



Louisville  
Institute

## 2026 Pastoral Study Project Application Guide

The Louisville Institute Pastoral Study Project Grant (PSP) **supports individual and collaborative study projects** on Christian life, religious practices and institutions, and possibilities for the church, our communities, and the wider world. Grants are awarded to skilled and innovative clergy, lay leaders, and staff working in diverse Christian contexts in North America.

### GRANT DETAILS

**Grant Amount:**

Up to US\$20,000

**Project Timeframe:**

January 1, 2026–June 30, 2027

**Application Due Date:**

August 15, 2025  
(11:59 p.m. ET)

**Awards Announced:**

November 2025

**PSP Consultation:**

February 2026



**QUESTIONS?** Please email [grants@louisville-institute.org](mailto:grants@louisville-institute.org).

**APPLY ONLINE: [WWW.LOUISVILLE-INSTITUTE.ORG](http://WWW.LOUISVILLE-INSTITUTE.ORG)**

APPLICATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 15, 2025



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## WHAT ARE THE PASTORAL STUDY PROJECT GRANTS?

Pastoral leaders have keen insight into the challenges and promises of faith, practice, and ministry, and often wish for the opportunity to engage more fully with the meaningful questions they face in their ministries. Our Pastoral Study Project grants give them that chance: financial support of up to US\$20,000 provides time and resources to think, research, ask, learn, study, and reflect about a big idea they've been pondering — about ministry, the church, and Christian faith in our communities and the wider world. Grantees then share their research through books and other publications, blogs and websites, podcasts, digital media and film, exhibits, worship, music, public presentations, classes, and more. These projects are lifegiving for grantees and their communities, and broaden the vitality of North American Christianity.

Past projects have examined topics like aging and dementia in congregations, social justice and racism in hospital chaplaincy, theologies of online worship, spiritual practices for college students from diverse backgrounds, and trauma and resilience in Black, immigrant, and LGBTQ+ Christian communities. You can read more about previous grantees and their projects on [our website](#).

Grantees receive funds in early 2025 and conduct their projects between January 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, according to their proposed timeline. As part of the grant, PSP grantees also gather for the **Pastoral Study Project Consultation in Louisville, KY, February 2026**, to discuss and hone their plans and learn about other projects. All expenses for the consultation are covered by the Louisville Institute. Attending this event is a requirement of receiving a PSP grant.



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## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A PASTORAL STUDY PROJECT GRANT?

### Eligible Applicants:

- have received theological education, training, and/or mentoring for Christian leadership
- are employed in diverse ministry contexts in the United States and Canada

### Previous Pastoral Study Project grants have been awarded to a variety of Christian leaders, including:

- clergy
- chaplains
- church and denominational staff
- Men and Women Religious
- members of monastic communities
- non-profit and parachurch staff
- artists and musicians
- independent researchers and writers
- pastoral counselors
- ordained ministers not currently employed in religious settings
- others regularly working in recognized positions of pastoral leadership



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### Additional Eligibility Information

- PSP grants are not educational scholarships and cannot be used for tuition, expenses, or projects related to degree programs such as an M.Div. or a D.Min.
- Ph.D. and Th.D students are not eligible for a Pastoral Study Project grant, but may apply for one of [our fellowship programs](#).
- Faculty and administrators at institutions of higher education typically apply for [Grant for Researchers](#) rather than the Pastoral Study Project Grant. If you are in one of these positions, please email [grants@louisville-institute.org](mailto:grants@louisville-institute.org) to discuss eligibility.
- Individuals may only apply for one LI grant or fellowship between June 1, 2025, and May 31, 2026.
- Any previous fellowships or grants from the Louisville Institute must be completed and final reports submitted before applying for another LI fellowship or grant.
- Members of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary staff, faculty, Board of Trustees, or student body or their immediate family members (parents, spouses, or children), are ineligible for Louisville Institute grants or fellowships. Members of the Louisville Institute Advisory Board and their immediate family members are also ineligible to apply.
- Louisville Institute grantees may not simultaneously hold two individual grants from Lilly Endowment-funded organizations that together total more than US\$55,000. Please contact us if you have any questions about this stipulations: [grants@louisville-institute.org](mailto:grants@louisville-institute.org).



