**Stewardship of Life Institute**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**New Stewardship Ministry Concept**

**PROJECT NAME: Sharron Blezard Innovation Fellowship**

**Stewardship of Life Institute**

**61 Seminary Ridge**

**Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325**

**PH: 7173383011 FAX: Stewardship of Life Institute**

**mzimmann@uls.edu**

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**Sharron Blezard Innovation Fellowship**

**Stewardship of Life Institute**

**Gettysburg, Pennsylvania**

**Article I.** **Introduction**

For thirty years, theStewardship of Life Institute (SOLI) has sought “to provide specific opportunities for the education and development of leadership skills in stewardship as a way of life” (Article III.3 of SOLI Bylaws). We now seek to become even more inclusive in sharing resources, seeking to reach those communities that are all too often overlooked or marginalized because of tradition and systemic hierarchies and racism. Now, in order to begin addressing these historical sins, we request that all ministry contexts outside of the mainstream ELCA congregational/institutional ministries make a proposal to receive the Sharron Blezard Innovation Fellowship. The following proposal request will outline the project goals and detail the format in which these ministries can submit a proposal. Please read this document carefully. In order for a proposal to be considered, it must meet the agreed upon timeline.

**Section 1.01** **Location and Sponsor**

Your bid is for funding under the Sharron Blezard Innovation Fellowship provided by SOLI, located at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 17325.

**Section 1.02** **Partnership**

SOLI board members will be off location during the project. The fellowship recipient will be responsible for the project's timely completion.

**Section 1.03** **Contact Information**

Please contact Martin Otto Zimmann for questions about the project details:

Phone: 7347554523

E-mail: mzimmann@uls.edu

**Article II.** **The Project**

**Section 2.01** **Mission**

By the end of this project we hope to achieve the following: The Sharron Blezard Innovation Fellowship grants up to $40,000.00 for persons in ELCA ministries who share a passion for stewardship of time, talent, and material/financial resources. Additionally, recipients of this fellowship will be able to implement a creative new resource for ministry that encourages people to embrace their role of steward in creation. Examples of this new resource could include podcasts, YouTube channels, innovation within church building infrastructure, or the creation of a beloved community within a ministry context. Special consideration will be given to historically marginalized communities and new ministry startups. This grant may be renewable pending review.

**Section 2.02** **Project Specifications**

Please refer to the separate application document describing the Project Specifications.

**Section 2.03** **Collaborator Requirements**

Should your proposal be accepted, we expect you to contribute the following to the project:

1. A working budget (assistance in building a budget is available if needed).
2. Periodic contact with a designated member of the SOLI board.
3. A shared journal using whatever means available (written, video, etc.) to share the joys and frustrations of this experience.

**Article III.** **The Proposal**

**(a)** **Expectations**

Fellowships will be awarded based on the information presented in the proposals received. We will award them based on the proposal expected to be the most beneficial to our project based on a variety of factors. Stewardship of Life Institute reserves the right to award more than one fellowship, award fellowships before the proposal deadline listed in the timeline, award fellowships before all proposals are received, and refuse any fellowship without obligation to Stewardship of Life Institute or to the persons offering the proposal.

**(b)** **Proposal Deadlines**

There are two annual deadlines for proposals. All cover letters and proposals must be submitted to Stewardship of Life Institute by April 1 or September 1 to be considered for their contribution to Sharron Blezard Innovation Fellowship. The timeline for the project would normally be one year, commencing within one year of the application deadline.

**(c)** **Selection Criteria**

All offers submitted will be considered based upon the materials provided in the proposal. Consideration will be given to any ELCA ministry context, performance projections, cost, and staff requirements. Only those proposals submitted by the deadline above will be considered. The following criteria will be the primary considerations for selecting a proposal:

1. Creativity: sharing the gospel of stewardship in new and different ways.
2. Inclusivity: this project should reach a diverse audience of ages and identities
3. Building connections: stewardship is primarily about living out a relationship with God and neighbor.
4. Spiritual growth and formation: people are invited to grow through the experience.
5. Church affiliation: Applicants need to be connected to an ELCA congregation or affiliated ministry.
6. Milestones: We encourage applicants to think of ways in which their projects will bear results that create positive change within their community and the world around it.

Stewardship of Life Institute may suspend or discontinue proposals at any time without notice or obligation to the company that submitted the proposal.

**(d)** **Proposal Format:** Stewardship of Life Institute suggests that you be able to answer the following questions to be eligible for funding. Proposals should adequately address the details of the proposed contract.

1. Describe your idea and the ELCA faith-based community where it will be based.
2. What does your organization hope to learn about yourself and those you accompany through this project?
3. What milestones does your ministry group hope to see in this journey?
4. What are the resources your ministry can bring to the table? What will be your biggest challenges?
5. How will you all use the funds we provide? Where do you find support? Please share your ideas.
6. Who will hold you accountable in this project? How can SOLI walk with you in this journey?
7. How will you be able to share results of your work and whether or not your vision for ministry has become reality?

**(e) Proposal Assistance:** If an applicant would like to have a conversation with a SOLI board member to complete the application, please email mzimmann@uls.edu or call 734-755-4523 for assistance. An application form is attached. You are welcome to use this form or create your own application as long as you include the information requested in this document.