

MacLellan

Setting a Grant Narrative



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Narrative: *A way of presenting or understanding a situation or series of events that reflects and promotes a particular point of view or set of values.*

Introduction to Narratives:

The Maclellan Foundation grant team is oriented by geography and divided into the following portfolios: South/Southeast Asia, Europe/Eurasia, Middle East/North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Chattanooga, and the USA. Each portfolio has a program officer assigned to advance a granting strategy, which is approved by the Board and called a grant narrative.

This grant narrative is a portfolio specific statement designed to align with Maclellan's overall granting focus: *sustainable Kingdom growth defined as local strategies to grow the local church, funded locally.*

Each program officer is charged with understanding their portfolio through several lenses. These lenses include the region's economic, political, demographic, and religious aspects. Central to this assessment is the state of the local church and the agencies that are aligned to aid and support the church and broader Kingdom goals. Typically, this analysis is done for each country then rolled-up into a summary document designed to describe the region.

The grant narrative is then written as specific objective statements, identifying the granting initiatives that will be taken within the portfolio region to accomplish Maclellan's overall granting goals. The narrative serves as a set of guardrails, creating boundaries to help identify what lies outside the scope for any grant. It ultimately provides a granting focus for each area to assure that there is aligned clarity of purpose with Maclellan's objectives. Maclellan revisits the granting narratives every three years.

Narrative Structure:

There are three major components to a narrative:

1. * *Top Line narrative:* This is a summary of the main idea in the narrative.
2. ** *Specific granting initiatives:* These are the types of grants we will make.
3. *** *What we are not doing:* These are the types of grants we will not make.

Below is an example of how this narrative looks for South/Southeast Asia beginning in 2022. The asterisks match the major components of the narrative to their respective statements.

Example Narrative for South/Southeast Asia:

*To see the indigenous church become self-sufficient in their theology, finances, and leadership**
*We seek to accomplish this through these initiatives:***



- Strengthening Local Capacities – Focus on building a solid foundation built of biblical principles through intentional capacity building with core grantees. This will help ensure that the grantees will be strong, established, and sustainable into the future.
- Strategic Generosity Engagements – Integrate generosity principles into grantee ‘water systems’ allowing for seamless integration with existing programs. Also, partner with local leaders to multiply Journeys of Generosity (JOGs) and Stations of Generosity (SOGs) among the Christian population.
- Bi-vocational and Entrepreneurial Development – Align with stakeholders and faith-driven entrepreneurs to help provide an environment for the formation of new businesses and social ventures to advance the gospel in the marketplace.
- Short-term Projects – Continue to fund opportunities that accelerate self-sustaining church growth through leadership development, Bible translation/distribution and effective integrated ministry among unreached people groups.
- Kingdom Related Grants – Partner with missional businesses to help build greater sustainability in developing areas.

*The Maclellan Foundation will be focusing our efforts on transformational leaders to ensure strong, established, and sustained churches, along with church supporting organizations, to build towards long-term self-sufficiency into the future. We will no longer fund generalized leader development projects that do not focus on creating local and sustainable practices that are fully integrated into the ministry’s ethos.****

Putting the Narrative into Practice:

Once approved by the Board, the Operations Team will update the narrative section of the grant approval process to include these five initiatives. With each grant recommendation, the Strategy Director will choose one of more of these specific granting initiatives to indicate to the decision makers where a particular grant fits into the overall narrative. At any time, a report can show total number of grants and dollars given by country and organization within each grant initiative. This system provides accountability at all levels for the connection of grants to the approved grant narratives and therefore, the greater mission of the foundation.