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## HOW CAN I USE PASTORAL STUDY PROJECT GRANT FUNDS?

**Pastoral Study Project Grants are intended for study and research.** For financial support of sabbaticals of rest and renewal, see [Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs](#). For projects focused on personal reflection or discernment, see the [Reflective Leadership Grant from Leadership Education at Duke Divinity School](#).

### **PSP funds *can be used for:***

- Support for time away from your regular job, such as salary replacement for unpaid time off, or for a temporary replacement or supply minister while you are on leave
- Resources related to your learning, such as books, training, or consultations
- Tools to facilitate your study, like library access, a recording device, or software or transcription programs
- Travel directly related to your project and its investigation, such as to access archives, museums, or libraries, or for experiences connected to your project (e.g., historical settings, site visits, worship events, or trainings). If you propose travel, you must be specific about the purpose and outcomes of the travel, including locations, dates, and intended activities, and why these are intrinsic to the project. See the budget section for more details.
- Childcare or other family support you need to undertake your project
- Compensation for research participants and partners, interviewees, focus groups, research assistants, and others who work on the project with you

### **PSP funds *cannot be used for:***

- Your regular salary to continue your current job or an existing ministry
- New programs or staff positions at your church or organization
- Payment to “experts” to do research for you
- Expenses in pursuit of a degree (M.Div., D.Min, Ph.D., etc.)
- Tools for your everyday work, such as an office chair, desktop computer, or cell phone



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## HOW DO I APPLY?

- Specific requirements of the application are described starting on [page 10](#). We ask you to tell us about yourself, describe your proposed project, provide a detailed budget, and receive affirmation from your colleagues and community.
- All applications elements are submitted online through our [application portal](#).
- Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. ET on August 15, 2025. And letters of recommendations are **due from the recommenders** by August 20, 2025.

## WHAT MAKES FOR A STRONG APPLICATION?

- Strong applications offer a clear and intriguing core question and a thoughtful research plan related to that question. Our selection committees want to know what makes you passionate and excited about your idea, and how you intend to dig into it.
- The most engaging projects are deeply connected to the lives of North American Christians and the significant questions on their hearts and minds.
- We strongly encourage you to share your proposal with trusted colleagues — ideally those who will write your recommendation letters — to receive feedback and suggestions prior to submitting your application.



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## CAN I APPLY WITH A TEAM OF PEOPLE?

- Yes, up to three people can apply for a grant together *as appropriate for the project*.
- Teams must designate a project director who will fill out the application and upload shared materials on behalf of the team, and whose congregation or organization will receive and distribute the grant funds. The Louisville Institute does not divide grants among team members or organizations.
- Each team member should have significant and necessary roles in the planning and implementation of the project. Consultants, advisors, or other resource persons should not be listed as team members.
- All team members must be named at the time of application. Team members cannot be added after applications are submitted.
- The total grant amount requested by a team cannot exceed US\$20,000.
- See [page 11](#) for instructions on HOW to submit an application as a team.
- If you have questions about whether or not you should apply as a team, please contact us at [grants@louisville-institute.org](mailto:grants@louisville-institute.org).

## WHAT IS THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR PSP GRANTS?

- The Louisville Institute appoints a selection committee to review proposals and award Pastoral Study Project grants. The selection committee meets about 8–10 weeks after the application due date. All applicants are notified by email as soon as possible after the selection process.
- We usually receive around 100 PSP applications each year, and plan to award 25 grants in 2026.
- Awards will be announced publicly in November 2025



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## WHAT IS THE PASTORAL STUDY PROJECT CONSULTATION?

