



The Methodist Church Plymouth & Exeter District

District Grant Making Policy

The Plymouth & Exeter District will consider making grants for projects that meet all of the following criteria:

That the work/project

1. relates directly to '*Our Calling*' in at least one of the four constituent parts
2. relates directly to at least one aspect of the District Policy
3. meets the objectives of the Circuit Mission Policy
4. is innovative and/or involves risk-taking
5. will also be supported by some local church and/or Circuit resources

In addition, grant applications will be viewed positively if every effort is made to obtain grant money from sources outside Methodism and/or if they are for projects which are environmentally friendly.

The District is aware that, for some churches and Circuits, the requirement to offer matched funding may be a barrier to starting a new, much needed project. The District will not require matched funding where this is not affordable. As part of the grant making process, the available funds of the Circuit and churches in that Circuit will be reviewed, along with the project budget and other income sources to ascertain the appropriate level of financial support to be offered by the District. Where matched funding is not affordable, the church and/or Circuit will still be expected to make some contribution to each project; the amount to be agreed with District.

Where personnel grants are requested for new ways of working, which in essence are to fill the gaps in the availability of ordained ministers or to redeploy existing staff levels in new ways, the District would expect the church or Circuit to only apply for District grants where actual staffing levels and costs have increased. Only the funding of the increased costs should be considered, both in terms of District grant and church/Circuit contribution.

For District projects, awards will be made by the District Policy Committee.

Applications may be made for grants that advance mission in an ecumenical project (of which the Methodist Church is a partner) and for community development projects with other partners/organisations. Where ecumenical or community grants are awarded, the District should be credited in the promotional literature of the project.

As funds are limited, the District will normally prioritise projects that have a missional aspect, particularly those that enable new evangelistic and community-based initiatives, rather than the maintenance of existing work that has no aspiration to become self-funding.

Where there are significant excess reserves in the Circuit or local churches that make up that Circuit, the District will require clarification of how these funds are to be used before making further resources available.

The District will prioritise people over premises. If there is sufficient funding to make a property grant available, it will be normally be for up to 10% of the total project cost. Please note that grants will not be given for 'maintenance only' projects.

Initial grants may be awarded for a period of up to five years. The District is aware of evidence to suggest that developing a new piece of work may take significantly longer than the initial grant period, so, there is the possibility of additional follow-on funding for projects that demonstrate potential. However, grants will be offered in such a way that the amounts awarded will reduce year on year.

Each application should give an overview of the expected outcomes for each year of the grant period and for the project as a whole. This should address questions such as:

- What is the long-term aim of the project?
- Is the project time-limited? Why is this the case?
- What is expected to happen at the end of the grant period?

Where a project or employment, to which a grant has been awarded, is suspended or stopped during the grant period, the Circuit must advise the Grants Committee promptly of the change. Any unused grant monies will need to be repaid to the District.

District Officers are available to advise and support grant applications at each stage of the process, if the conditions below/overleaf have been met. The District Grants Committee will give additional weight to applications that are received as a result of consultation with District Officers.

Accountability

- District grants will only be awarded when the District Policy Committee is satisfied that the Circuit concerned has sufficient Safeguarding policies in place and that Circuit employees or volunteers have completed appropriate training.
- District grants for the employment of lay personnel will only be awarded when the District Lay Employment Committee has been consulted and approved the arrangements for the relevant post(s).
- Grants offered over a number of years will only continue to be made when satisfactory annual Monitoring and Evaluation reports have been received. Part of this assessment will be a comparison of how the project has developed against the overview produced as part of the application process.

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