

Applications for Circuit Grants (September 2022 update)

1. Purpose of Paper:

- 1.1 To set out the policies and procedures in respect of applications for grants from any Circuit Fund to churches, Circuit Organisations or Circuit members.
- 1.2 It does not cover requests for grants from external organisations.

2. Procedures

2.1 General rules for applications

- a) Applications will not normally be accepted for a property project that has commenced or costs other than fees incurred.
- b) All approved grant applications will be reported to the Circuit Meeting by the Circuit Steward- Governance and Administration / Circuit Treasurer.
- c) Applications may be submitted for projects being carried out in conjunction with ecumenical partners.

2.2 Local Preacher Fund

- a) Requests may only be submitted by Circuit Lay Preachers and may be for any type of resource (including conference fees/expenses) to assist them in their preaching, which cannot be funded from their annual resources allowance of £50. Grants will normally be between £50 and £500.
- b) All applications must be submitted to the Local Preachers Secretary (*or Superintendent Minister if post not filled*).
- c) Requests for grants must be approved by the Local Preachers meeting.

2.3 Circuit Benevolence Fund

- a) If required, this Fund is available to Circuit Ministers and Circuit Stewards to make confidential payments for the relief of poverty and distress in the congregations and neighbourhood of the Circuit either where there is no local Methodist Church Benevolent Fund or in conjunction with such a Fund.
- b) All requests from ministers and circuit stewards must be approved by the Superintendent Minister.
- c) If after a period of time when this Fund is not in operation, the reinstatement of the fund is required then this must be approved by the Superintendent Minister.

2.4 Fresh Expressions Fund

- a) Requests for monies from the Fund must relate to a Fresh Expression of Church as defined by the Fresh Expressions organisation, i.e. "A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church."
- b) All requests must be submitted to the Circuit Steward - Governance and Administration

- c) Grants to churches will not normally exceed £2,500. (If greater funding is required, an application should be submitted for a Mission grant.
- d) Requests will be reviewed by the Circuit Steward - Governance and Administration and the Circuit Treasurer. Recommendations will be placed before the CLT and approved requests will be reported to the next Circuit Meeting.

2.5 Children & Youth Fund

- a) Applications must relate to a specific piece of children's or youth work within an individual church or the Circuit and will generally be within the range £100 to £2,500. (If greater funding is required, an application should be submitted for a Mission grant.
- b) All applications must be submitted to the Circuit Steward - Governance and Administration
- c) Requests will be reviewed by the Circuit Steward - Governance and Administration and the Circuit Treasurer. Recommendations will be placed before the CLT for approval and approved requests will be reported to the next Circuit Meeting.

2.6 Mission Grants (In line with Connexional Policy)

Requirements

- a) Before submitting a request the project must have been approved in principle by the Church Council. Those from Circuit Organisations (e.g. Nutgrove CC) should have been approved by their Leadership Team / Management Committee.
- b) The project must assist the church in meeting its mission objectives.
- c) The project must be in line with the Circuit's mission and vision statements.

Criteria for consideration of requests

Applications will be assessed against the following five criteria:

1. Evidence for the prospect of mission
2. Clear description of project, its aims and anticipated results
3. Cost break down
4. Current financial position and reserves policy
5. Funding requirements and possible source(s) of funding

Circuit grants will not normally be greater than 75% of the cost of a project. Projects lifecycle may be for up to five years. Beyond five years the expectation is that the project will become self-funding.

Consideration process

- a) Churches will be required to submit their proposals on two sides of A4 (minimum 11pt font) to the Circuit Steward- Governance and Administration who will liaise with the Circuit Leadership Team (CLT) and, when necessary, to appoint a panel.
- b) Any application involving the appointment of a new Church employee must be accompanied by a completed "Church Appointment Approval form". (Form appended to this paper in Appendix A)

- c) The Church may send up to two Church members and the Minister with pastoral oversight for the Church to the panel meeting to present their proposals and answer questions.
- d) Submissions will be reviewed by a panel appointed by CLT comprising one minister, one circuit steward and the Circuit Steward- Governance and Administration, which will make recommendations to CLT. The panel will not normally include the minister with pastoral oversight of the church or a Circuit Steward who is a member of the church.
- e) Requests for up to £10,000 can be approved by CLT, subject to reporting to the next Circuit Meeting.
- f) Requests for over £10,000 if supported by CLT will be submitted to the next Circuit Meeting for approval.
- g) Once a grant has been approved, the project must commence with 12 months of the approval date otherwise the grant award lapses.

Funding

- a) Projects will be funded using Circuit Model Trust monies with grant for continuing projects payable quarterly in advance.

Post Project Review

- a) Projects will be reviewed after 12 months of commencement by a CLT panel (separate to the Approval Panel) of one Minister and one Circuit Steward. If applicable, further reviews of a project will be scheduled as necessary.

2.7 Property Consents (in line with Connexional Policy)

Requirements

- a) All applications must be submitted to the Circuit Steward - Governance and Administration who will call a meeting of the Property Consent Group.
- b) The Property Consent Group makes a recommendation to CLT which will then submit the project for approval by Circuit Meeting.
- c) Details of the project will be required to be placed on the Methodist Church Property Consents website and be approved by District before any grant can be paid. If required, a full guide on using the property Consents website is available from the Circuit Steward – Governance & Administration.
- d) If after consent for the project has been given, a subsequent property grant application is required, the Property Consents Group will consider this application.