**The Pastoral Study Project Consultation** is an annual event held in Louisville, Kentucky, for that year's PSP grantees. Grantees gather at the beginning of their grant period to learn from others, discuss and hone their projects, and imagine and discover new resources and possibilities. Grantees this cycle will attend the **PSP Consultation February 2026**. All travel, housing, and other expenses to participate in the gathering are covered by the Louisville Institute. Attending this event is a requirement of receiving a PSP grant.

## WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

- You are welcome to apply again for any of our grants or fellowships in subsequent years — in fact, it's very common! However, you may only apply for one grant or fellowship between June 1, 2025, and May 31, 2026.
- Any previous fellowships or grants from the Louisville Institute must be completed and final reports submitted before applying for another LI fellowship or grant.



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## HOW CAN I ASK FOR FEEDBACK ON MY PROJECT?

We are happy to provide initial feedback on your project idea. Being specific and focused about your project will yield more helpful feedback from us. Before you submit a feedback request, please run your idea by trusted colleagues and possible participants to get their thoughts.

To request feedback, use [this link](#) to respond to the following questions:

- What is the primary question you want to explore? (50 words or fewer)
- Why is this project important to you, your community, and/or the church in North America? (100 words or fewer)
- How are you planning to carry out your study? Give a brief overview of where and/or with whom you hope to work, the research methods you might use (e.g., archival research, interviews, surveys, observation, visits, etc.), and why you've chosen these strategies (350 words or fewer).

Please note that responses to feedback requests often take several weeks, especially as the application deadline approaches. Requests are answered in the order received, so the earlier you submit a request the earlier you will receive an answer. We will respond to all feedback requests submitted prior to July 1 but cannot guarantee responses to requests we receive after that date.

### Need help thinking through how to do research? Check out these resources on interviews, surveys, observation, and other ways to collect data!

#### Studying Congregations —

[www.studyingcongregations.org](http://www.studyingcongregations.org) — is an online resource for understanding congregations in North America. Find out more about:

- [Archives/written materials](#)
- [Institutional timelines](#)
- [Interviews and focus groups](#)
- [Observation](#)
- [Photos and videos](#)
- [Surveys](#)

#### [The USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture](#)

has created an online resource manual for studying religious communities and practices, including:

- [Choosing research sites](#)
- [Data analysis](#)
- [Ethical considerations](#)
- [Interviewing](#)
- [Objectivity](#)
- [Participant observation](#)
- [Validity](#)



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## PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

- 1** Read through all the application requirements in this guide.
- 2** Begin talking to your staff or organization leaders about the possibility of a PSP grant early in the application process so that you can plan together for considerations to complete your project. Your organization will need to provide affirmation of support for your project.
- 3** Create an online profile on our [application portal](#). You will be asked to provide your name, contact information, and other information about yourself. If you have previously applied for a Louisville Institute program, make sure to update your contact information.
- 4** Once you have created your profile, **click the “Apply” button and select “Pastoral Study Project”** to begin entering the elements of your application.
- 5** **Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. ET August 15, 2025.** We recommend that you put together the application elements in time to share them with friends or colleagues for feedback before submitting them. Please do your best to provide clear, refined, and edited documents, noting which elements should be submitted as PDFs.
- 6** **Recommendation letters are due from the recommenders August 20, 2025.** In the application portal you will be asked to provide contact information for your recommenders — name, email address, and phone number — and we will send them a link to upload their letters.



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## HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION AS A TEAM (IF APPLICABLE)

### Reminders about team stipulations (see [page 7](#)):

- Team may include up to three members, including the project director.
- All team members must be named in the application and cannot be added after applications are submitted.
- Team members should share equally in carrying out the project.
- The total grant amount a team may request cannot exceed US\$20,000.
- If you have questions about whether or not you should apply as a team, please contact us at [grants@louisville-institute.org](mailto:grants@louisville-institute.org).

