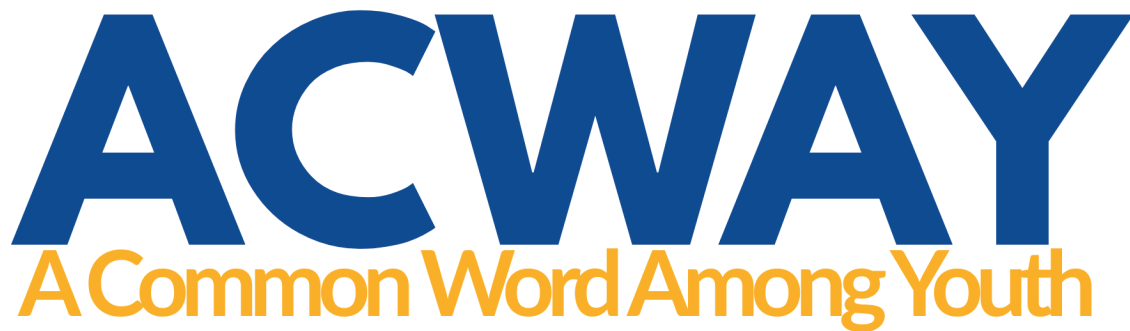




ACWAY Fellows Seed Funding: Application Guidelines

Last updated: 14 October 2026

Please read these guidelines carefully before applying.

These guidelines explain the eligibility requirements, funding conditions, application process, selection criteria, and responsibilities associated with the ACWAY Fellows Seed Funding Programme.

If you have a question that is not answered in this document, please contact the ACWAY Seed Funding Team - admin@acway.org

1. About the Seed Funding Programme

ACWAY, supported by the [Fondation Pierre et Laura Zurcher](#), is pleased to announce the launch of our Seed Funding Programme. This programme is an opportunity to support Fellows to take their ideas, skills, and connections developed through ACWAY and put them into action in their community.

The programme aims to:

- Support Fellows to translate learning and ideas into practical community action
- Encourage continued engagement with ACWAY beyond Forums and other activities
- Support locally relevant initiatives addressing interfaith and community needs
- Contribute to ACWAY's Interfaith Development Goals (IDGs)
- Learn from Fellows' projects and strengthen future ACWAY programming

2. Eligibility & Selection

2.1. Who can apply

The Seed Funding Programme is open to ACWAY fellows.

Applicants must:

- Be an eligible ACWAY Fellow
- Be less than 35 years of age at the point of implementing their project (If more than 1 ACWAY Fellow is participating in your project, a minimum of 1 person needs to be younger than 35.)

2.2. Previous ACWAY project engagement

ACWAY wishes to recognise Fellows who have demonstrated continued engagement by putting their learning into practice and completing their reporting responsibilities.

Applicants who have previously implemented an ACWAY project and submitted the corresponding project report to ACWAY will receive additional consideration during the selection process.

Applicants wishing to receive this consideration should provide:

- Project title (including date of project delivery)
- Brief description of the project

ACWAY will verify this information during the application review. Previous project implementation does not guarantee funding, and all applications will be assessed against the selection criteria.

2.3. Joint applications and multiple applications

Applicants may work with other ACWAY Fellows to deliver a project. Where more than one Fellow is involved, the application should identify one lead applicant, who will be responsible for communication with ACWAY, receipt and management of the grant, financial documentation, and reporting.

2.4. How applications will be assessed

Eligible applications will be based on:

- Alignment with the [ACWAY Interfaith Development Goals](#)
- Community impact
- Feasibility within the available time and resources

- Community engagement
- Potential for sustainability or continued impact
- Value for money and reasonableness of the proposed budget in the local context
- Previous engagement with ACWAY project activities, where applicable

ACWAY may approve the full amount requested, offer a reduced amount where the project remains feasible, or decide not to fund an application.

3. Project & Funding Guidelines

3.1. Project alignment

Every proposed project must identify one primary IDG. Applicants may also identify additional IDGs to which their project contributes.

The application should clearly explain:

- The community need, challenge, or opportunity being addressed
- The project's intended participants or community
- The activities that will be delivered
- The expected outcomes
- How the project contributes to the selected IDG(s)

Projects should be locally relevant, community-focused, achievable within the implementation period, and consistent with ACWAY's values and objectives.

3.2. What types of projects can be supported?

ACWAY welcomes different types and scales of Fellow-led initiatives. Examples may include:

- Community dialogues
- Interfaith activities
- Workshops and educational activities
- Awareness campaigns
- Community engagement activities
- Other creative approaches responding to identified local needs

These examples are illustrative and do not limit the types of projects that may be proposed.

