

Grants Policy – West Midlands Methodist District

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1. General Comments

i. In line with Conference approved Connexional strategy

The West Midlands District is mindful of the overall Conference approved Connexional strategy, including Net Zero 2030, and the ongoing commitment to Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, a Justice Seeking Church, and God for All policies. The District also encourages consideration of Faith Rooted Community Organising initiatives.

Applications will be considered in the light of these overall policies, although applicants whose projects are not directly related should not be discouraged from applying and will be considered.

ii. Grants are not restricted to new projects only.

Previously, a feature of grant policies was an emphasis on new work. The West Midlands District recognises the value of ongoing projects that may need longer term support, particularly if the benefits can be proven, and these projects are at risk without financial support. This is particularly the case of Church in the Margins projects.

Therefore, applications from ongoing Church in the Margins projects, or those working in areas of deprivation, or isolated areas are welcomed, as well as new projects.

iii. A Collaborative and Accessible Process

The District seeks a collaborative process that supports the applicant. Prior to your application, one of the Mission and Ministry Leads or the District Property Secretary/Consultant will arrange to meet with you to learn about your project and advise you on the application process. Acting as a critical friend, their role will be to support you help you to articulate your mission and vision, so that your application can be as good as it can be. This may also include making links with other similar projects within the District to enable good practice and learning to be shared.

If your application is successful, the Resourcing Mission Committee will require regular updates on the project, and also that any learning points from the project will be shared with others. You may be asked to share you experiences with other applicants with similar projects in the future.

The application process is detailed below, however, if the application process itself is preventing you from applying (for example if you struggle with public speaking or producing written documents) then please contact the Grants Officer for additional support and adjustments will be considered.

iv. Limitations

Generally speaking, the District will not fully fund a piece of work. They will expect local fund raising to be carried out, and other grants to be applied for. The following will be limits will be worked to, apart from in exceptional circumstances:

- General Property: Usually, up to 10% of the total will be contributed by the DAF.
- Net Zero Property Projects: Usually, up to 50% of the total will be contributed by the DAF.
- Lay Employees: Usually, up to 50% of the total will be contributed by the DAF.
- New Places for New People: Usually, up to 33% of the total will be contributed by the DAF, which may match an additional 33% from the Connexional fund, which is applied for via the same process. Please note that there may be changes to the Connexional fund after September 2026.

The exception is small grants, which can be used to pay the full costs of a particular activity, up to the value of £2000.

Where a strong benefit can be evidenced further grant requests will be considered.

Grants are only available to charities and bodies under Methodist Trusteeship. Where a project has become a separate entity or charity that is not under Methodist Trusteeship it will no longer be entitled to receive grants.

The limits set out above will be reviewed on a biannual basis by the Resourcing Mission Committee, overseen by the District Policy Committee.

v. Alternative forms of funding.

Projects are strongly encouraged to engage in local fundraising and seek grant support from other sources (please see Appendix A) in addition to applying to the DAF. As a general rule, the Circuit should always be approached first.

It will be advantageous to a project if they can demonstrate local support for the work in this way, although areas where local fundraising is not possible due to demographics of the local population and church attendees should not be discouraged, as the Resourcing Mission Committee will consider each application within its local context.

2. Grant Streams

The following streams are currently open for applications. Please see below for the application process.

For each stream, examples are given to illustrate the principle, but these should not be considered exhaustive, and applicants with proposals outside of these should not be discouraged.

i. New Places for New People

The West Midlands District is committed to continue to bring the Good News to all people, and as such applications are welcome for new projects (or existing projects NPNP projects that have proven effective but need ongoing support) that enable people who would not normally come into contact with the church, to encounter God.

Please note, that pioneer missionaries and lay employees engaged purely for the purpose of outreach and mission should be applied for under this stream.

Examples are as follows:

- A new outreach activity that prioritises those who are not currently in contact with the church.
- An outreach lay employee, lay pastor, or pioneer missionary, whose role is directly related to the NPNP project.
- Innovative new worship, that either takes place in a secular venue, or if in a church venue, is markedly different to what is currently available.

Applicants to this fund will also be considered for the Connexional God for All Funding, and this will be done as a part of the same process. The Connexional criteria are strict and as such the first step will be to contact the NPNP Mission Advisor for advice, and a full explanation of the process.

