

## **DISTRICT ADVANCE FUND GRANTS POLICY (2018)**

This policy document outlines the policy and procedures for making a grant application from the District Advance Fund.

### **1. Policy Statement**

The District Advance Fund provides a resource to support the growth and development of churches and circuits within this District as they seek to engage faithfully in God's mission. It sees as its key purpose the need to provide funds so that churches and circuits may grasp and develop mission and discipleship opportunities within their own localities which would not be possible purely through their own financial resources.

Primarily, the funds from the DA are intended for Mission and Ministry projects, however, it has been recognised that to obtain funding from other sources it is helpful for the applicant to show tangible support from the District. Therefore, up to 25% of the annual DAF allocation will be available to support Property Schemes and the detail of how this will operate is outlined in section 4 of this policy document.

In assessing any application priority will be given to new work especially where that work is directed at engaging with the unchurched, or at new ways of being and perceiving church with the 25 – 40 age group. However, any work whose purpose is to grow the kingdom will be considered for a District Grant

Applications should be submitted according to the process described in Section 4 of this policy statement. Grants must be submitted to the District Grants officer at least four weeks in advance of the District Grants Committee as published in the Synod Directory and in the District web site.

The DAF is administered by the District Grants Committee on behalf of the District Policy Committee. This committee normally meets three times a year to consider applications. However, in the case of small one-off grant up to a maximum of £5,000 such grants can be considered at any time of the year by a sub-group of the full

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grants committee consisting of the Chair of the Committee, District Treasurer, District Grants Officer and Chair of District.

Grants of up to three years duration will be considered but the committee will wish to see how the work fits within the Circuit/Church strategy and how such work will be maintained or developed afterwards. However, in the case of Presbyteral or Diaconal or Lay appointments the Grants Committee may provide funding to support such an appointment for five years in partnership with the individual Circuit. This may be extended if it is recognised that the work needs a longer period to achieve its full potential. The detail of how this will operate is outlined in section 5 of this policy.

Where grants are requested for three years then the committee will normally agree only the first two years, with a proviso that the third-year grant will only be paid after a report of progress against objectives has been submitted. However, in the case of ordained or lay appointments the review will normally take place before the end of the third year. The monitoring approach for these five-year appointments is summarised in section 5.

## **2. District Grants Criteria**

When considering grant applications priority will normally be given to projects which meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Projects that are clearly a tangible development of existing circuit/church strategic priorities and are demonstrated as such by reference to the circuit/church mission plans
- Projects that make effective use of existing resources both within the local context and within the wider ecumenical scene, and where appropriate show evidence of working in partnership either across the circuit or across adjoining circuits.
- Projects that arise from a defined and clear need within the local context and to which the church is seeking to respond appropriately and effectively
- Projects that encourage engagement with the marginalised, the poor and those who are disadvantaged within the community
- Projects that take account of the various age groups and recognise their own context by focusing on those groups that reflect their local context
- Projects that recognise and develop the potential for providing new way of being church

## **3. General guidelines**

These general guidelines relate to all Grant Applications. The additional guidelines specific to Property and Presbyteral/Diaconal appointments are covered in sections 4 and 5 respectively.

- Applications will **not** be considered for work that has already started, or for posts which have already been advertised.
- For general grants (**not** Property and Presbyteral/Diaconal) the District Grants Committee will not normally fund more than 50% of the work and will look for funding to be obtained from local and ecumenical sources as well as other grant making bodies.
- Applications must demonstrate a clear aim for the work for which the grant is sought and it must include specific objectives, an action plan and details for monitoring and evaluating the work
- Details of the local church and/or circuit mission policy must accompany the application
- For general grants both term grants (for a maximum of three years) and single grants are available. For termly grants a report of progress against objectives must be submitted at the end of year 2. A third-year grant will only be approved when this report has been received and accepted by the committee
- The maximum general grant payable in any one year is £20,000. Hence the maximum grant over three years is £60,000.
- The level of reserves in the Circuit will be considered when assessing the level of grant funding offered and details of this approach are included in the guidance notes with the district grant application
- Other than for one-off grants a clear exit strategy from grant support must be submitted with the application.
- Every application must have received Circuit approval before any grant can be paid. However, the committee are prepared to consider an application if the Circuit meeting has not met, but any grant approval will be subject to subsequent agreement by the Circuit Meeting.

#### **4. Property Schemes**

Each year the Grants Committee will set aside up to 25% of available funds to be allocated to Property applications. The available funds are those funds remaining after on-going commitments have been considered.

Grants for this purpose will only be considered when a District grant is judged to support the applicants in other grants for which they are applying.

Because Property schemes are often large in financial terms they will only attract a one-off payment from the DAF and this payment will be restricted to 10% of the

project cost to a maximum of £5,000 (five thousand pounds). Where the project is less than £50,000 then the maximum will be 10%. For example, a project of £100,000 would attract the maximum of £5,000, whereas a project of say, £30,000 would attract the 10% maximum of £3,000 (three thousand pounds).

## **5. All staff appointments**

Presbyteral and Diaconal appointments are for an initial five years and the funding must be assured before an application is submitted to the Connexion. For Lay appointments the initial appointment is normally for three years, but could be extended beyond that period. To allow for the provision of an appointment for up to five years the following approach will be used:

- a. Applications will be agreed for the first three years, but a review will be requested before the end of the third year.
- b. For the remaining two years the DAF will enter into partnership with the Circuit and will commit to cover any shortfall up to the maximum of the District Grant offered over the first three years. For example, if the initial three-year grant is for £15,000 a year then in the last two years the maximum further grant will be £30,000 over the two years. However, the DAF would hope that in the last two years the Circuit would be able to increase its own contribution resulting in a smaller contribution from the DAF

In exceptional circumstances, it may be possible to extend the grant for a further five years on the same terms. But this would only happen where the work is bearing fruit but needs more time to achieve its full potential. In such circumstances, the District Mission Enabler would meet with the Circuit to produce a full report for the District Grants Committee (DGC). The DGC may also wish Circuit representatives to attend the meeting to discuss the scheme in more detail.

## **6. How to apply for a grant**

The application form and a full set of guidance notes are available on the District web site and can be submitted electronically or as hard copy. The application should be submitted to the District Grants Officer four weeks before the next District Grants Committee the dates of which are in the Synod Directory. However the District Grants Committee will expect Circuits looking to apply for funding to consult the District Mission Enabler and the District Grants officer early in the development of a scheme and before any applications is submitted.

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