3.3. Funding available

Funding Tier	Amount	Indicative Use
Micro Grant	Up to USD 500	Small-scale activities, first-time initiatives, awareness activities, or pilots

Seed Grant	USD 500–1,000	Community workshops, dialogue activities, engagement projects, or developed pilots
Impact Grant	USD 1,000–2,000	Larger projects with greater community reach, partnerships, or potential for sustained impact

Applicants should request the amount their project genuinely needs and provide a clear and reasonable budget.

Applicants are expected to plan their budgets carefully and realistically. Any unused funds may need to be returned to ACWAY, which can involve additional administrative and international transfer procedures. Applicants are therefore strongly encouraged to request an amount that closely reflects their anticipated project expenditure.

3.4. Partnerships

Applicants may work with other ACWAY Fellows, local organisations, education institutions, community groups, faith-based organisations, civil society organisations, or other relevant community partners. Partnerships are welcome where they strengthen the project but are not required.

If one (1) ACWAY Fellow is under the age of 35, not all participating fellows need to be younger than 35.

3.5. Co-funding and own contributions

No co-funding is required.

Applicants are not required to contribute their own money or secure funding from another organisation. A project may be fully supported by the ACWAY grant or partially supported by ACWAY alongside other funding, partner contributions, or in-kind support.

If the total project cost is higher than the amount requested from ACWAY, the applicant should identify how the remaining costs will be covered in the Project Budget Template.

Example: A project may cost USD 2,500 in total while requesting USD 1,500 from ACWAY, with the remaining USD 1,000 provided through partners funding or in-kind support.

In-kind contributions may include donated venues, volunteer time, donated materials, or other non-cash support.

3.6. Eligible expenditure

Seed Funding may be used for reasonable and necessary costs directly related to the approved project, including:

- Venue hire
- Materials and supplies
- Food and refreshments connected to project activities
- Local transportation required for project implementation
- Printing and design
- Communications and promotion
- Reasonable facilitator, speaker, or specialist costs
- Other directly related costs that are clearly justified in the application\

3.7. Ineligible expenditure

Unless specifically approved by ACWAY, Seed Funding should not be used for:

- Personal purchases or expenses unrelated to the project
- Expenditure incurred before the Seed Funding Agreement is signed
- Activities outside the approved project scope
- Unexplained or unsupported cash expenditure
- Expenses for which appropriate financial documentation cannot be provided
- Activities or expenditure that breach applicable local law

If you are unsure whether a particular cost is eligible, please contact ACWAY before submitting your application.

4. Financial Guidelines

4.1. Seed Funding Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to sign an ACWAY Seed Funding Agreement before receiving any funding. The agreement will confirm the approved project activities, approved funding amount and budget, project timelines, conditions governing use of funds, financial documentation requirements, reporting requirements, communications and branding requirements, and conditions relating to changes, cancellation, and unused funds.

4.2. Payment of the grant

70% – Initial Payment

70% of the approved grant will be transferred after the Seed Funding Agreement has been signed

30% – Final Payment

The remaining 30% will be transferred following successful completion of the project and ACWAY's approval of the required narrative and financial reports.

4.3. Receiving your funding

Successful applicants are strongly encouraged to create a [Wise](#) account, where available, as this may provide a faster and more cost-effective way to receive international funding. International bank transfers may also be arranged.

Any bank charges, intermediary fees, currency conversion charges, or other transaction costs associated with receiving the grant will be deducted from the approved project funding. ACWAY will not provide additional funding to cover these charges.

Recipients are responsible for providing accurate payment information and complying with any relevant local banking, tax, or legal requirements.

4.4. Financial documentation

If you plan to purchase goods or services from street vendors, local markets, informal suppliers, or other vendors that may not normally provide receipts, please confirm before making the purchase that they can provide appropriate written proof of payment including the price per unit, number of unit, total price of payment, date, and name of vendor.

Expenses that cannot be appropriately documented may be considered ineligible. Recipients should retain all receipts and other financial documentation throughout the project.

4.5. Changes to the approved budget

Projects should be implemented in accordance with the approved budget. If circumstances require a significant change to the budget, the recipient should contact ACWAY before making the change. ACWAY will consider reasonable budget modifications on a case-by-case basis.

4.6. Unused funds

If an approved project cannot be implemented, the recipient must inform ACWAY as soon as possible. Unless ACWAY agrees otherwise due to exceptional circumstances, unused or unspent grant funds must be returned to ACWAY. ACWAY may consider project modifications, extensions, or other reasonable arrangements in exceptional circumstances.

5. Project Implementation & Reporting

5.1. Implementation period

Funded projects may begin once the Seed Funding Agreement has been signed and ACWAY has confirmed that implementation may commence. All funded projects must be completed by the 28th of February 2027.

5.2. Changes to the approved project

Projects should be implemented substantially as described in the approved application. If circumstances require a significant change to the activities, project location, target participants, budget, timeline, or overall delivery approach, the recipient should contact ACWAY as soon as possible and, where possible, before implementing the change.