### How to apply as a team:

- The director fills out the application, and uploads shared materials (narrative, budget, etc.) on behalf of the team.
- To add team members, the project director will select “Manage Team” in the application portal to add the email address of each additional team member.
- Each team member will receive an email to create a profile and join the team.
- Once connected to the application, each team member will use the portal to submit the following for themselves:
  - CV/resume
  - context of ministry statement
  - contact information for a colleague letter of recommendation.



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## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

**Pastoral Study Project grant applications require the following elements. After you have created your online profile, you will be prompted to provide the following:**

- 1 General information about your project.** Fill in the title of your project, the proposed amount in US dollars, and start and end dates. Then complete the following:
  - a. **Project Core question.** In a few sentences (about 100 words/ maximum 500 characters and spaces), describe the primary question you want to explore and why it is important to you, your community, and/or the church in North America.
  - b. **Project Summary/Abstract.** In approximately 200 words (maximum 2000 characters and spaces), give a brief overview of your project. Strong summaries are focused, well-articulated glimpses into your thinking that help our selection committee envision the project and your capacity to carry it out. Think of it like preaching a one-minute sermon: hit the important points with passion!
  - c. **Project Snapshot.** In one sentence, give an intriguing, quotable “snapshot” of your project for use on our website and in publicity materials.
  - d. **Proposal keyword tags.** Select 3-5 keyword tags that describe your project. Begin typing to select or type to enter a new word.
- 2 Project Essay.** Prepare an essay of about 1500 words (5-7 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) that tells the story of your project. Include your name and page numbers on each page of the document, and upload to the application as a PDF.

**In the essay, please include:**

- a. The primary question you want to explore, and how you came to care about that question. Why does this project matter to you, your community, and the larger North American church?
- b. The importance of your project, how it connects or bridges the academy and the church, and why you are well placed to carry it out. In other words, why should the *Louisville Institute* fund your project at *this time*?

*(Continued on the next page)*



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## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- c. A comprehensive project plan, including the following as applicable to your project:
- *Methods and approaches:* What research methods will you use, and why? How many people will you interview/survey, and how will they be selected? Make sure to explain why the methods and parameters make sense for your project. Even if details are not fully finalized, we want to see that you've thought through the "how" of your project. Note: If you plan to travel, your travel must be specific and relevant to the study you hope to conduct. Why are you traveling to a particular location? Who or what do you hope to engage while you are there? Why is travel necessary for your project? The most competitive projects are clear and detailed about travel plans and their specific purpose.
  - *Partners:* Who do you hope will be involved? How will you determine your partners/participants? How will you build those relationships? How will you compensate participants and partners?
  - *Analysis:* How will you analyze the data you collect? What measurements or assessments will you use? How will you frame and make sense of what you've collected or discovered?
  - *Remember that if you are applying as a team, you need to describe the roles of each of the team members.*
- d. Your project's intended impact:
- Who is the intended audience for the project? Who do you hope will benefit from it?
  - How will you share what you learn and discover? (Examples: published writing, a podcast, an adult education series, an art display, a community event, etc.)
  - What impact do you hope your project will have on your community or the larger church and world?

(continued on the next page)



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## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

e. A timeline and schedule for the project:

- Projects need to be conducted between January 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027.
- Include information about how you will make time to conduct your project: taking a month leave from your job, setting aside hours per day or a day each week for several months, etc. If you are currently working less than full time, you will still need to describe how you will make time for the project. Remember that our grants are designed for you to take time away from responsibilities in order to conduct your project, not to simply add the project to your existing responsibilities.

