

## Large Mission Fund Application Form Guidance Notes



All applications must be submitted on the application form to enable the Mission Fund Panel to assess them accurately against the agreed criteria (attached).

Synod aims to encourage, enable and support local churches. In planning your project, bear in mind that Synod may be able to offer personnel with experience and expertise to assist you as well as financial resources, though both are limited.

**Applicants are advised to seek advice from the Synod Mission Development Officer and as appropriate other Synod officers (e.g. the Children and Youth Work Development Officer) at an early stage and before submitting an application.**

The numbering below correlates with the numbering on the application form.

### 1. Name of Church

If the application is made by a separately constituted project, please give the name of the sponsoring URC or LEP church which are part of the East Midlands Synod of the United Reformed Church and explain the relationship between the project and the church.

### 2. Project summary

#### a. Project Name

Please provide a brief project name to enable easy identification.

#### b. Project outline

In no more than 30 words, give a summary of what you aim to achieve through the project and the activities involved. You will give details later on the form.

#### c. Mission Fund Grant requested

We expect you to match fund any grant offered, so any grant will normally be up to a maximum of 50% of the total project cost and not more than £50,000.

Where the Pastorate is/or includes an LEP the maximum grant awarded may be less than 50% at the discretion of the Mission Fund Panel. You can apply to have your grant paid over a maximum of five years.

The Panel do have discretion to offer a grant for up to 100% of the project funding within the £50,000 limit however we usually offer up to 50%.

We will accept applications for a follow-on grant for a further 3-5 years at up to the same level as the first grant.

There is no limit as to the number of times that a church or pastorate can apply for a further grant.

It is possible for churches or pastorates to submit more than one application for different projects at the same time or concurrently.

Please note that the Mission Fund is a limited fund of money, and the maximum grant will only be paid if there is sufficient money available in the fund – if applications submitted oversubscribe the available fund, grants will be reduced accordingly.

Ask for advice before submitting the application if you are at all unclear about the size of grant for which you can apply.

#### d. Total project cost

Give the total project cost. Do not include “in kind” items, such as cost of voluntary labour. However, if your project will be part-funded, furnished, or otherwise completed through “in kind” efforts, please identify them in section 6a.

### **3. Project Development**

#### **a. Explain how your project arises from your Pastorate/Mission Profile**

Each local church should now maintain a current Pastorate/Mission Profile, and that document should identify your future mission plans. Detail what it is in your Profile that gives rise to this current project. If you need to update your Profile, seek advice from your Pastoral Consultant and please give careful thought to the Five Marks of Mission.

#### **b. Is this project short term, medium term or long term?**

Tell us how many years you expect your project to last, even if you are only asking for a grant for one year or for a one-off cost. If your project is already running, please provide a report on the work to date and explain how the grant would help you to develop the project. Please note that funding cannot be provided retrospectively.

#### **c. Are you working in partnership with anyone?**

If you will be working in partnership to deliver the project, please give details of your partners (such as local Churches Together Group, another charity, a GP Surgery, the Local Authority) We do not need details of, for instance, building professionals in a building refurbishment project.

#### **d. Which Synod personnel were consulted in developing this project?**

Give the names of any Synod personnel that you worked with in developing this project and preparing this application.

You must consult the Mission Development Officer.

If the project involves work with children and/or young people (under 26 years of age) directly or with families or as an inter-generational project, you must consult the Synod Children and Youth Work Development Officer.

Other Synod staff can give helpful advice, such as the Synod Property Officer and the Finance Networkers. We may contact them for further information when we receive your application. Our experience shows that more mission projects are awarded grants initially when others are involved in developing the application.

### **4. Project Rationale**

#### **a. In what ways will sharing faith be included in the project?**

Will your project allow you to share your faith directly with those who benefit from your project? If so, how will you do this?

#### **b. Which of the Five Marks of Mission does this project seek to address and how?**

Mission can be expressed in many ways, use this section to explain how mission will be expressed for your church through this project. Clarity of vision and purpose will help the Panel understand your project.

#### **The 5 Marks of Mission**

- to proclaim the good news of the kingdom (Tell);
- to teach, baptise and nurture new believers (Teach);
- to respond to human need by loving service (Tend);
- to seek to transform unjust structures of society (Transform);
- to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, to sustain and renew the life of the earth (Treasure).

