple with an application form requesting type of grant sought, information about the application organization, the project goals and their connection with the Grail mission goals, a budget and income statement, letters of reference/support from Grail entity/member(s) and others, documentation of 501c3 status of organization or fiscal agent, an IRS 990 financial statement or similar documentation. Depending on the type of grant sought, there may be additional application questions or requirements. Why only organizations—artists are not organizations for e.g.

#### **Grail Mission Fund Committee**

The Grail Mission Fund Committee will be set up by and accountable to the Grail Council. The Committee will make decisions about grant allocations based on the criteria and procedures laid out in these policies.

##### **1. Committee Make Up:**

The Committee will consist of 7 members. At least one member should be a woman of color. Three of the members will be selected by the Council, one of whom will be a Council member. The remaining 4 will be elected by the membership. Those standing for election must submit a

statement of qualification and interest. Members will serve three-year terms. The initial committee will consist of 2 members serving one-year terms, 2 members serving two-year terms, and 3 members serving three-year terms. Thereafter all members will serve three-year terms. Members may be appointed or elected for one additional three-year term. They may be appointed or elected again after a break of at least two years. In appointing members to the Committee, the Council should be aware of ensuring regional and racial diversity. The Committee will select its own chairperson from its membership.

## 2. Committee Responsibilities

With the help of a designated part-time administrative staff person, the Committee will:

- Ensure announcements about the fund and application process/forms are sent to the members in conjunction with funding cycle(s) through multiple communication channels.
- Develop a page on the Grail website for the fund with a link to a contact person for information and forms.
- Receive applications, ensure they are complete and in compliance with eligibility criteria.
- Ascertain if any committee member has a conflict of interest with an applicant. That committee member must recuse themselves from any consideration of that applicant.
- Assign members to conduct research about proposed projects and interviews with applicants to get more info as needed. Member will share information with the whole committee.
- Meet in person or electronically to share information and make decisions about grants.
- Send decision letters to applicants.
- Ensures checks are issued to grantees and evaluation forms returned as required.
- Report at least annually to the Council and the Grail membership about grant decisions, including amounts, and any procedural changes.
- Recommend changes to the Fund policies based on experience and/or changes in the Grail, the society, or economic conditions. Recommendations must be made to the Council for decision-making.

### **Periodic Fund Evaluation**

To ensure on-going effectiveness of the fund in terms of meeting its goals and proper implementation of its policies and procedures, its performance will be evaluated initially after 2 years and thereafter every 4 years. The Grail Council will appoint a 5-person committee including 1 Council member, 1 Grail member who has served on the Fund Committee, 2 Grail members who have not served on the Fund Committee. These 4 members will choose a fifth member who may or may not be a Grail member. This committee will report its findings to the Council. The report will also be made available to the membership.

The Grail Finance committee will evaluate the financial performance of the fund as part of its responsibilities for the Grail portfolio.

## **Making Changes to the Grail Mission Fund Policies**

Administrative type changes to the fund procedures may be made by the Fund Committee and reported to the Council in its annual report.

Suggested major changes to the Mission Fund Policies can be initiated in four ways:

1. Recommendation from the Mission Fund Committee
2. Recommendation from the Periodic Evaluation Committee
3. Recommendation from the Council
4. Recommendation from a Grail entity or group of at least 10 members

Regardless of who makes a recommendation for change, it should be written with a rationale based on experience, or changing situations in the Grail, the society at large, or economic conditions. In all cases, the Mission Fund Committee should be consulted for input. The Council is responsible for deciding if the recommendation relates to administrative or operational procedures or if the recommendation involves a major shift in the Mission Fund's goals/directions/policies. Administrative or operational procedures recommendations may be referred to the Mission Fund Committee or can be decided by the Council. Major shifts in goals/directions/policies must be referred to the next General Assembly for decision with the Council providing information needed for decision-making.