**3 Bibliography or Resource List.** A typical bibliography is a list of books, articles, and other media you want to study as part of your project. For PSP grants, you may create a traditional bibliography or a broad list of resources that will inform your study, such as:

- written resources (books, articles, etc.)
- radio broadcasts, podcasts, or TV shows
- music or art
- museums or historical sites
- records or archives
- partner organizations



List bibliographic/resource materials in alphabetical order by author like this:

- Books: Author Last Name, First Name. Book Title: Subtitle. Edition. Place of publication: Publisher, Year. DOI/ URL.
- Book chapter: Author Last Name, First Name. "Chapter Title." In Book Title: Subtitle, edited by Editor First Name Last Name, page range. Place of publication: Publisher, Year. DOI/URL.
- Journal or magazine article: Author Last Name, First Name. "Article Title." Journal Name Volume, no. Issue (Month Year): Page range. DOI/ URL.
- Website: Author Last Name, First Name. "Page Title." Website Name. Month Day, Year. URL.

[More citation examples can be found here.](#)



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## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- 4 Budget plan.** Tell us how you plan to use the grant money by providing two versions of your budget: **a line-item budget** in which you list your anticipated expenses, and a **budget narrative** in which you describe in more detail how each expense will contribute to the objectives of the project. Budgets are described in detail starting on [page 18](#).
- 5 Curriculum vitae or resume.** Provide a current CV or resume of **no more than 4 pages** including (but not limited to):
  - your education with dates attended and degrees earned, starting with the most recent
  - employment starting with current/most recent
  - publications and/or presentations
  - professional affiliations
  - other information that will help the selection committee get to know you, such as academic or other service, church leadership, etc.
- 6 Overview of your ministry context.** In about 500 words (2 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font), provide a short description of your congregation, organization, or ministry, and describe your leadership role.



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## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- 7** **Two letters of recommendation, due from recommenders on August 8.** In the online application portal, you will be asked to provide contact information (name, email address, and phone number) for your recommenders, and they will be sent a link by email through which they can upload letters. As soon as you submit contact information, your recommender will automatically receive that email. Make sure to contact your recommenders in advance to explain the PSP grant and to share your project proposal.
- a. **Your first recommendation letter** should come from a **ministry colleague** within or outside your congregation or organization who can describe:
- the gifts and skills you bring to the project and why the Louisville Institute should award you a grant
  - your ability to coordinate and conduct the study and the relevant experiences or background you bring
  - the larger impact of the project for the church in North America.
- b. Your **second recommendation letter** should come from someone who can assess the **feasibility and significance of your project**, specifically:
- the viability and potential of your project and its plan
  - the project's broader academic and/or ecclesial significance
  - the distinctiveness of this project in light of what others are doing or have already done
  - why this proposed project matters, how you are well-suited to undertake it, and why this study has relevance for North American Christianity.

*We will notify you via email when we receive the letters from your recommenders.*



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- 8 Affirmation of Support *due from ministry representative August 8.*** Please identify an appropriate church or ministry representative or supervisor (head of staff, colleague, board chair, bishop, team leader, etc.) who can verify that you will be given the necessary flexibility and/or time off to conduct your project.

When you provide contact information for the representative, we will send the person a link to an online form to complete. We will notify you when we receive the completed form. If you are self-employed or for some other reason do not require institutional affirmation to conduct your project, please enter your own contact information, and complete the form yourself.

## COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

You can edit all portions of your application until 11:59 p.m. ET August 1, 2025. Changes cannot be made after the application due date. Letters of recommendation are *due **from the recommenders** August 20, 2025*. Late applications will not be accepted.

In the weeks following the application due date, LI staff will process the applications to prepare for the selection committee. We will follow up with you if your application is incomplete. We will also send you confirmation when we receive your letters of recommendation and your letter of release, and will email you when your application is complete.



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## PREPARING YOUR BUDGET PROPOSAL

The PSP budget proposal shows the nuts and bolts of your project — how you will use grant funding to bring your idea to life. Your budget proposal should help the selection committee understand some of the specifics of your project and what it entails.

There are two parts to your budget proposal:

- A line-item budget (see [page 22](#))
- A budget narrative (see [page 24](#))

In short, your line-item budget is a list of categories of expenses for your project and a dollar figure for each category. The budget narrative briefly explains each category and how it is relevant to the project. The line-item and budget narratives are described below. Most budget proposals are 2–3 pages total. Save the budget document as a single PDF with your name on each page.



