

Conference Grants Policy

Galileo Church • adopted December 2016

Our mission statement says that, in addition to seeking and sheltering spiritual refugees, Galileo Church “rallies spiritual health for all who come” and “fortifies every tender soul with the strength to follow Jesus into a life of world-changing service.” We have found that certain conferences, seminars, and other learning experiences help us meet those goals, both because the people who go are changed by the experience and because the church benefits from their learning.

The Missional Logistics Team is charged with the stewardship of our finances in support of our missional priorities, so it has developed the following guidelines for financial grants for conference attendees:

1. Galileo church leadership will coordinate travel to conferences each year that we believe will support the mission (and the missional priorities) of our church. Previous examples include the Gay Christian Network conference, the Wild Goose Festival, and the OPEN conference. Announcements of each conference are made to the whole church with reasonable advance notice for making plans.
2. Anybody is eligible to apply for a travel grant for such a trip, with these qualifications:
 - a. They must be a co-conspirator or local friend of Galileo Church (i.e. we can reasonably expect that you are around for our regular life together).
 - b. They must be able to attend the entire conference from beginning to end.
 - c. They must be willing to travel with the group, including carpools and shared housing (hotel rooms, tents, whatever).
3. Recipients of grants will need to:
 - a. Participate maximally in the event – cheerfully attending lectures, discussions, presentations, activities, or whatever the conference is offering.
 - b. Follow behavior standards of the conference context and represent Galileo Church in ways that would make us proud.
 - c. Treat fellow travelers with kindness and respect. Each conference group will have a designated “boss”, and the boss gets the final say in the arbitration of conflict in the group.
 - d. Report to the church at least One Big Idea that they are bringing home to us from the conference – a new learning, a different perspective, a word of encouragement or challenge. Reports can be spoken aloud in worship (our preference) or submitted in writing.

4. Grants are applicable toward gas, plane fare, housing, registration fees, or food. Souvenirs, entertainment, and medical care are on you.
5. Very often such trips are coordinated by Galileo Church and paid for with church credit cards so that expenses can be added up and billed out to participants. Travelers must pay their share of the expenses within 30 days of receipt of the bill.

6. Grants will be awarded thusly:

Up to \$300 per traveler for conferences that are amenable to road travel.

Up to \$500 per traveler for conferences that require air travel.

One grant per person, per year. (You can go to additional conferences with Galileo, but you have to pay 100%.)

We provide free registration whenever we can through Paul's, Nathan's, and Katie's work at conferences. When we don't have enough free registrations for all travelers, we will divide the cost of the remaining registrations among the entire group (except those who are working).

We will provide funds for conferences up to the amount designated for such in the Galileo Church budget. We expect to fund grants for about 3 conferences per year for about 5 people per conference. Travelers may request grants well in advance of the conference they hope to attend. Requests should be made to any member of the Missional Logistics Team, or to the Lead Evangelist (Katie).

7. Galileo Church will "buy" free registrations from Paul and Nathan whenever they are earned by their conference work, helping to defray travel costs for the musicians as well as the additional travelers.
8. We encourage the use of GoFundMe or other crowdfunding platforms for individuals to raise funds for conference travel. We encourage ensemble GoFundMe campaigns for groups that are traveling together. We encourage those who want to support conference travel to contribute to our grant program.
9. The Missional Logistics Team will make determinations about grants as best they can, knowing that it's easy to get this wrong. We invite prayers for wisdom and ongoing discussion about how to make this a fairer, simpler, and more life-giving process.