

What is the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People?

Self-Development of People (SDOP) is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that affirms God's concern for humanity. We are Presbyterians and ecumenical partners, dissatisfied with poverty and oppression, united in faith and action through sharing, confronting and enabling. We assist the PC(USA) in carrying out its global commitment to work toward the self-development and empowerment of economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people who own, control, and benefit directly from projects that promote long-term change in their lives and communities, and who seek to change the structures that perpetuate poverty, oppression, and injustice.



Who does SDOP help?

The Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People is prepared to establish partnerships with groups in the United States and other countries that:

- Are oppressed by poverty and social systems.
- Want to take charge of their own lives.
- Are organizing to do something about their own conditions.
- Working to produce long-term changes for their lives and communities.
- Will control the programs they own and will directly benefit from them.



Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People People Investing in People

“Our partnership couldn’t have come at a better time,” ... “It catapulted us into action. We had been working in homes and cars. SDOP helped get office space that was essential for training [and] meetings and provided us with a central location to store products.”

Monica Lewis-Patrick, We the People of Detroit (Detroit Water Crisis Hotline Project)

Criteria

The following standards are used to determine whether a project is valid for funding consideration within the ministry; a project will:

- Be presented, owned and controlled by the group of economically poor people who will benefit directly from it,
- Address long-term correction of conditions that keep people bound by poverty and oppression,
- Describe, in detail, its goal, objectives, the role of direct beneficiaries and the methods used to achieve the goal and objectives,
- Be sensitive to the environment,
- Not advocate violence as a means of accomplishing its goal and objectives,

- Describe fully the resources known to be available for its support, including the in-kind and other financial resources sought or to be sought,
- Contain a balanced income and expenditure budget, a financial plan showing expected income and expenditures over the funding term of the project will be included,
- Specify how progress toward the stated goal and objectives will be evaluated by the group, and when the evaluation will be made.

Annual grants from the National SDOP Committee are no more than \$15,000. Projects may also receive grants (usually less than \$10,000) from the SDOP Committee of the Presbytery and/or Synod in which the project is located.

A Dozen Things to Know

1. Applications are accepted year round at the national level. Mid Councils (Presbytery and Synod SDOP Committees) should be contacted directly. To find out if there is a Mid Council SDOP Committee in your area, please call the national SDOP office: Toll Free English—1-888-728-7228 ext. 5792/5781, Toll Free Spanish—1.888.728.7228 ext. 5790.
2. Funding decisions at the national level are made in January, May and September. Once an application is received, processing could take anywhere from three to six months.
3. If your group chooses, it may fill out a pre application prior to completing the full version of the grant application. If your group submits a pre application, SDOP will review and discuss with you whether to proceed with filing a full grant application. However, your group may choose to complete the full grant application without filling out a pre-application.
4. A group may apply for funding by submitting an application at the Mid Council level (i.e. Presbytery or Synod), at the national level or at all three (Presbytery, Synod or National) levels simultaneously.
5. National level applications may be downloaded from pcusa.org/apply-grant. Some, but not all, Mid Council SDOP Committees use the national application. Ask the Mid Council SDOP Committee about what application form it uses.
6. If you need assistance with your grant application, please contact the SDOP national office at 1.888.728.7228 ext. 5781/5792.
7. Self-Development of People seeks to partner with communities; therefore, it is unusual for a group of less than ten people to receive funding.
8. SDOP funds youth led projects only if the youth directly own and control the project. We do not fund children's projects because the group members need to be old enough to directly own and control the project.
9. Generally, statewide organizations, faith-based groups, and umbrella organizations do not meet the SDOP criteria of being owned and controlled by the low income people directly benefiting from the project.
10. SDOP does not require groups to have 501 (c) (3) status, to be incorporated, or to be a non-profit organization in order to submit a grant application.

11. SDOP does not fund private entrepreneurial businesses. SDOP is interested in partnering with cooperatives that will enhance community economic development. According to SDOP, a cooperative is a group/organization owned by and operated for the benefit of those using its services and involves: equally shared decision making, revenue, expenses and investments and responsibility. Groups will also need to meet SDOP's primary funding criteria.

12. While congregations and other organizing groups are encouraged to reach out to communities and provide help to groups as they develop projects, the projects must be presented, owned and controlled by the groups who will benefit directly from them.



One Great Hour of Sharing

SDOP's primary source of income is approximately one third of the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), a special offering taken during Lent in Presbyterian congregations. The Presbyterian Hunger Program and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance also receive a portion of the offering.

Community Workshops

Community workshops explaining the Self-Development of People program are held in various regions of the country throughout the year. If your group would like information on an upcoming community workshop or to assist in arranging a workshop, please contact the Self-Development of People national office at 800-728-7228 x5792.

SDOP in the United States



The devastating impact of hurricane Katrina in 2005, is still being felt in parts of New Orleans today. In particular East New Orleans residents are still dealing with schools that are inadequately resourced, non-functioning public libraries and too few jobs. Transportation is limited so residents need the Internet as a way to keep connected and informed. Although the spirits of community residents have been weakened, they have not been broken.

In 2011, approximately 200 area residents gathered to discuss priorities for their community and decided a community center was a top priority. They elected an 11-member board to initiate plans for the center. In early 2012, Self-Development of People partnered with the group by awarding it a \$20,000 grant. Today the project consists of a community center centrally located from the 7th, 8th and 9th wards and Gentilly in East New Orleans. The center offers computer and job skills training, mentoring among peers, job searches and access to resources and more. As a result of the center, new opportunities have opened up for the community residents. For some residents, merely learning how to operate a computer is a major step forward and allows them to fully participate in society.

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SDOP in Belize

Struggling to earn a living in Punta Gorda, Belize, members of the Rio Grande Fishermen Cooperative discovered that sea cucumbers are the answer! The small, snake-like fish are plentiful in Belize's coastal water, and are easy to catch. Not eaten by the people of Belize, sea cucumbers are in high demand in parts of China, where they're a popular food. Members of the cooperative decided to begin harvesting sea cucumbers for export.

The members of the Rio Grande Fishermen Cooperative quickly ran into two problems with their plan to sell sea cucumbers to China: They needed additional space in their small production facility to process their catch, and needed more freezers to store the processed sea cucumbers until they had enough for a full shipment. Financially, those two requirements cost more than the group could afford. What could they do?

The Cooperative applied to SDOP for a grant. SDOP agreed to help the Cooperative, enabling the Belizeans to expand their facilities and to buy additional freezers. Cooperative members are now regularly shipping sea cucumbers to China; their economic situation is greatly improved!



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbyterian Mission

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
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“Motive matters. Foundation is crucial. The ministry of SDOP is driven, not so much by who the recipients are but by who we are—faithful and generous followers of Jesus. Our identity is to follow the lead of Jesus, who looks upon everyone as a valued child of God, worthy of God's good gift of life abundant. Such is our foundation and motive.”

Rev. Joseph Johnson
Evergreen Presbyterian Church, Dothan, Alabama

Visit SDOP Website: pcusa.org/sdop
English - 800-728-7228 x5781/5792
Spanish - 800-728-7228 x5790
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To order additional booklets or other SDOP resources please call 800-524-2612



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People Investing in People