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## BUDGET GUIDELINES

### PSP funds can be used for:

- **Support for time away** from your regular job, such as salary replacement for unpaid time off, or for a temporary replacement or supply minister while you are on leave
- **Resources** related to your learning, such as books, training, or consultations
- **Tools** to facilitate your study, like library access, a recording device, or software or transcription programs
- **Travel** directly related to your project and its investigation, such as to access archives, museums, or libraries, or for experiences connected to your project (e.g., historical settings, site visits, worship events, or trainings). ***If you propose travel, you must be specific about the purpose and outcomes of the travel, including locations, dates, and intended activities, and why these are intrinsic to the project.***
- **Childcare** or other family support you need to undertake your project
- **Compensation** for research participants and partners, interviewees, focus groups, research assistants, and others who work on the project with you

### PSP funds *cannot* be used for:

- Your regular salary to continue your current job
- New programs or staff positions at your church or organization
- Payment to “experts” to do research for you
- Expenses in pursuit of a degree (M.Div., D.Min., Ph.D., etc.)
- Tools for your everyday work, such as an office chair, desktop computer, or cell phone



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**APPLICATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 15, 2025**



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## COMMON BUDGET ITEMS

Below are examples of common budget items. This is not an exhaustive list, so please create a budget and categories that align with your project.

- **Personnel:**

- *Salary replacement:* salary or wages used to compensate the grantee and any project team members taking unpaid leave to conduct the project. If you are currently working less than full time and will not be taking time off to conduct your project, please describe this in your application essay and the budget narrative. Anyone receiving salary replacement should be named in the budget narrative.
- *Temporary/supply ministers or employees:* stipends for supply ministers or other employees who will fill in for the grantee while they conduct the project.
- *Fringe benefits:* the amount your organization charges for benefits such as health insurance and retirement savings. This is typically a percentage of the overall compensation amount. If rates are different for different individuals, please include a summary of these amounts in the narrative budget. Sample fringe benefits table:

| Sample Table     | Salary  | Fringe Rate | Total   |
|------------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Project Director | \$8,000 | 25%         | \$2,000 |
| Admin. Assistant | \$1,000 | 20%         | \$200   |
| TOTAL            |         |             | \$2,200 |

- **Administrative costs:** expenses directly related to performing the proposed grant project, such as supplies, printing, postage, Zoom or conference software, etc. Generally, such items can be grouped under one category in the line-item budget but should be explained individually in the budget narrative. However, any significant single expense should be listed as a separate line item.
- **Books and resources:** print, digital, and/or media materials that foster your learning. Specific titles do not need to be included in the budget proposal.
- **Gatherings or events:** can include bringing people together for topic discussion or as a focus group, brainstorming or wisdom-gathering in community, sharing your research, etc.
- **Participant compensation:** gift cards, stipends, meals, or other compensation for participants in your project, such those being interviewed or completing a survey.



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## COMMON BUDGET ITEMS

- **Travel expenses:** can include flights, mileage, public transit, ride shares, etc., as well as accommodations, food, and other likely expenses.  
***Please note: travel plans should be well articulated, clear, and relevant to the project. Travel to a generic location for non-specific observation or general engagement with local communities is insufficient for a grant proposal; be specific not only about where you will travel and when, but why that particular location, who you will meet with or what you will visit while there, and why it is necessary for your research.***  
Travel expenses should be based on your organization's standard travel policies, including per diem amounts. Document your calculations and estimates, and explain in your narrative essay how the travel is intrinsic to the project. PSP funds should not be used for vacation travel or general tourism.
- **Trainings or conferences:** attending a conference or training that is helpful to your project goals. Such events should help foster your ability to conduct research or scholarship and dig deeper into your questions, rather than being general continuing education. Note that costs associated with a degree program are not eligible expenses. List anticipated travel expenses as separate line items.
- **Contracted assistants or consultants:** compensation for transcription services, research assistance, etc. If you plan to hire project consultants, describe the purpose, expected duration, and rate for the consultant's work. When you hire consultants, initiate and retain for your files a contract that includes the following:
  - consultant's name, address, and social security number
  - beginning and ending dates of engagement, and estimated number of consulting hours to complete the project
  - description of work to be performed, reports written, etc.
  - hourly rate and method of payment for work performed
  - description of any special arrangements such as hiring of secretarial/clerical assistance, renting of office space or equipment, overhead expenses, etc.
  - a termination statement noting time requirement and obligations for payment
- **Miscellaneous costs:** items that are not easily included in another category, but may be necessary to conduct the project.



