



## **DISTRICT ADVANCE FUND GRANTS POLICY**

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.

Consequently the funds from the DAF are solely intended for Mission and Ministry projects and as such grants are not considered for any property related projects. Priority will be given to new work especially where that work is directed at engaging with the unchurched, and 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 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. Apart from exceptional circumstances,

grants will not normally be made for ordained appointments unless there is clear evidence that the post can be funded by the circuit for the full five years. No appointment may go to stationing unless it is fully funded.

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.

## 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. Guidelines

- Applications relating to any building project will not be considered
- Applications will **not** be considered for work that has already started, or for posts which have already been advertised.
- 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

- Both term grants (for a maximum of three years) and single grants are available. For termly grants a report of progress against objectives has to 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
- Apart from exceptional circumstances, grants will not normally be made for ordained appointments unless there is clear evidence that the post can be funded by the circuit for the full five years.
- The maximum 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 as a whole will be taken into account when assessing the level of grant funding offered and details of this approach are included in the guidance notes with the district grant application
- When appropriate 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. 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.

If you require any help or wish to discuss your application then contact the District Grants Officer who will be pleased to meet with you and go through the application. However, the District Grants Officer does not vote at the District Grants Meeting and therefore cannot provide any reassurances about whether a grant is likely to be approved.

Charles Nevin

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