

## The Future Church Project

*A Grant Opportunity of the Program for the Future Church*

*Funded by Lilly Endowment Inc.*

### GRANTS FOR RESEARCH RELATED TO THE FUTURE CHURCH

The [Program for the Future Church](#) (PFFC) at George W. Truett Theological Seminary is soliciting **letters of inquiry** to fund research projects for faculty of any rank or academic staff in a full-time research position with a PhD/ThD at Baylor University to undertake interdisciplinary research on the pressing challenges that confront local communities of faith and those who lead them.

The PFFC organizes its efforts around four pillars:

1. **Leadership:** The PFFC cultivates collaborative, imaginative, adaptive, resilient, shared leadership with specific attention to women in leadership.
2. **Youth and Emerging Adults:** The PFFC nurtures understanding of the cultures, contexts, issues, questions, and illuminations of the next generation.
3. **Pedagogy:** The PFFC supports best practices in teaching and learning, helping ministry leaders to develop participatory, creative, story-driven, dialogical, holistic, hybrid learning communities.
4. **Lived Experience:** The PFFC fosters sacred space, faithful presence, and compassionate witness in relation to the lives of people of faith. Grounded in lived experience, the PFFC's research, scholarship, and programs will explore: mental and spiritual health in an integrated way, critical aspects of attending to suffering, individual and collective responses to crises, character and virtue development, best practices in promoting equity and justice, and nurturing respectful dialogue across lines of difference. The PFFC will also investigate essential elements of human flourishing such as meaning, love, peace, hope, joy, and belonging.

The PFFC intends to provide catalytic funding through grants of up to \$10,000 to support research and related expenses. Although projects requesting funding beyond this level will still be considered, applicants should provide a clear and compelling case for the catalytic impact of work beyond this level.

### ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must have a doctorate and be in or contracted to a faculty or full-time research position at Baylor University before the proposed project start date. All full-time faculty of any rank or academic staff in a full-time research position at Baylor University are eligible. The PFFC will fund up to ten projects over the course of five years.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Successful applicants must be willing to commit to the following *for their actual project*:

1. One major output related to the research such as submission of one article to a top-tier, peer-reviewed journal in their field; submission of one popular article to a publication that reaches practitioners who work in churches (e.g., *The Baptist Standard*, *Christianity Today*); presentation at a conference (academic or with an audience of practitioners who work in churches); an event that brings together practitioners who work in churches and/or community leaders; or other approved output. Please follow these guidelines for your research outputs:
  - a. If an output does not fall into the categories suggested above, please email the PFFC with other ideas before submission.
  - b. Send a copy of published or completed article manuscript/syllabus/event outline (title, audience, objectives, schedule) etc. to the PFFC at [pffc@baylor.edu](mailto:pffc@baylor.edu).
  - c. For any published work, please acknowledge funding from the PFFC.
2. Submit yearly or mid-point progress report(s), if applicable, and final progress and expenditure reports. The final progress report should not exceed 5 pages, and should detail the outcomes of the funded project. Reports must be submitted at the conclusion of the project (no later than October 2026).
3. Consent to have their project featured on the Program for the Future Church's website and media communications, including, but not limited to, the PFFC's *Future Church Fieldnotes* newsletter and social media.
4. Follow stipulations of grant award as communicated by Lilly Endowment either to Baylor or to the recipients directly, and as determined by the Program for the Future Church.

## REVIEW PROCESS

Letters of inquiry will be reviewed by an external review panel in conjunction with the PFFC.

*Selection criteria will include:*

1. Relevance of the project to the key topics (identifying pressing or emerging challenges and piloting solutions facing the future church) and pillars of the Program for the Future Church
2. Originality and chance of success of the intended project
3. Resonance with [the organizing values](#) of the Program for the Future Church

Successful projects will be those that contribute most directly to the PFFC's broad research agenda, show promise of producing helpful results, and have the capacity to stimulate further reflection on and discussion of the future church in one or more scholarly fields.

## ◆ LETTER OF INQUIRY INSTRUCTIONS

*Applicants should prepare:*

1. A cover letter of no more than 1 page with the title, grant amount requested, duration of the project (not to exceed two years), and team members (if applicable).
2. A brief abstract of the proposed work of no more than 150 words.
3. A narrative description of the work to be conducted, not to exceed 1,250 words (excluding references). The description should explain the central question(s) or aims of the project, the background and significance of the questions or aims, the way in which the project addresses the subject(s) and at least one of the pillars posed above, a summary of the main idea or argument, and plans for the dissemination of the research output.
4. A preliminary project budget. If invited to submit a full proposal, applicants will work with their URA to develop the complete budget for their project.
5. A project summary of up to 250 words that explains the project and its significance to non-academics for publicity purposes.
6. A timeline for the proposed work.

***\*\*\*If the project is accepted, it will move on to the next stage, the proposal phase, which will include all of the requested items in the letter of inquiry plus a complete CV, budget approval process, and written approval by department chair and university signing officials.***

## ◆ SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Please submit your LOI by **June 1, 2023** in order to receive consideration for this round. The first round of funding decisions will be made by **August 1, 2023**.

## ◆ SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- Letters of inquiry should be submitted by email attachment as a single PDF (and in the order listed above) to [pffc@baylor.edu](mailto:pffc@baylor.edu).
- The following words should appear in the subject line: “Future Church Letter of Inquiry 2023.”
- The only acceptable file format is PDF. An acknowledgment email will be sent within seven days of receiving your full proposal.

You can follow the outcomes of these projects and learn about future funding opportunities by subscribing to our monthly newsletter, [Future Church Fieldnotes](#), or contacting the PFFC directly at [pffc@baylor.edu](mailto:pffc@baylor.edu).