



## Reformed Partnership Fund Criteria

### Introduction

Through the Reformed Partnership Fund (RPF) the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) provides small grants to member churches and endorsed organizations to implement strategically impactful, mission-related projects important to the life of a church and its surrounding community, particularly in the Global South. The WCRC also maintains an Emergency Fund, to which member churches may apply when needing assistance for disaster relief. These grants are intended to strengthen the ties of member churches to the WCRC, as well as meet strategic objectives of both the member church and the Communion as a whole.

### History

The Partnership Fund is an important aspect of the WCRC's commitment to mission. It is rooted in the understanding of the Communion as a family of interdependent churches: "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

Its name reflects the ecumenical principle of resource-sharing: "working towards self-reliance and self-determination; committing ourselves to a common discipline of sharing among God's people; participating in the decision-making process between north and south; and promoting through words and deeds the holistic mission of the church." It is a people-centred fund, giving preference to human resource development. Grants are awarded to projects supported by WCRC member churches.

The Partnership Fund was created at the 22nd General Council (Seoul 1989) of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, a predecessor organization of the WCRC. In 1990, after the collapse of communism throughout central and eastern Europe, the Executive Committee launched a separate fund to help churches in that region strengthen and rebuild their life. In 1997, the General Council in Debrecen approved the merger of the two funds, so that the Partnership Fund now serves the four-fifths of WCRC churches that are located in the southern hemisphere and in central, eastern and southern Europe. Half of these churches are not members of the World Council of Churches, mostly because they are too small to be eligible, and have no access to its interchurch aid programmes.

The main source of financial support for the Partnership Fund is through the Waldensian Church's *Otto per Mille* fund and a special grant from the Church of Westphalia (Germany), although donations from WCRC member churches, partnership organizations and individuals are periodically received and always welcome.

### Overview

Beneficiaries are member churches and regional councils of the WCRC located in the Global South. Applications for projects have to comply with certain criteria (see below) and be approved by the RPF Committee which meets annually in May. Applications for emergency response are approved by the WCRC General Secretary on an as-needed basis.

Purposes of projects include communications, community development, human rights, leadership development and theological reflection.

Grant applications for projects must fall between 5000 and 25000 euro to be considered for funding; emergency funding is set at a maximum of 7500 euro.

Funding is possible bi-annually if previous projects have been formally closed, although the RPF Committee has indicated a preference to favour applicants who have not received funds recently. Formally closing a project includes comprehensive financial receipts, a narrative report and an audited financial report.

The RPF is supervised by the Executive Secretary for Communion and Theology, with administrative coordination from the Executive Secretary for Communications and Operations. The daily work is done by the administrative assistant for the RPF.

## **Criteria and General Requirements**

### **Who may apply**

- WCRC member churches
- Groupings of member churches
- WCRC regional councils
- Organizations located in the Global South (OECD DAC criteria) affiliated with and endorsed by WCRC members
- WCRC networks or programme offices

### **Types of projects considered**

- *Communications*: publication and distribution of books, informational materials or other printed resources; development, production and distribution of audio and/or video programs; creation of websites and/or social media campaigns
- *Community Development*: a project that supports or promotes self-help for socio-economically disadvantaged groups or improves their living conditions; a building project that improves living conditions for disadvantaged people
- *Emergency Relief*: a project that provides immediate relief supplies or support for natural or human-made disasters
- *Human Rights*: a project that empowers or heightens awareness of minority group(s); a project that empowers women or heightens awareness of gender inequalities; a project that empowers Indigenous people or heightens awareness of discrimination
- *Leadership Development*: a project that trains or empowers people (especially young, female or minorities) for a specific purpose; a project to promote peace, justice and/or reconciliation within a specific context; a project to enhance effectiveness of church leaders in a difficult or hostile context
- *Theological Reflection*: a project that strengthens the witness of a member church; a project that provides leadership development or training for church leaders (both lay and ordained); a project that promotes cooperation among member churches; a project that assists member church(es) to increase their knowledge of the Reformed tradition and its application in their witness today

### **Grant types and amounts**

- Emergency grants will be funded up to 7500 euro
- Regular project grants must be no less than 5000 and no greater than 25000 euro
- For regular projects a local financial contribution of 20% is expected
- Total costs for projects may exceed the amount requested

### **Application needs**

- The application form with all included information:
  - Member church information, as well as specific project coordinator(s)
  - Written narrative description of the project including measurable objectives
  - Duration of project (projects must be completed within a year), including start date
  - Statement of how applicant will monitor executive of project (internal controls)

- Commitment to meet reporting requirements
- An independent auditing firm (for projects at and above 20000 euro)
- A detailed financial budget (using the budget form), including other sources of funding
- If the applicant belongs to an organization that is not a member of the WCRC, an endorsement letter from a member church

#### **When to apply**

- Emergency grants may be applied for at any point during the year
- Applications for regular projects will be accepted annually for a set period of time, typically January-March, with an announced set deadline; late applications will not be considered until the next funding cycle
- Applications will be considered by the RPF Committee at its annual meeting in May; applicants will be notified shortly thereafter
- Only one application from a member church will be considered every other year (does not apply to emergencies)

#### **Reporting requirements**

- If awarded a grant, the applicant will sign a contract that sets out all reporting requirements:
  - Narrative report (with images, if possible) utilizing provided template
  - Measurement of objectives (or plan to do so)
  - Financial report utilizing provided template, including:
    - Bank statements
    - Currency exchange rate(s)
    - Invoices and receipts
    - Internal or (if required) external audit
- All reporting must be completed within two months of the completion of the project (outside of any longer term measurement of objectives)