#### **c. Who does your project seek to reach and how did you identify them?**

Please explain who will be the beneficiaries/service users (such as the elderly, families, people on low incomes) How did you identify these people as being in need of this project?

### **5. Management**

#### **a. By whom will the project be managed?**

Who will provide the management of the project? Do you need to create/use a separate registered charity or Charitable Incorporated Organisation or create a management committee for the project?

**b. What is the relationship of the management group to your church and how will members be appointed?**

For some projects it will be necessary and appropriate to create a separate management group for your project. For example, if you are applying for other grants from secular agencies, they may want a management group that includes your project partners and service users. Alternatively, it might be some volunteers from your church who manage the project, or the Eldership. Who will form this group, and how will they be appointed?

**c. Who is going to be responsible for the activities of the project?**

- i) Give the names of any key personnel (volunteers or paid) who will deliver the project, and show how they are appropriate people for this role.
- ii) Where those individuals are yet to be recruited/identified, explain how you will recruit, induct and train them – please supply job/role descriptions.

**d. If you need other experience and expertise where do you expect this to come from?**

e.g. A counselling service will need a professional supervisor; an advice service might need external legal support; a youth work trainee will need access to education: what external back up will your project need? How will you provide this (such as: - are volunteer costs identified and included in the project budget, are all required policies in place)?

**e. What risks could occur in the project and how will you manage them?**

Think through what could go wrong with your project and prevent you from achieving your objectives. Risks to consider might include failure to raise the full amount of money needed, a sudden increase in expenses leading to a budget overrun, a safeguarding issue, resignation of key personnel, unresponsive beneficiaries, withdrawal of support by partners. Think also about safety risks and how to minimise or remove those risks. You will know what the most likely risks for your project are. List them and explain how you would deal with the risks you have identified. You may wish to provide a formal risk assessment as a separate document.

**f. How do you intend to evaluate the project?**

Successful projects are regularly evaluated. Would this be done internally, for example by the management group or the Elders, or by an external consultant? Think about the evaluation of the project itself but also its effectiveness as mission and its contribution to the church. When you draw up your budget, remember to include any costs of the evaluation you plan.

This could be part of the report you provide to the Panel explaining how you used your grant and the difference it is making. This is required 12 months after the grant payment is made, and annually thereafter where grants cover more than one year. A full independent review is expected at 3 years with the support of the Synod.

**6. Finance**

**a. Where do you expect other funds to come from?**

What funds do you already have available, and how much are you committing to this project? (If you are retaining significant reserves that will not be used for this project, give a very clear justification for why you need this grant.) What other grants and loans have you applied for, and what is the status of those applications (pending, approved, any conditions on that funding)? What fundraising efforts and targets have been set within the congregation? Have you secured or sought any “in kind” contributions – such as donations of equipment, voluntary labour - and if so, have those contributions been promised, and what conditions apply to them? What value would you put on the in-kind contributions? Tell the Panel immediately the outcome of any funding applications you receive after you have submitted your application whether it was successful or not.

**b. What is the financial year of the project?**

This is particularly relevant for projects lasting over one year and projects where multiple year funding is sought from the Mission Fund, but if neither of these applies, then please give your normal church financial year dates.

**c. Is your church up-to-date with your M&M payments?**

The principle of the United Reformed Church is that the first call on a local church’s funds is the Ministry and Mission Fund. The Mission Fund will not normally make grants to churches with M&M arrears, although we may consider a grant if there is an agreed plan to repay any deficit. If you are in arrears, please discuss the situation with your local Finance Networker and/or the M&M Officer as a matter of urgency.

## **7. Sustainability**

### **a. How will the project be sustained/continued or ended after this period of funding?**

Describe how your project will be continued after the grant has been spent. If your project will end once this grant funding ends, explain why this is the case and describe your strategy to exit from the project.

### **b. Are there any cost implications for you after the end of the period for which a grant is needed and if so, how will they be funded?**

## **8. Reference from the Children and Youth Work Development Officer (CYDO)**

If your project involves work with children and/or young people, the CYDO will have visited your church to talk the project through with you and provide advice. When you have completed the form, send a copy to them and ask for a reference.