## Appendix A

### Notes on Racine Dominican Mission Fund

Meeting with Sr. Jean Verber, Fund Administrator and Ann Heidkamp, Grail Mission Fund Task Force

March 22, 2019, 10am – noon

#### Background:

Fund started in late 70's/early 80's as Racine Dominicans worked to get their largely Catholic school teaching sisters to be paid "lay equivalent salaries." All the money the sisters earned above what was needed for their basic living expenses was pooled into a general fund. This model of contribution to a general fund by the earning sisters continues to this day. This fund is then allocated for the order's next 2 years of operating budget and coverage of retirement needs. Any remaining funds not needed for these two priorities then goes into the Mission Fund. The order does not have a development office, but all donations received also go into this fund. The three funds are rebalanced every three years to be sure each is sound and based on current data.

This Mission Fund has grown considerably over the years. 5% of the fund is distributed annually and this now amounts to about \$1 million per year.

#### Current Decision/Distribution Process:

Right now, 40% of the available funds go to 6 "sponsored Ministries." These are all Racine Dominican started projects/programs in Racine WI. Some have had funding for 30 – 40 years. They include the Sienna Retreat Center, St. Catherine's High School, Bethany Apartments where women coming out of the homeless/domestic abuse shelter can stay for up to 2 years, Senior Companions program, Hope Center, and the Eco-Justice Institute. The individual annual allocations for these projects are decided by the order's Leadership Team.

The remaining 60% of the funds go to groups that apply. Decisions are made by an Allocation Committee that consists of 10 – 12 volunteers from the sisters and associates. Each serves a 3-year term and they can renew for one additional term. The committee chooses its chair. The committee is supported by the Fund Administrator and an assistant.

There is one funding cycle per year – it starts in January and final decisions are made by about mid-June.

#### Upcoming Decision/Distribution Process Changes:

The 6 "sponsored Ministries" have been told that in two more years they will no longer get automatic funding. They need to work towards independence from the annual Racine Dominican contribution. They will be allowed to apply to the mission fund but will go into the general pool with all other applications. However, since the 40% of the funds that have been going to these 6 groups will become part of the money available to the general pool of applicants the overall pot of money will be the same.

#### Criteria for Funding

From the website: <https://www.racinedominicans.org/justice-outreach/missionfund2.cfm>

"The Mission Fund was established as a means for Racine Dominicans to partner with and help support justice efforts of organizations that share a common focus and mission with the Racine Dominicans.

The Mission Fund Allocation Committee seeks to fund organizations that:

- address an unmet and/or under-met need
- impact the poor and marginalized, women and/or children
- involve and empower people of diverse, racial, ethnic and social-economic background
- address and advocate for change in societal structures which cause or support oppression
- have a viable evaluative plan and measurable benchmarks
- demonstrate responsible care of EARTH – when applicable
- collaborate with other organizations or agencies
- have the financial stability to create and sustain quality services
- have other available resources and funds – the Mission Fund cannot be the sole funding source

The Racine Dominican Mission Fund operates on the principle of non-discrimination regarding race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and national origin and will award grants only to groups adhering to the same principle.

The Mission Fund Allocation Committee does not fund requests for the following: endowment funds, grant-making foundations, debt reduction, capital improvements, annual fund drives and individuals.”

In discussion with Sr. Jean, she said that lots of priority is given to groups in Racine, WI where the order was founded and has its motherhouse. In Racine, having funding from the Dominicans lends credence to an organization and can help them get more funding from other sources. Most of the funded groups have no remaining Dominican presence but the order says “we need them....to carry on our work.” The order will however use grant funding to help projects anywhere that are meaningful to their overall ministry. As an example, Sr. Jean talked about funding a birthing center in southern Texas where they have not had an active ministry but that serves their goal of impacting poor, marginalized women and children.

The fund will accept applications from the same organizations year after year. They do not have limits on how many times an organization can apply and/or received funds. Besides the 6 “sponsored Ministries” that have been guaranteed annual funding, some of the organizations applying to the general fund have been receiving funds since the beginning of the fund. An example is the Benedict Center for Criminal Justice in Milwaukee which was founded in the 1970’s and continues to serve women in the criminal justice system. A Racine Dominican was one of the founders but there is no continuing Dominican presence in the organization.