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## LINE-ITEM BUDGET

Your line-item budget is a table of categories in which you anticipate money being spent for your project (see sample categories above), and the anticipated costs of each. The total of these line items should equal the amount you are requesting for the grant. If you are in Canada, you may put together your line-item budget and budget narrative in Canadian dollars, but please indicate the exchange rate and show that the final amount is equal to or less than US\$20,000.

Create a table or spreadsheet that includes your proposed budget items. If grant funds will be spent over two years, include columns and amounts for each year, as well as the total amount for the two years combined. See sample budgets below.

### SAMPLE BUDGET #1: Applicant Name, Project Title, Proposed Budget

|  | 2026            | 2027           | TOTAL           |
|--|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Personnel</b>                           |                 |                |                 |
| Salary replacement                         | \$8,100         | \$8,100        | \$16,200        |
| (3 months @ \$2,700 per mo)                |                 |                |                 |
| <b>Research Costs</b>                      |                 |                |                 |
| Books & Reference Materials                | \$500           | \$500          | \$1,000         |
| Telephone, Zoom, mailing, copies, supplies | \$500           | \$500          | \$1,000         |
| Travel & Lodging                           | \$1,000         | \$800          | \$1,800         |
| <b>TOTAL REQUESTED</b>                     | <b>\$10,100</b> | <b>\$9,900</b> | <b>\$20,000</b> |



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## PASTORAL STUDY PROJECT GRANT

PLAN  
YOUR  
BUDGET

### SAMPLE BUDGET #2: Applicant Name, Project Title, Proposed Budget

|   | 2026               | 2027              | TOTAL              |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
|   |                    |                   |                    |
| <b>Release time: hiring of supply minister</b>  | \$2,500.00         | \$2,500.00        | \$5,000.00         |
|   |                    |                   |                    |
| <b>Travel</b>   |                    |                   |                    |
| Denver trip – Fall 2025 & Spring 2026<br>(2 days each trip)   |                    |                   |                    |
| Airfare   | \$500.00           | \$500.00          | \$1,000.00         |
| Ground transportation - car rental  | \$300.00           | \$300.00          | \$600.00           |
| Meals for two days  | \$150.00           | \$150.00          | \$300.00           |
| Hotel accommodations (2 nights)   | \$300.00           | \$300.00          | \$600.00           |
| <b>Personnel &amp; Supplies</b>   |                    |                   |                    |
| Summer Salary: calculated by dividing 10<br>mos. contract by 10 to obtain per month<br>salary, multiplying by 2 mos. which will be<br>spent finishing project | \$9,000.00         | \$0.00            | \$9,000.00         |
| Participant Compensations:<br>15 gift cards @ \$30 each   | \$450.00           | \$0.00            | \$450.00           |
| Fringe Benefits on summer salary  | \$1,500.00         | \$0.00            | \$1,500.00         |
| Transcription assistance<br>(40 hrs @ \$15 an hour)   | \$0.00             | \$600.00          | \$600.00           |
| Books   | \$400.00           | \$200.00          | \$600.00           |
|   |                    |                   |                    |
| <b>TOTAL REQUESTED</b>  | <b>\$15,100.00</b> | <b>\$4,550.00</b> | <b>\$19,650.00</b> |



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## BUDGET NARRATIVE

The budget narrative is essentially a series of sentences or paragraphs that illustrate your budget proposal. The budget narrative gives explanations for the items in your budget and enables us to understand your proposal fully.