## **9. Reference from the Mission Development Officer**

The Mission Development Officer or a designated member of the Mission Fund Panel will have visited your church to talk the project through with you and provide advice. When you have completed the form, send a copy to them and ask for a reference confirming the mission focus of your project.

## **10. Approval**

Remember to get Church Meeting approval for your application and include a copy of the Minutes with your application.

## **General**

The Mission Fund may be used as a “first funder” to help you secure other funding, but grants will be conditional upon the rest of the funding being secured. The church may match a Mission Fund grant from its own resources or through applying to other grant-making bodies. Projects may not be funded by the Mission Fund in addition to any other Synod funds. Appropriate evidence of match funding (offer letters, bank statements, etc.) will be required before the Synod issues any grant awarded. You will normally hear the outcome of your application within a week of the Mission Fund Panel meeting.

Some larger projects will require a Business Plan. Decide whether you need to provide one for yours and include it with your application. If you need advice on writing a Business Plan, consult the Mission Development Officer or your local Council for Voluntary Service or a similar organisation which advises community and voluntary groups.

The Panel will normally attach some conditions to your grants. As a minimum, a report on how you used your grant and what difference it has actually made to your mission will be required from all successful applicants. This report and accounts showing how the money was spent will be required upon completion of the project or 12 months after the grant payment has been made (whichever is sooner), and where grants cover more than one year, annually thereafter. Any delays should be reported to the Panel. Annual grant payments will not be released until a satisfactory report, accounts and budget for the coming year have been received and reviewed by the Panel.

Where a grant has been awarded for a building project, an annual report on progress is required, even when work has not started because match funding has not yet been secured.

You will be sent a copy of the Terms of Grant with your offer letter. These can also be downloaded from the Synod website.

**The Mission Fund recognises that the Mission Fund Application Form might seem complex. Please do seek advice from the Mission Development Officer or a Mission Fund Panel member on completing the application form for any area where you are unsure how to answer. They will be happy to help.**

**East Midlands Synod**  
**Large Mission Fund Application Form**  
**Criteria for Evaluating Projects**

**Introduction**

All applications to the Mission Fund for grants will be examined according to the following criteria.

**1. Mission**

- 1.1. It fits the Five Marks of Mission.
- 1.2 The church has thought through and expressed the mission implications of its project.
- 1.3 The project demonstrates clarity of vision.
- 1.4 There is a clear faith purpose.
- 1.5 The target audience or membership of the project has been identified in a way that is relevant to its mission purpose.
- 1.6 There is a positive relationship between the volunteers or staff of the project and the people they are trying to reach.
- 1.7 The application shows how sharing faith will be included in the activities of the project.
- 1.8 There is an understanding of how this project will strengthen and extend the life of the church.
- 1.9 There is evidence of support by the Mission Development Officer or a designated member of the Mission Fund Panel.

**2. Leadership**

- 2.1 The team leadership is identified and suitably qualified or job/role descriptions are identified.
- 2.2 Existing volunteers/staff have experience in this area of work.
- 2.3 The application shows how new volunteers/staff will be recruited, trained and motivated.
- 2.4 The needs of the target group have been identified and appropriate measures to address them have been included.
- 2.4 Where the project involves work with children and/or young people, there is evidence that the Synod CYDO has been consulted.
- 2.5 An evaluation process is identified.

**3. Resources**

- 3.1. The project has been properly costed.
- 3.2 Sources of income to match a Mission Fund grant have been identified.
- 3.3 The church and/or project accounts demonstrate that the church or other managing body for the project is able to support this work and other areas of work will not suffer in consequence.
- 3.4 Where the church is holding large reserves but is not putting financial resources into this project, an acceptable explanation has been provided.
- 3.5 Risks have been identified and measures identified to minimise or handle them.
- 3.6 There is clarity about how the project will be continued in future.
- 3.7 The church is meeting its Ministry & Mission Fund (M&M) obligations and where appropriate has an approved arrangement in place to pay off arrears.

**4. Project Plan**

- 4.1 The project plan includes adequate description, aims, strategy, management structure, expected outcomes, evaluation and, if necessary, a business plan.
- 4.2 There is a plan to continue the project beyond this funding, or there is a clear exit strategy.

**5. Reporting**

- 5.1 The conditions on any previous grants were adhered to.
- 5.2 The required annual report(s) and accounts was(were) received from projects previously supported by the Mission Fund.