

Classis Grand Rapids East Community Engagement Team Grant Application for 2024-25

Classis Grand Rapids East desires to nurture collaborative church-based ministry partnerships that promote community engagement and are signs of kingdom renewal. \$18,500 is available for Community Engagement grants to be used beginning August 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025. The purpose of Community Engagement grants is to encourage the initiation and development of collaborative partnerships that are community-based and foster transformational ministry. We anticipate that 5 to 7 grants will be awarded this year, ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 each. **Grant applications are due by March 1, 2024.** The grants are approved in May for the new fiscal year which begins on August 1. The first quarterly payment commences on November 1.

The Community Engagement Team supports initiatives that can transform our community. We are interested in a wide range of proposals that do three things:

- Encourage and support diaconal/social justice projects in cooperation with Christian Reformed churches in Classis Grand Rapids East;
- Develop and grow local collaborative community partnerships using the resources of ABCD training and cohorts;
- Address at least one of the four community issues identified by Together West Michigan: Mental Health, Child Care, Affordable Housing, or Immigration & Refugee Well-being.

GENERAL FUNDING CRITERIA

1. All grants must align with Classis' values and priorities, and help fulfill its mission.
2. Grants support new ministry initiatives, training needs, and other ministry opportunities.
3. Grants are intended to help develop self-sustaining ministry through broader partnerships and support.
4. We anticipate that new grants may not be available after the 2024-25 fiscal year. Therefore we encourage grants to fall into one of two categories.
 - a. If a grant is awarded to a current or past funded project, the project's focus will be to assist the organization in transitioning to other future funding.
 - b. If a grant is for a new project, the grant should be viewed as one-time seed money which encourages building collaborations and discovering other funding sources for the future.
5. Grants require meaningful partnership and accountability with the appropriate ministry team of Classis and, ordinarily, with one or more member congregations.
6. Grant amounts are finalized by recommendation of the ministry team, endorsement of the ministry planning team, and approval of the executive team of Classis.
7. Grant recipients are to report twice annually (mid-year and final) and are reviewed by the appropriate ministry team.
8. Actual payment of approved grants is contingent on available funds.

Note: See Classis Mission, Core Values, and Ministry Priorities, attached.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible congregations

- Members of Classis Grand Rapids East
- Committed to local community-based partnerships
- Have a current Safe Church program including a safe church representative and up-to-date safe church policies. (In your congregation's letter of endorsement, please indicate your safe church Classis representative and the most recent review date of your safe church policies.)

Eligible organizations (non-profits)

- Provide services in the ministry area of Classis Grand Rapids East.
- Partner with one or more congregations of Classis GRE.
- Have workplace safety policies regarding sexual harassment, youth protection, and the use of alcohol and other drugs.

Please note: if your organization needs assistance in writing and/or implementing workplace safety policies, let us know and we can suggest resources for assistance.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. A completed grant application form. (See below.)
2. A letter of endorsement from the congregation's council or organization's board of directors.
3. If a non-profit organization, a copy of the workplace safety policies.
4. If a church, please inform us of the church's Safe Church Classis representative and the most recent review date of your Safe Church policy.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Your church/organization name:

Name of collaborative partner (church or organization):

Contact person:

Contact person's email:

Contact phone:

Project/Program name:

Annual Project/Program budget and all revenue sources for this grant year (attached).

Amount of grant requested:

Are you applying for any other funds from Classis GR East for this grant year? If yes, please explain the source and purpose of the funding.

Summarize your proposed partnership project in two or three concise sentences. Explain *why* you will do it, *who* you will collaborate or partner with (e.g. church, community organization, neighborhood), *what* you will do, the intended *result*, and *how your project engages* the church.

For example: Because we see _____ (*the why*), we hope to partner with _____ (*the who*) in a project that _____ (*the what*). We intend that our project will promote _____ (*the result*) and will _____ (*how it engages*) in our church (or partner church or churches).

Provide one or two brief paragraphs that expand on the needs or opportunities that this project will address. Please explain how your church and/or organization and community will be transformed due to this project.

If the applicant is a church, please address how you will integrate this project into your liturgy/worship service.

Describe your implementation plan.

1. Define target group and geographical area. (Who are you intending to reach?)
2. Describe methods and programs. (How will you reach them?)
3. Describe your impacts, benchmarks, and outcomes.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Participant: An English as a Second Language (ESL) participant is someone who attends at least 80% of classes in a series that lasts six months.

Method: ESL classes will be offered on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for 24 weeks over 6 months. The class size will be limited to 12 participants. The classes will be taught by trained volunteers. Each class will have one primary “teacher” and two assistants. 1-to-1 tutoring will be available for those requesting such tutoring.

Impact: The ultimate goal or impact is that ESL students will read and write English at a 4th-grade level so they can qualify for an entry-level job.

Benchmarks: Track the number of participants. Test students before and after a stated number of classes in a series.

Outcomes: After X number of classes, Y number of participants met or exceeded a goal of scoring Z% on a 4th-grade literacy test.

Email all application materials as Word document(s) **by March 1, 2024** to partnerships@classisgreast.org

If we need more information or clarification, we will notify you. Thank you.

CLASSIS GRAND RAPIDS EAST
Mission, Core Values, Ministry Priorities
August, 2011

MISSION: To be a community of congregations that encourage, equip, and challenge one another to be vibrant and missional.

CORE VALUES (Abridged)

1. An Extended Church Community. We develop long-term relationships that sacrificially enfold people into our family and are instruments for salvation, healing, and growth.
2. Authentic, Passionate Faith. To pass our faith to the next generation we need to know, grow in, and experience God's grace in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
3. Discipleship. God holds us accountable for our growth and for how we help others grow as Jesus followers. Let us be and make disciples.
4. Being Good Neighbors. God expects us to be salt and light in our neighborhoods and city, and challenges us to implement divine mercy, justice, and righteousness.
5. Social Justice. We will overcome our contentment with the status quo, and give priority to addressing the needs of those with fewer resources and more disadvantages.
6. Diversity. We are called to be the best possible model of valuing others, with no outsiders who have been consciously or unconsciously excluded.

MINISTRY PRIORITIES

1. To Develop Leaders: Coordinate training for church leaders (including orientation to classis meetings) and provide links to other opportunities.
2. To Worship and Pray Together: Promote corporate worship in classis and as a community of congregations, and mobilize prayer for our congregations, ministries and partners.
3. To Thrive in Our Neighborhoods: Help us partner with public schools, other churches, and businesses to make our neighborhoods better places to live, work, play, learn, and worship.
4. To Break Down Barriers: Equip our congregations to identify and break down barriers that prevent full participation in church life.
5. To Shepherd Each New Generation: Identify quality resources and provide guidance to congregations for reaching, developing and ministering to persons in each new generation.
6. To Press on Together: Increase knowledge, skill, and participation for disciple-making through regular contact, support for each other, and regular training opportunities.
7. To Partner Ecumenically: Equip congregations to develop sister church relationships with neighboring churches and develop justice and mercy ministries.