This fund can make significant, multi-year contributions to a project. Funds will usually be given over a period of 5 years, up to £90k in total. The DAF will not expect to fund more than 33% of the total cost.

ii. Net Zero 2030 Improvements

The West Midlands District, in line with Net Zero policies, seeks to ensure that churches and Circuits are enabled to develop their buildings to create sustainable spaces that serve the mission of the Methodist Church. As such, support may be requested with various eco projects such as:

- Support with eco improvements to buildings, that will make them more sustainable, and evidence the church's desire to be good stewards of God's creation. Examples include insulation, electric car charging points, solar panels, efficient heating systems, renewed windows, etc.

- Support with eco improvements to manses, to create more sustainable housing.
- Creating and improving green spaces as part of a missional outreach.

Funds will usually be given up to a maximum of £50k per church or £10k per manse. The DAF will not expect to fund more than 50% of the total cost.

Only one grant will be awarded per property.

NB: If the property is sold within ten years of the works being completed, then the District will reclaim the cost of the grant from the Circuit.

iii. Church Growth Support including Lay Employees

The West Midlands District understands that at this point in time, member fatigue and capacity can be a significant roadblock to mission and the ongoing function of churches. While there may be a strong appetite for mission, members often struggle with the work involved and may seek to engage a lay worker to support this.

Examples are as follows:

- Lay workers to support ongoing outreach work, such as children's activities, or work with older people.
- Lay workers to support the ongoing function and development of church premises, such as community development workers, and building managers.
- Faith Rooted Community Organisers
- In exceptional circumstances, applications for administrative and property support may be considered, if this will release resource for Mission and Ministry.

Funds will usually be given for up to a period of five years. The DAF will not usually expect to fund more than 50% of the total cost.

Applications for this stream will require the support of the Circuit, and we encourage engagement with the District Lay Employment Committee to ensure that applicants are able to manage an employee appropriately, and within the requirements set out by employment law. Applicants are required to have a conversation with the Mission and Ministry team before approaching the Resourcing Mission Committee.

When determining the pay scale of your prospective employees, please reference the Connexional Pay Scale, which can be found here:

[a_guidelines-for-determining-the-salary-figure-for-lay-post_Feb_2025.doc](#)

iv. Children and Young people

Recognising that young people and children must be supported and encouraged in their discipleship, the West Midlands District commits to materially support missional

activities in this area. Funds can be applied for to support church based youth and children's work. Funds can be applied to for activities such as:

- Young leader's training.
- 3Generate attendance, up to 1/3 of the ticket cost.
- District youth activities such as Amplify

Applications for this stream require the support of the Circuit and an initial conversation must be held with a member of the Mission and Ministry team before approaching the Resourcing Mission Committee.

Funds will usually be given up to a maximum of £7,500. The DAF will not usually expect to fund more than 50% of the total cost of the activity.

As the District underwrites the majority of the costs of the Amplify youth event, applications for funding towards young people's participation in this event would not usually be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances.

v. Justice Seeking Church

The West Midlands District is committed to continue to work along communities who may be isolated or suffering from deprivation, recognising the excellent work already done in this area by the legacy Districts. Deprivation can mean different things in different areas, and does not just pertain to economic deprivation, as per the examples below.

It is also recognised that longer term funding solutions may be required for this work, as the contexts may make it difficult to create self-sustaining projects.

Examples of work that may benefit from this work are:

- Inner city community spaces and hubs.
- Rural chaplaincies, in areas where there may be limited infrastructure.
- Work with groups of people who may experience discrimination.
- Projects that actively engage with those living in economically deprived areas (projects in areas in the bottom 10% or 20% for deprivation indicators – see Appendix A for more information) will be favoured.

Funds will usually be given up to a maximum of £90k, over 5 years. Sustained funding may be considered for an extended duration, with regular review checkpoints to ensure the project is still providing benefit.

Applications for this stream require the support of the Circuit Meeting and an initial conversation must be held with a member of the Mission and Ministry team before approaching the Resourcing Mission Committee.

vi. Small Grants

The West Midlands District will continue to offer small grants of up to £2,000 for support community events, seasonal celebrations, or small one-off costs of church and community activities.

Examples of how this grant could be used:

- A holiday club
- A seasonal event with a strong community based element, such as an Easter Fair or a Summer BBQ.
- Equipment for community outreach activities such as Film Clubs
- The costs of ongoing engagement projects such as warm spaces or community clubs run by the church costs such as a Film Club.

Small grants can be used to fully fund an event or need.

Micro grants are also available, up to £500. These can be agreed by the RMC Chair or Grants Officer and a member of the Mission and Ministry Team, and from a finite fund that is agreed each year. Whilst these do not require an application form, a written request in letter form is required. A report as to how the money has been used will then also be required.

