

Oikos Accelerator

Letter of Invitation

Thank you for your interest in the Oikos Accelerator, a RootedGood initiative. We are thrilled to partner with congregations for this initiative and are anticipating fruitful outcomes and significant learning for all involved.

This letter of invitation will:

- Introduce RootedGood: Who are we and how do we work?
- Provide an overview of the aims of the Oikos Accelerator: What is it?
- Specify the outcomes for participating congregations: What will happen as a result?
- Outline what involvement in the initiative entails: What will it involve?
- Identify characteristics of congregations that are a good fit for the accelerator: Who is it for?
- Identify the process for applying and being selected: How can congregations join in?

Who are we?

RootedGood, a non-profit organization, empowers institutions, congregations, social enterprises, and entrepreneurs to make good in the world. Through engaging tools, training, and experiences, we help our partners solve “complex problems” and create innovative approaches to systemic change. As co-founders, we have 35 years of combined experience at the intersection of faith, innovation and economics.

How do we work?

We know that you are the ones on the ground who know the real problems and opportunities in your community. We believe that you also have a lot of resources available. But maybe you could use some help putting it all together. That’s where RootedGood comes in. Our proven tools use design thinking and gamification to help your team make new connections and move further, faster. Designed to be accessible for use in a wide variety contexts, the engaging exercises and activities help you propel your congregation forward.

Watch our
one minute
introduction
animation
here:



<https://youtu.be/Za7Blwz8r4c>

WHAT IS THE OIKOS ACCELERATOR?

OIKOS:

the Greek term for household and it is also the etymological root of economics and ecology. All these meanings come together for this initiative - imagining new ways that a congregation's 'house' might generate a new economic future in its specific context and setting.

ACCELERATOR:

equipping innovative projects and initiatives to grow and develop quickly, in the context of a supportive and encouraging environment.

Therefore, the Oikos Accelerator empowers congregations around the US to align money and mission by creatively using their buildings and property to further their mission and build financial resilience by helping them launch a social enterprise.

Up to 50 congregations will be accepted to participate in this program.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN YOUR CONGREGATION AS A RESULT OF PARTICIPATING?

By the end of the Oikos Accelerator, each organization will effectively design and launch a social enterprise that utilizes their church property in some form.

UNDERSTAND

your church's changing context in terms of your ministry, local community, and financial model.

IMAGINE

how your core mission and theology shapes the use of buildings and property in light of this changing context.

BRING

your whole congregation on this journey together.

EXPAND

your capacity to experiment, try new things, learn from failure, and try again.

EXPERIMENT

with new, innovative uses of buildings and property that both further your mission and generate income.

LAUNCH

a social enterprise utilizing your church property.

Examples of a social enterprise utilizing church property include:

- Turning a food pantry into a grocery co-op
- After-school education programs for low-income families
- Community vegetable garden
- Building affordable housing on church property
- Renting office space to local non-profits at a discount
- Co-working space for social start-ups
- Starting a restaurant or cafe
- Employment training
- Event space
- And many more!

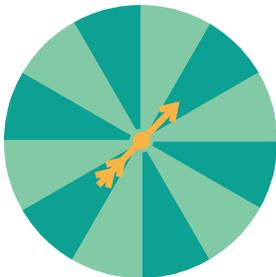
WHAT WILL YOU RECEIVE BY PARTICIPATING IN THE OIKOS ACCELERATOR?

The Oikos Accelerator will take time and commitment on behalf of leaders in your congregation for it to be effective. But it will be worth it! Through participating in this initiative you will be:



Equipped with RootedGood tools and resources

Access to fun, dynamic, and proven tools, games, and resources that will help your congregation learn more about the process of designing and starting a social enterprise. Physical resources will be delivered through the mail and digital resources will be available online.



Trained through an online accelerator course

Participation in an online learning program, comprising six sessions, which will help you identify and design an idea for new activities and/or social enterprises using your property.



Prepared to pitch your project to donors and funders

You will be prepared and supported to develop your pitch, materials, and other content needed to make your case to donors, funders, investors and/or lenders for your project.



Connected to a greatly expanded network of learning partners and resource providers

Throughout the year, and during a dynamic, in-person Resource and Learning Symposium in the Spring of 2022 (if conditions allow it) you will be connected with: other congregations for mutual learning, resource providers who can help you turn your project into reality, and other vital connections that will help your congregation succeed.

TIMELINE

2020 OCT	2020 1 st DEC	2021 MARCH	2021 OCT-JUN	2021 NOV-FEB	2022 MARCH
Application launch	Start of review and acceptance of congregations on a rolling basis until the cohort is full	Oikos Accelerator Start - congregations receive welcome pack	Online accelerator course training	Launch your social enterprise (timing of launch will depend on nature of your project)	Resource and Learning Symposium

INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Financial

- A fee of \$500. Please note, a grant has enabled us to cover the majority of the costs for this program. The value of the program is \$12,500 per congregation
- Travel to the Project Showcase & Resource Symposium Event (which will be held in a US city with good transport links) for three members of your team. All other costs of the convening are covered.
- **Scholarships are available to assist with the fee and travel costs.**

Availability

- Attend Resource and Learning Symposium in March 2022

People

- A leadership team of 3-5 that is committed to participate in the whole initiative. This team needs to include:
 - At least one clergy or staff person and at least one lay leader
 - The ability and technology to engage with an online learning platform
 - Only three team members can attend the convening.
 - There will be a few activities that involve the whole congregation or significant numbers of congregants
 - Acceptance letters will need to be signed by the senior minister/pastor and representative of the lay governance committee.

WHO IS THE OIKOS ACCELERATOR DESIGNED FOR?

Congregations that own building/s or property and have:

- A willingness to explore the use of church building(s) and/or property for revenue generating social enterprise activity
- A desire to serve the community beyond the walls of the church in ways that are constituent with the values and theology of the church
- Capacity to engage in activities that will involve gathering input from the full congregation (not just the leadership team)
- Capacity to engage in activities that will involve gathering input from the community around the church
- Willingness to share learning with RootedGood, other Oikos Accelerator congregations, and denominational/network partners so that the wider church can benefit from what is learned

How can congregations apply and join?

Having read through this letter of invitation, if you meet the criteria, please fill out this application form:

<https://rootedgood.typeform.com/to/eengKxfx>

We will start reviewing applications on Dec 1, 2020 and begin accepting participants on a rolling basis.

Thank you for considering this opportunity,

SHANNON HOPKINS, MARK ELSDON AND MARK SAMPSON
CO-FOUNDERS OF ROOTEDGOOD



ROOTEDGOOD.ORG