

## Church of Scotland Parish Development Fund



The following criteria may be reviewed and amended in the light of future experience.

### **Background and purpose**

The Parish Development Fund has been established in response to the wide-ranging review of the life of the Church of Scotland, *Church Without Walls*. The purpose of the Fund is to encourage local churches to work with others for the benefit of the whole community – and to take risks in living and sharing the Gospel in relevant ways.

### **What will the Fund support?**

The Fund will invest in proposals which relate to the above purpose and...

...make a positive difference in the lives of people in greatest need in the community...

...demonstrate imagination and creativity, offering encouragement and hope to both church and society in challenging injustice and discovering new ways of working...

...are inclusive and collaborative, committed to the formation of partnerships and the building up of trust and positive relationships...

...affirm and involve local people, helping them develop their skills and confidence.

### **Who can apply?**

Local churches or other organisations working with them. It is expected that wherever appropriate, applications will be submitted by groups of churches (working through a lead body) within a natural community or grouping, ideally across traditional parish boundaries.

In all cases, applications will require to be supported by the Kirk Session(s) of the appropriate Church of Scotland congregation(s) serving the community in question.

### **What support is available?**

- The limited financial resources of the Fund will be distributed according to the level of need in each case. Grants will not normally exceed half the total costs of a proposal, up to a maximum grant of £15,000 per annum for three years.
- In certain cases, where the committee feel that the project offers particularly valuable insights which others can learn from, a further two-year extension may be possible. This will be determined after completion of the second year of work.
- Smaller one-off grants will also be available.
- Non-financial support, advice and training may be available through the Fund, other departments of the Church of Scotland, or other agencies, again depending on the level of need in each case.

One of the Fund's main aims is to encourage local churches to begin a journey of discovery and the committee have a particular interest in supporting the development of new or recently established work.

If a project is well established and has benefited from the support of the wider church and other organisations, it is less likely that funding will be available from the Parish Development Fund. This does not mean that the committee consider such work to be of less value than new

projects, but simply reflects a policy on allocating the limited resources as fairly and justly as possible.

### **What is the application procedure?**

- Applicants should contact the staff of the Fund for informal discussion of ideas and proposals as early as possible.
- Applicants may be offered the opportunity to meet together with other groups in a similar or different situation, to share ideas and learn from each other as proposals are being developed.
- Before proceeding with a full and detailed application, applicants must submit a brief proposal in writing (no more than one side of A4) to check that this meets the basic criteria of the Fund.
- When ready to proceed, applicants should submit their proposal on the appropriate form, together with any other information required.
- Applications are considered three times a year and closing dates are the end of March, August or November. Applicants should not normally have to wait more than eight weeks following the closing date to hear the outcome.
- After an application has been received, representatives of the Fund will contact the applicant to formally assess the proposals.
- A recommendation will be made to the committee which will decide the final outcome of the application.

### **If a grant is agreed:**

- Organisations will require to comply with any conditions attached to the grant, some of which will concern following good practice and meeting statutory responsibilities on different matters, depending on the nature of the work involved.
- Appropriate procedures for the payment of the grant will be put in place.
- Organisations will require to comply with appropriate monitoring procedures and report on the progress and development of their work.
- Organisations will be encouraged to join occasionally with others in a mutual sharing of stories, knowledge and experience. It is hoped this will promote the ongoing process of learning and reform throughout the church.

### **If a grant is not agreed:**

- An explanation will be given about the reason(s) for this.
- Applicants will be encouraged to continue to reflect on their proposals and to draw on other non-financial support which may be available through the Fund, from other departments of the Church of Scotland or from other agencies.
- Where appropriate, applicants may wish to resubmit the proposal at a future date, if the points raised in the initial feedback have been adequately addressed. Applicants should bear in mind, however, that re-submitted applications may not necessarily be successful.

**For further information please contact the Development Worker, Iain Johnston:**

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