We seek to celebrate projects funded in this way and may request photographs or reports for District communications.

vii. Training

There is a small budget available each year for training. This can be used for church related development for ministers, church office holders, lay workers, and local preachers and worship leaders. Examples are as follows:

- Theology lectures for local preachers
- ACAT courses for treasurers.
- Theological and professional qualifications relevant to the work of the District and Methodist Church.
- Circuit applications for Circuit-wide courses to be held in support of church life and outreach, such as food hygiene training and first aid.
- Youthscape training for youth leaders.
- If there is a District benefit, support for higher education, apprenticeships may be supported.

Funds will be given on a one off basis, usually up to a maximum of £6,000. The DAF will not expect to fund more than 50% of the total cost. Beneficiaries of this fund may only apply once every three years.

The RMC notes that there is also Connexional funding available for post ordination ministerial training, and for other Methodists. Funding may also be sought from appropriate apprenticeship schemes and some charity trusts.

viii. General Property Grants

Where there exists a strong missional plan for sustainable church growth funds may be made available for general property works that do not come under the Net Zero funding stream.

Examples are as follows:

- Accessibility improvements that will enable equality of access for users.
- Major redevelopment or re-ordering of a church premises to support mission and sustainability,

Unless there is an exceptional circumstance, general maintenance and repairs will not be funded. This fund may not be used to purchase Circuit manses. Funds will be given up to a maximum of £100,000 for major redevelopment only or 10% of the cost. The DAF will not expect to fund more than 10% of the total cost.

Applicants must have an initial conversation with a member of the Mission and Ministry team and the District Property Secretary before approaching the Resourcing Mission Committee.

NB: Before applying to the property funding stream, the project must be listed on the Methodist Consents website, and the project number must be included in the application. The project on the Consents website must fully align with the application made to the District.

3. Application Process

To apply for a grant, please follow the process below:

- i. You will first speak to a member of the Mission and Ministry team and the Chair of the Resourcing Mission Committee, and the District Property Advisory Committee in the case of property projects. Their contact details are:
 - a. Resourcing Mission Committee Chair: Revd Dr Iain Ballard,
RMCCChair@wmmethodists.org.uk
 - b. District Property Advisory Committee Chair: Revd Phil Warrey,
DPACChair@wmmethodists.org.uk
 - c. Ministry and Mission Team: Jo Yair and Adam Sanders,
ministryandmission@wmmethodists.org.uk
- ii. Following this conversation, contact the Grants Officer who will then send the appropriate forms.
 - a. Grants Officer, Revd Denise Hargreaves, grants@wmmethodists.org.uk

- iii. Return the completed forms to the Grants Officer, along with requested documents. Note, the RMC will require a copies of relevant mission plans and may ask to see other related documents such as Quinquennials and Standard Form Accounts. These will need to be received one month before the RMC meeting.
- iv. You may then be asked to talk about your project and answer questions about it at an RMC meeting. You will be supported throughout this process by a member of the Mission and Ministry team, and all efforts will be made to ensure that the process is accessible for you. If you have any particular concerns regarding either presenting your project, or completing written application forms, please do contact us. The West Midlands are committed to principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and ensuring that this process is open to all.
- v. Applications to property grants can only be made once a project has been listed on the Consents website, and a project number must be provided. The project must fully align with that found on the website.

4. Appendix A: Other sources of funding

It is unusual for the DAF to provide 100% of the funding for a project and you will likely have to source other funds. Unless the project is of District benefit, the RMC will expect you to also approach your Circuit, and will also ask if you have committed any of your own funds to the project (note, it is understood that the latter is not always possible).

You should also consider the following:

- i. Local fundraising. Utilise social media (you will be supported in this by the District Comms Officer/Administrator) special church fundraising events and gift days, to raise awareness of the project and funds. A strong local response can evidence the support for your project from the beneficiaries.
- ii. When you have received a response from the District, you will also be able to apply to Trustees for Methodist Church purposes – note the District Chair and another trustee will need to approve your application. They fund a number of types of project which are detailed on their website here:
- iii. <https://www.tmcp.org.uk/money/grants>
- iv. For a community project, consider approaching your Neighbourhood Officer – a council employee responsible for an area. They often have access to community funds which they can allocate at their discretion.
- v. Funding search engines such as Funding Central can generate reports of all funders, filtered to be relevant to your project. There may be a small fee for accessing these reports, but for larger projects the cost is marginal.
- vi. For some activities, Connexional funding may also be available. The Mission and Ministry team will be able to confirm this for you if you are unsure.

- vii. Consider joining your local voluntary service mailing list. They will frequently have updates on local grant funders who are funding voluntary projects in your area.