GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY

CHURCH ASSISTANCE FUND | GENERAL GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

The Gila River Indian Community Church Assistance Fund is established in the annual Tribal Operating Budget to provide charitable funding to assist established Community churches with building and equipment grants that help churches fix buildings, buy equipment, and improve church facilities.

OPPORTUNITIES TO APPLY

The Gila River Indian Community Treasurer's Office will announce an application period for Community Churches to submit proposals for funding requests. The proposals that meet the application requirements will be presented to the Community Council's Government and Management Standing Committee for consideration.

ELIGIBILITY

Only established churches located within the Gila River Indian Community are eligible to apply for the Gila River Indian Community Church Assistance Fund. Grant funds are restricted to recognized Christian churches and ministries. Secular organizations and non-faith-based groups are ineligible to apply for or receive these funds.

The Gila River Indian Community will consider the following factors to determine whether an organization is considered a recognized church for fund eligibility purposes:

- Distinct legal existence:

  Separation of Liability: Owners or members are generally shielded from personal responsibility for the debts and legal actions of the entity.

  Independent Ownership: The organization holds title to bank accounts, real estate, and assets in its own name.

  Perpetual Succession: The entity continues to exist even if its leaders, directors, or members change or pass away.

  Formal Recognition: Often established through state incorporation, organization filings, or official recognition documents like an Employer Identification Number (EIN).

- Recognized creed and form of worship
- Definite and distinct ecclesiastical government

- Formal code of doctrine and discipline
- Distinct religious history
- Membership not associated with any other church or denomination
- Organization of ordained ministers
- Ordained ministers selected after completing prescribed courses of study
- Literature of its own
- Established places of worship
- Regular congregations
- Regular religious services
- Sunday schools for the religious instruction of the young
- Schools for the preparation of its members
- Any other factor or circumstance the Gila River Indian Community finds relevant

The Church must have an automated accounting system in place to manage grant payment(s).

To ensure equitable distribution of funds, this program uses a staggered eligibility cycle based on the organization's funding history.

- New applicants that have never received a grant from this fund are eligible to apply upon announcement.
- Past grantees that have received funding of $100,000 or less are eligible to reapply two years after the date of their previous award.
- Past grantees that have received funding of over $100,000 are eligible to reapply three years after the date of their previous award.
- Active grantees are ineligible to apply in a newly announced grant cycle regardless of the wait periods.

APPLICATION

Applications to the Gila River Indian Community Church Assistance Fund shall be made on the organization's letterhead and should include the following:

1. The purpose of the project
2. The project cost and how it was determined – this may include quotes, building plans, etc.
3. The project timeline
4. Community impact – How will the project improve or affect service to the Community
5. A description of the organization's internal controls including segregation of duties and authorization for check or electronic payments
6. A point of contact responsible for managing the grant funding and activities

Attachments

1. Proof of Distinct Legal Existence – EIN, Legal, Bank, or Real Estate Document in the organization's name
2. Quotes, building plans, etc.

Applications should be submitted via email to OTincoming@gric.nsn.us.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Applications to the Church Assistance Fund will be reviewed by the Office of Special Funding to determine:

1. That eligibility requirements have been met
2. That the application is complete

Complete and eligible applications will be submitted to the Government and Management Standing Committee at either their regular meeting as part of their regular agenda, or at a special meeting requested by the Office of the Treasurer. The applicant may be asked to be present at the meeting to answer any questions.

The Government and Management Standing Committee shall make one of the following determinations regarding each application reviewed:

1. Recommendation for approval of funding
2. Request that the applicant revise the application and resubmit it to the Office of Special Funding by a determined deadline
3. Decide that the application is not appropriate for funding under the Church Assistance Fund and recommend denial.

Applications recommended for approval will be forwarded to the Tribal Council for final award decision. The decision of the Community Council shall be final and not appealable

FISCAL REQUIREMENTS

Approved funds will be sent to awarded applicants via electronic payment or paper check. Disbursement options will be considered by the Office of Treasurer based on the nature, timeline, and size of the grant.

Any church receiving grant funds shall be subject to audit by the Gila River Indian Community's Internal Audit Department. Documentation to be reviewed may include but is not limited to accounting records, invoices, purchase orders, and any other necessary information to ensure appropriate use of allocated funds.

REPORTS

Approved applicants will make periodic reports (quarterly, semi-annual, or annual) to the Government and Management Standing Committee on the specific use of funds and the timeline

progress. Frequency of reports shall be determined based on the timeline and the size of the grant and will be specified in the Notice of Grant Award.

NONCOMPLIANCE

When the Community determines that a church receiving grant funds is in violation of the funding conditions, the Community may take one or more of the following actions:

1. Temporarily withhold payments until the church takes corrective action.
2. Disallow costs for all or part of the activity associated with the noncompliance.
3. Suspend or terminate the award in part or in its entirety
4. Demand repayment for costs associated with the noncompliance.
5. Ban church from applying for the Church Assistance fund in the future.
6. Pursue other legally available remedies.