

Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance

Guidance Notes

for

**Parish Vision
Grant Fund**

And

**Parish Vision
Loan Fund**

August 2020

Guidance Notes

Thank you for asking for an application pack.

- Please read these notes carefully before you complete the application form and gather together supporting documentation.
- For applications for funding of up to £2,000 please complete form A and for those in excess of this amount, please complete form B.
- Please ensure that your proposals meet our aims and are not outside the scope of the scheme.
- If your proposal is educational, please ensure that it also complies with the criteria of the Board of Education which are attached to these notes.
- We strongly advise if your application is over £2,000, that you discuss your proposals prior to submitting your application. Please refer to page 8 for contact details.
- No grant/loan will be offered if work has already begun or people are already employed.

Aims of the Scheme

Your project must fulfil one or more of the three Vision priorities:

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ

- Knowing the Scriptures better through reading, teaching, preaching and study
- Praying with greater depth and urgency for the Kingdom of God to come
- Giving generously of our time, talents and money to the cause of Christ

Being witnesses to Jesus Christ

- Sharing the Gospel of salvation with confidence
- Holding regular enquirers' courses in as many local churches as possible
- Showing God's love in action through projects that meet a local human need
- Offering thorough and accessible Baptism preparation and follow-up
- Planting or renewing 50 new strategic congregations by 2026

Growing leaders for Jesus Christ

- Supporting and equipping the current leadership for today's context
- Enabling missional leadership in every Christian community
- Liberating lay leadership for greater participation
- Creating the varied patterns of Sunday and weekday worship necessary to welcome all kinds of people, especially the newcomer

Prioritising work among children, young people and schools

Priority Contexts:

Applications are welcome from parishes seeking additional resources that focus on three of the Vision 2026 priority contexts (2016-2019):

a) Presence and Engagement

the importance of the Church both remaining present in multi religious areas and engaging positively with communities of other faiths. NB Presence and Engagement is different from inter faith dialogue, although complementary to it

b) Outer Estates

outreach through words and action in parishes that are in the bottom 40% nationally for multiple deprivation (please ask if you're not sure if your parish meets the criteria)

Applications are particularly welcome from parishes to subsidise attendance (both fees and travel) at the Mission Shaped Ministry Course (September 2017-March 2018)

c) Turnaround Parishes

outreach through words and action in parishes that have seen decline in numbers and financial strength over the past five years, and are determined to see growth in the number of, and depth in, discipleship

What you can apply for

Examples of the type of work which will be funded in line with these principles are as follows:

To support and enable:

- 'Seed corn' funding for feasibility studies for Vision 2026 initiatives
- Clusters of parishes working together
- Christians working together ecumenically and, where appropriate, entering partnerships with local faith communities and other groups
- Grants for new people based Vision 2026 and outreach into the community initiatives
- Any work, whether capital or revenue, which meets the aims of Vision 2026

Applicants may like to consider the following list of initiative categories that, from research, appear to be resulting in church growth in the Church of England today:

Encourage personal and parish discipleship (eg attendance at external discipleship events, parish day/ weekend away) Planting new congregations
Improving welcome and integration
More lay involvement in leadership
Evangelism and outreach for any generation
Making the Gospel accessible (Kids' Clubs, Christian Holiday Clubs, Messy Church, Street Parties, Weekend events, Bible Study weeks)
Setting up and running discipleship courses
Training for evangelism, outreach and mission
Showing God's love through Action
New or replacement parish liturgical/ worship materials

Please note that the funding period is normally limited to a maximum of three years. If your project is long term the Diocese would not expect you to rely on continuing Diocesan support, but would anticipate that other sources of funding would be investigated or how the project will be concluded.

Outside the Scope of the Scheme

Please note the following:

1. Parishes in arrears with their Parish Share are unlikely to be offered financial assistance unless a repayment plan has been agreed with the Diocesan Board of Finance.
2. Parishes with sufficient funds/resources to meet their costs are unlikely to be considered for funding. Your accounts will be scrutinised and we will require a full set of complete and compliant accounts, including details of all assets and liabilities and you must also provide a copy of your latest Trustees' report.
3. Parishes may not apply more than once in any 12-month period.