Criteria for consideration of property consent requests

The criteria that will be used to judge property projects requesting Circuit Meeting consent is as follows:

1. Evidence for the prospect of mission
2. Clear description of project, its aims and anticipated results
3. Cost break down
4. Funding requirements and possible source(s) of funding
5. Subjective view of anticipated progress after one year

6. Compliance with Connexion and District procedures

Consideration process

- a) Churches will be required to submit their proposals addressing the above on two sides of A4 in advance of a meeting of the Property Consent Group.
- b) The Property Consent Group will be made up of members who are not connected to the church applying for consent. Members are as follows:
Minister (Nominated by Circuit Leadership Team)
All Circuit Stewards (minimum of at least 3 Circuit Stewards)
- c) Churches will be required to send one/two representatives and, if desired, the Minister with pastoral oversight for the Church to the meeting to present the proposals and answer questions.
- d) The Property Consent Group will then recommend a course of action for the Circuit Leadership Team to endorse prior to presenting the scheme to the Circuit Meeting for their consideration and if appropriate to give their approval.

Schemes that require consent are:

- a) Any structural changes to the property - This would include small projects such as installing a ramp or disabled toilet, or much larger extensions or refurbishments involving the reconfiguring of a building. There is no financial limit on such transactions below which Consent is not required.
- b) The demolition of all or any part of a Methodist building.
- c) Routine repairs on listed buildings or buildings in a conservation area.
- d) Purchase and sale of property plus leases also require consent (but not short term licences).

Additionally, consent required for any scheme that commits a church to an expenditure of over £15,000 .

Please note that necessary repairs as a result of a quinquennial inspection are classed as a scheme and should follow the above rules

2.8 Property Grants

Property Project Grant Assessment Criteria

1. Current financial position and reserves policy
2. Projects are new builds or significant alterations and/or refurbishments.
3. Where there are significant alterations and/or refurbishments, projects will put the fabric and structure of the building into a good state of repair.
4. Projects will address all of the relevant criteria for efficient energy use and sustainability, as detailed in the CIBSE standards, including high performance insulation, as well as addressing pre-existing issues, reduction of incoming mains power, ensuring use of energy efficient heating and lighting, installation of solar panels.
5. Projects will at least conform to the requirements of the Equality Act as it applies to disability access, and all other relevant buildings regulations.
6. Projects contain multi-use, flexible spaces (i.e. buildings which allow people to use sanctuary space throughout the week for a range of activities singly or at the same time, in addition to fulfilling the requirements as a place for worship), and ideally will

obtain the necessary energy performance certificates (EPC) so that they can be let out or used in this way. Up to date gas & electricity inspection certificates are required and, in some circumstances, these will be accepted in place of energy performance certificates.

7. Projects will provide space for either a congregation which is growing or for several congregations (or fellowships) to share

The maximum grant is £100,000 (grants expire 3 years after funding has been confirmed). The Property Consents Group will normally only give a grant of up to a half of the value of the project. Exceptions to this are normally relating to smaller projects with a total cost less than £10,000.

Grant awards are subject to the availability of Circuit Funds.

Evidence must also be provided of local fundraising and applications for other external grants.

Requests for up to £10,000 can be approved by CLT, subject to reporting to the next Circuit Meeting.

Requests for over £10,000 if supported by CLT will be submitted to the next Circuit Meeting for approval.

Post Project Review

- a) Projects will be reviewed after 12 months of commencement by a CLT panel (separate to the Approval Panel) of one Minister and one Circuit Steward. If applicable, further reviews of a project will be scheduled as necessary.

3. Procedures Review

- a) These policies and procedures will be subject to annual review by CLT, with any changes being subject to approval by Circuit Meeting.

Application to Circuit Meeting for approval to appointment of a Church Lay Employee under Methodist Standing Order 570 (2) (b)

Note: Circuit Meeting approval is required prior to a person being appointed.

Church Name:	
Post Title:	
Summary of Tasks: <i>(To be taken from Job Specification)</i>	•
If Fixed Term or Temporary, period of proposed contract	
Hours per week <i>(Full time is 40 hrs)</i>	per month
Estimated annual cost (including Employers National Insurance and Pensions costs, travel and other expenses)	£ per annum (incl pension)
How the cost of the post is to be funded	
Name and position of the person who will act as Supervising Officer	
Date of Church Council meeting at which the post was approved	
Confirmation that District Lay Employment Secretary has been contacted about the post	
Any other facts the Circuit needs to be aware of	

Completed by:		Date:	
Position held:			

Please continue on back of form if there is insufficient space above for any response.

Appendix A

This form should be submitted to the Circuit Steward- Governance and Administration at least **one month prior** to the date of a Circuit Meeting.

Sankey Valley Methodist Circuit

Application to Circuit Meeting for approval to appointment of a Church Lay Employee under Methodist Standing Order 570 (2) (b)

Continuation Section (if required)