5.3. Final reporting

All recipients must submit their final reports to ACWAY by the 28th of February 2027. The final submission will include:

- A short narrative report
- A financial report comparing actual expenditure against the approved budget
- Receipts, invoices, and/or other required proof of expenditure
- Photos/videos and/or other evidence of project activities, where appropriate;
- Key outcomes
- Reflections and lessons learned
- Examples of project communications and materials demonstrating the required acknowledgement and branding

Templates will be provided by ACWAY.

5.4. Final payment

The remaining 30% of the approved grant will be transferred after ACWAY has reviewed and approved the required final reporting. Incomplete reporting or unresolved financial documentation may delay the final payment.

6. Communications & Visibility

6.1. Acknowledging support

Projects supported through the Seed Funding Programme are made possible through ACWAY and the support of the Fondation Pierre et Laura Zurcher. Successful applicants will be required to appropriately acknowledge this support in communications relating to the funded project.

6.2. Logo use

Successful applicants will be required to use the ACWAY and Fondation Pierre et Laura Zurcher logos on appropriate project-related materials, including, where relevant:

- Event materials
- Posters and flyers
- Presentations
- Social media graphics
- Publications and reports
- Other communications relating to the funded project

ACWAY will provide successful applicants with the appropriate logo files and relevant branding guidance.

6.3. Photos/Videos and project evidence

Recipients may be asked to provide photographs/videos or other appropriate evidence of project activities as part of their reporting. Recipients are responsible for ensuring that appropriate consent has been obtained before sharing identifiable photographs, videos, personal stories, or other personal information with ACWAY.

7. Safeguarding, Ethics & Conduct

ACWAY-funded projects should provide a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for participants. Recipients are expected to:

- Treat participants with dignity and respect
- Promote respectful interfaith and intercultural engagement
- Avoid discrimination, harassment, hate speech, or harmful conduct
- Take responsible steps to protect the safety and wellbeing of participants
- Obtain appropriate consent for photographs, videos, or collection of person information
- Take particular care where activities involve children, young people, or vulnerable participants
- Respect participants' privacy and personal information
- Complete with applicable local laws and regulations

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Applicants may use generative AI tools to support the preparation of their application, for example for proofreading, translation, formatting, or improving the clarity of written responses.

However, the ideas, project design, proposed activities, and information provided in the application must reflect the applicants' own work and genuine intentions. Applicants remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all information submitted.

AI-generated content should not be used to fabricate information, experiences, partnerships, budgets, evidence, or other aspects of the proposed project.

8. How to Apply

Step 1 – Read the Guidelines

Read these Application Guidelines carefully and make sure your project meets the programme requirements.

Step 2 – Develop your project

Identify the community need or opportunity you want to address, your project's Primary ACWAY IDG, any additional relevant IDGs, your proposed activities, who you intend to engage, and the outcomes you hope to achieve. Download and complete the ACWAY Project Proposal Template.

Step 3 – Prepare your budget

Download and complete the ACWAY Project Budget Template. Your budget should show the full estimated cost of your project and clearly identify the amount requested from ACWAY.

Step 4 – Submit your application

Complete the online Seed Funding Application Form and upload your completed Project Proposal and Project Budget. If you would like previous project engagement to be considered during assessment, the corresponding project report must have been submitted to ACWAY before you submit your Seed Funding application.

9. Key Dates

- Mid Oct 2026 - Applications open
- Mid Nov 2026 - Application deadline
- Early–Mid Dec 2026 - Applications reviewed and successful projects announced
- Mid–End Dec 2026 - Seed Funding Agreements signed and initial 70% funding transferred
- Dec 2026 – Feb 2027 - Project implementation
- 28 Feb 2027 - Projects completed and final reports submitted to ACWAY
- Mar 2027 - Final reports reviewed and remaining 30% funding transferred
- Apr 2027 - ACWAY reports programme outcomes to the Fondation Pierre et Laura Zurcher

10. Before You Apply

- ☐ I have read these Application Guidelines.
- ☐ I meet the eligibility requirements.
- ☐ I have identified one Primary ACWAY Interfaith Development Goal.
- ☐ My project can be completed by 15 February 2027.
- ☐ I can submit the required final reporting by 28 February 2027.
- ☐ I have completed the Project Proposal Template.
- ☐ I have completed the Project Budget Template.
- ☐ I understand that all project expenditure must be appropriately documented.
- ☐ I understand the communications and branding requirements.
- ☐ If I am claiming previous project engagement, the corresponding project report has been submitted to ACWAY before this Seed Funding application.
- ☐ The information provided in my application and budget is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

11. Questions & Contact

Please read these guidelines carefully before contacting ACWAY, as your question may already be answered above.

If you cannot find the information you need or are unsure about your eligibility, proposed expenditure, or another programme requirement, please contact the ACWAY Seed Funding Team - admin@acway.org

We encourage applicants to raise questions before the application deadline, particularly where clarification may affect the design or budget of the proposed project.