### **How do people find out about the fund?**

There is no publicity about the fund beyond having a page on the Racine Dominican website which lists the mission and criteria for application along with a contact link. If someone wants to apply, they must send a request in writing describing their project mission and requesting an application form– using the link or contacting the fund administrator. The administrator will decide if the project sounds like it meets the criteria or not and reply either that it does not or when the next application cycle will start and when to write again for the forms.

In the current funding cycle, about 100 applications were received – most from previously funded groups but also 14 new ones. Requests come from throughout the US and some from overseas (the Racine Dominicans have never themselves had overseas ministries).

Note: The Mission Fund website now says that in future applications will only be accepted from groups that have received funding in the past – no new groups will be considered. This is probably in conjunction with plans to change the Fund criteria in the next few years.

### **Current Allocation Decision Making Process**

As noted, the Allocation Committee is 10 – 12 sisters or associates each serving 3-year terms. The decision-making process is very thorough and intensive. All applications are reviewed by everyone. So, with 100 applications received this is a big, multi-month process. This is one reason that the process is being reviewed and likely to change.

1. Application received and reviewed for completeness by Administrator and/or Asst
2. Allocation committee members receive all applications and review them at least enough to be conversant with them
3. Allocation committee divided into 3 groups of 4 members each. Each team receives 1/3 of the apps – usually about 30 – 35 to review in depth.
4. Each team assigns 8 – 9 of their applications to each member to study in depth and fill out an evaluation form about each.
5. Then each team then discusses their 30 – 35 assigned applications. The team must come up with recommendation for each – no funding, yes funding and if so, range of funding.
6. Then the full Allocation Committee meets for 3 days and goes over recommendation for each applicant and makes final decision about who to fund and allocation. They have the information about how much the recommended funding ranges exceed the amount available. During the initial stages of this process, any committee member can raise questions about the recommendation of the small group or request a change in funding decision or amount.
7. After decisions are made, Administrative Team sends out award and reject letters. Award letters include an evaluation form which must be submitted at end of year and is required to be included with application for new funding.

## Appendix B

Notes from Phone Conversation re BVM Ministry Fund on 3/1/2019

Conversation with Sr. Thea O'Meara, BVM, Administrative Assistant to BVM Council  
1100 Carmel Drive | Dubuque, Iowa 52003-7991 | p 563.588.2351 ext 5532, [tomeara@bvmsisters.org](mailto:tomeara@bvmsisters.org)

Interviewer: Ann Heidkamp

Website: <https://www.bvmsisters.org/about-us/outreach-grants-and-scholarships/>

The BVM's (Sisters of Charity of the BVM), founded and headquartered in Dubuque, Iowa had a primary mission of education of children in the United States. Over the years, with changing understanding of the needs of society and the decline of Catholic schools, the sisters became engaged in a wider variety of ministries and social justice projects which they felt represented the mission and core values of their order. They created a Ministry Endowment Fund for "mission related projects. This fund provides about \$1,250,000 annually for ministry related grants.

### Vision and Values of the Ministry Fund

"In keeping with our BVM mission, the community directs a portion of its financial resources toward external ministries. We fund BVM sisters and others who engage in the work of "helping others enjoy freedom in God's steadfast love." To this end, we support a variety of projects and organizations with grants that:

- empower persons living in poverty;
  - transform structures;
  - have global impact;
  - foster nonviolence;
  - further right relationship with all creation;
  - are collaborative and participative; and
  - enable BVMs to continue in ministries which incorporate these goals."
- <https://www.bvmsisters.org/about-us/outreach-grants-and-scholarships/>

In pursuing these goals, the BVM's emphasize solidarity with those marginalized by society, especially women and children.