To create a budget narrative, list all the items in your line-item budget, and provide a brief description of and rationale for each. Specifically include:

- the budget item
- how it helps accomplish the project
- how you calculated the amount requested

### Budget narrative examples:

- **Item 1: Pulpit supply, \$1200.** In order to complete my project, I anticipate needing to be gone from my church for four Sundays, and we pay guest preachers \$300/Sunday
- **Item 2: Participant compensation, \$250.** I plan to conduct five 1-hour long interviews, and will provide \$50 gift cards for each participant.

## FINAL NOTES ON PREPARING YOUR BUDGET

Selection committees are often attentive to issues of fairness, justice, and equity when examining budgets. Consider how you might compensate assistants, interviewees, consultants, etc., as you prepare your budget. Some proposals include hourly wages or stipends for participants; others offer gift cards, meals, or other small tokens of gratitude. Though many of us who work in church settings often depend on volunteers, PSP projects should not assume the free labor of others.

During the proposal review process, the PSP selection committee occasionally has questions about particular budget items and decides to award a grant conditionally pending budget revision. If this is the case, we will be in contact with you.

A PSP grant may be payable to a church/host institution or directly to the individual grantee. For teams, the grant may be payable to the project director or the project director's institution. Because recipients of Institute grants may be liable for income taxes on funds awarded, PSP grantees often find it more convenient to have their grants made payable to a tax-exempt nonprofit organization with a 501(c)(3) status. The Institute does not provide advice on tax matters; we advise grantees to consult their own tax advisors to determine the tax consequences of receiving grant funds.



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## WHO WE ARE

Funded by the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment, Inc., the [Louisville Institute](#) bridges Church and academy by awarding grants and fellowships to those who lead and study North American religious institutions, practices, and movements, and thereby promoting scholarship that strengthens Church, academy, and society, and ultimately contributes to the flourishing of the Church. To find out more:

[Grants](#)

[Fellowships](#)

The Institute's [Advisory Board](#) shapes mission and direction, helps review and approve grant and fellowship proposals, and evaluates initiatives and programs. Our [staff](#) guides the Institute's work on a daily basis from our offices on the campus of [Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary](#).



The [Religion Division of Lilly Endowment](#) names as a primary aim of its grantmaking "to deepen and enrich the lives of Christians in the United States, primarily by seeking out and supporting efforts that enhance the vitality of congregations and strengthen the pastoral and lay leadership of Christian communities. The Endowment also seeks to improve public understanding of diverse religious traditions by supporting fair and accurate portrayals of the role religion plays in the United States and across the globe."



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## WHO WE ARE

### 2026-2028 PRIORITIES

The Louisville Institute supports cutting-edge and visionary research that is significant to the North American church in all its diversity and richness. As the academy and the Christian church imagine the future at the quarter mark of the 21st century, the Louisville Institute seeks to contribute in particular ways to that future, specifically by:

- **Cultivating repair** through projects and ideas that address social injustice, trauma and healing, historical harms, restoration and reconciliation, relationships of trust, and interdependence and interconnectedness.
- **Building collaborative learning communities** that cultivate relational, supportive, and non-competitive research communities, the participatory inclusion of unheard or underrepresented voices, and gatherings of pastors and scholars for mutual learning and collaboration that strengthens and enriches wisdom and discovery.
- **Supporting purposeful risk-taking** that asks questions in new ways, brings together unconventional ideas or concepts, shows courage and ingenuity in the face of an unknown future, and combines grounded thinking with strategic purpose and lively imagination.

**For more information about the Louisville Institute, contact us:**

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