### Funding Categories

The annual funding of about \$1.25 million is further divided up by a Ministry Focused Committee into 8 grant categories with specific designated purposes and grant requirements. Three of the grant categories are exclusively for BVM sisters. Applicants to any of the other 5 grant categories must have a direct relationship with a BVM sister or associate. Availability of the funds and annual application dates/process are announced only to the BVM network and to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. The eight grant categories are:

1. Ministry Partnership grants for non-BVM projects but which have a direct connection with a BVM sister via Board or staff member or active volunteer
2. Ministry of Presence grants to provide living expenses for BVM's under age 65 who want to engage in ministry to the poor where salaries are unavailable.

3. Volunteer/Immersion Experience grants provide partial funding for non-BVM participants who want to share in the BVM mission through programs offered by the BVM Volunteer/Outreach Office or similar experiences consistent with BVM core values. – Examples might include service, immersion and advocacy experiences.
  4. The Margaret Mann Fund which provides BVM sisters with an opportunity to obtain a cash grant of up to \$2000 at any time to provide funds to people in need.
  5. BVM Sisters Education Grants provide funds for sisters to obtain training or education to acquire a new set of skills for their current ministry or to prepare for a new ministry.
  6. BVM Sisters Renewal Grants which provide funds for an extended period spiritual, mental, or physical renewal or preparation for a life/employment transition.
- 7 & 8. Two Scholarship Funds to provide funds for women of limited means who demonstrate BVM values to pursue education – at various levels – GED's, technical, associate or 4 year degrees. Annual amounts range from \$3000 - \$5000.

### **Funding Cycle and Process**

Currently the BVM's have 2 funding cycles per year with applications due on either Aug 1<sup>st</sup> or Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>. In 2018-2019 they had a total of 64 applicants. The Ministry Focused Committee, made up of 10 sisters including representatives of the Leadership Council and appointed members, make the decisions – by the end of October and the end of April each year. The committee divides up the applicants among its members to do interviews with them, so each committee members interviews 3 – 4 applicants.

As noted above information about the fund and application deadlines is only circulated through the BVM network and the LCWR. The sisters are then responsible for contacting projects that they are involved with and that they want considered for grants so that the necessary application forms can be completed. If anyone finds out about the fund from the BVM website, they are directed to a BVM fund administrator who will discuss the eligibility for funding, including the connection with a BVM sister. Application forms can only be obtained through contact with a BVM sister.

#### **GUIDELINES, ANNUAL MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP GRANT**

1. Each applicant must have a reference by a BVM Sister or a BVM Associate who is knowledgeable about the project itself; e.g. board member, staff member, volunteer, or one who knows the contact persona and/or sponsoring agency submitting the grant.
2. Projects are consistent with BVM Core Values: Charity, Justice, Freedom, Education. It is not the intent of this grant to provide frequent or prolonged funding for an organization. If a grant is awarded, the applicant may apply only two more times within a 5-year cycle.
3. Projects will benefit a number of persons who are poor, powerless, oppressed. They may involve either immediate assistance or long term action toward systemic change.
4. The budget of the project shows sources of funding other than BVM. If a project is currently receiving funds from another BVM source, it is not eligible for a Ministry Grant.

The application process consists of completion of a cover sheet, application form with budget, and letters of reference from the BVM sister and a Board or Staff member or a volunteer.

### School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) Central Pacific Province Fund

**Notes by Ann Heidkamp from Phone Conversation with Sr. Rita Jursik, 615-450-9012 on Friday 4-12-19**

This fund has been in place for the last 7 years when the SSND's merged four former provinces into the Central Pacific Province. The mission funds of the four former provinces were combined into the current Central Pacific Province Fund. This fund is to provide grants to projects that have direct SSND involvement as a board member, staff, or volunteer but the project itself was not organized by the SSND order.

From discussion with Sr. Rita – in addition to this fund, the SSNDs have two other funds – an “ALMS” fund to which an SSND sister can apply for “urgent” needs up to \$1000 for a person or project they are involved with and which is open for requests 4x a year; and an “Affiliated Mission” fund which covers requests from projects started by the SSND's themselves – like Mt Mary University, a Center for Homeless Women and Children, and the Living Earth Center.

**Annual Distribution:** \$250,000 disbursed in two cycles of \$125,000 each per year.

#### **Mission:**

The Central Pacific Province will continue the work of the former four provinces and will establish one fund to support projects and organizations that assist the poor with the skills they need to effect change in their communities enabling them to identify causes of their poverty and create strategies to change structures which keep them in poverty.

*“As members of an international congregation, we recognize our obligation and opportunities to develop a world vision and a sense of global responsibility. Our internationality challenges us to witness to unity in a divided world; to discover unsuspected ways of sharing what we have, especially with the poor and marginalized; and so search for new channels of service in the universal church.” YAS C 26*

*“Deep faith and high courage urged Mother Theresa to risk already meager resources to satisfy needs wherever she was called. In her spirit we respond to God's call expressed in our times. Like her, we educate in schools and in other areas of urgent need; like her, we exclude no one from our concern, but are especially sensitive to youth and women and are impelled to prefer the poor.” YAS C 24*

#### **PURPOSE**

- to respond to urgent needs, being especially sensitive to women and youth, (*note: from discussion with Sr. Rita “urgent” does not mean “immediate” but rather “important”*)
- to empower the people who are poor to claim their place in society,
- to help carry out community development or systemic change with the economically and working poor
- to promote education with a vision of the possibilities for a new world order

#### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

The applicant organization functions in a nonprofit manner for the public benefit and:

- models a commitment to inclusivity and diversity,
- fulfills one or more of the purposes of the Central Pacific Province Fund,
- has a relationship with the School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Central Pacific Province, (*note: from discussion with Sr. Rita, this means there must be a direct connection with an SSND sister. Sister must be on the Board, a volunteer, or a staff member. Application asks for how the SSND is involved*).
- demonstrates operational and management effectiveness, financial viability and responsible stewardship of resources,
- has a mission consistent with our SSND charism and the call of our General Chapters

In addition, a recent Addendum to the Central Province Fund allows projects already receiving a subsidy through the Affiliated Ministries fund to request an additional grant from the Central Province Fund for one project per year with maximum funding for 2 years or for a one-time non-repetitive special project that will be funded only once. A recent example is a request from Mt Mary University for funding for a project involving its central entrance.

#### **Application Process:**

- 2 funding cycles per year – applications are due in September and March and will be reviewed in October and April.
- Each cycle is announced only to the School Sisters themselves.
- Potential applicants write to the Fund Secretary who sends them the application form and deadlines.
- Funding to specific projects or organizations will be granted only once during the fiscal year.
- Requests for funds of \$2000.00 and above will be considered.
- Ordinarily no project or organization is funded for more than 4 years in succession.

#### **Selection Committee and Process:**

- Committee appointed by the Provincial Council for 3-year terms, with one renewal possible.
- 7 members – 2 Provincial officers and 5 others
- Typically, about 15 applications per cycle
- All committee members review all the applications and must come to a consensus on who to fund and for how much. Committee can ask applicant for more information during the decision-making process
- Decision emphasis is on if all application questions are answered clearly and if the project is sustainable – eg what % of budget does the requested grant represent.
- Typical awards are for \$2000 - \$2500. In Sr. Rita's memory the biggest grant given was about \$15,000.
- Secretary writes to applicants – if accepted sends them amount and evaluation form to complete at end of project. If rejected tells them why so they can improve if they apply again.

- Sr. Rita noted that over time the applications have improved based on that feedback and better understanding by the sisters of the criteria and how to fill out the application form.

**Examples of Projects Funded:**

- Education and support for marginalized girls
- Reentry housing for ex-offenders
- In home ESL programs for immigrant women
- Life skills for Latina girls
- Bringing children to see incarcerated mothers
- Dealing with healing from trauma