Funding is not available for:

- Maintenance of buildings
- Maintenance deemed necessary, including by quinquennial inspection — this should be forward planned and budgeted for
- Disabled facilities
- Cosmetic improvements
- Outbreaks of dry rot
- Retrospective applications
- Improvements to buildings unless it can be demonstrated that the current facilities are a major hindrance to mission and growth.

Who can apply

An application can be made by parochial office holders within a parish, with the approval of the PCC.

No applications will be accepted from BDBE, departments of the BDBF or Blackburn Cathedral. Requests from these bodies should be made through the Bishop's Leadership Team for Vision 2026 funding.

Supporting Documents and Eligibility

The following documents are required:

- Completed application form
- Mission Action Plan/Vision 2026 Parish Response Form
- Action plan to monitor implementation and measure the impact against your targets

Additional documents required for grants of over £2,000:

- Supporting statement from Area Dean and Lay Chair
- Copy of latest and prior year's Accounts and Trustees report
- Minutes of PCC meetings discussing and approving the application

In addition:

- Your Parish Share payments must be up to date or a payment plan for arrears in place
- An appropriate level of available reserves should be applied to the work
- Your parish must demonstrate it has actively responded to Vision 2026

Employment (additional requirements)

- The appointment process, day to day management of the post and terms and conditions of employment should be in line with good employment practice
- There should be a clear job description, both setting out the main roles and responsibilities of the post and providing a basis by which the post can be appraised
- The post should identify how the post holder can provide support both to the wider community and the Diocese as a whole. It should be a priority of any post funded with Diocesan money that the post benefits not just the individual parish or school) but the wider church
- The information provided with the application should identify the process by which the post and the job description have been developed. There should be indications why the post is structured in a particular way and how the Deanery and Diocese have been involved in this development

Youth and Children's Worker applications require the support of the Board of Education and should also meet the Board's criteria, as follows:

- The application should include comments from the Diocesan Youth Officer on how the role links with other roles supported in the locality.

Parish or Community Worker

- The Parish Development and Stewardship Department must be consulted before any application for a Parish or Community Worker can be considered for support.

If you are making an application relating to employment you must submit the following documents:

- Job Description
- Draft Contract of Employment
- Supervision arrangements
- Management structure
- Budget
- Redundancy provision

You should remember when calculating salary that you should also include National Insurance and pension contributions.

Writing your proposal for funding (Grants over £2,000)

Please note that the maximum amount of funding is 50% of the total project cost with a maximum grant of £20,000.

The written proposal is a very important part of the application process. We will use it to assess your application.

When writing the application please describe the following:

1. You and your work

- Project manager's role in the parish
- What you want to do and to achieve and how it fulfils one or more of the Vision 2026 priorities

2. Making it Happen

- Describe the plans already made and who in the parish is supporting them
- How you will ensure that the activity/scheme achieves its aims
- Who will benefit
- What will happen when the funding ends

Please also provide, where relevant, evidence of support from partners, including funders.

3. The expected impact of your project

4. The Finances

Please describe:

- How you will raise the total funds needed
- How much new money you will raise
- How much of your reserves you will use (you are expected to use an appropriate level of available reserves)
- Any effect the action will have on the long-term financial position of your parish

5. Financial Plan

When preparing your budget:

- Please provide as much information as possible so we can see the breakdown of how you have reached your subtotals and totals of costs and revenue funding
- Make sure the budget balances and show annual years 1, 2 and 3 budget balances and an overall total
- If you intend to employ (pay people) you may need to budget for paying Employers' NI contributions for each person, pension contributions, expenses, redundancy etc as well as holiday pay. You should not include only the basic salary in your budget
- Churches can be liable for VAT. Please include this within your budget unless you have received professional advice that it is not applicable.
- Ensure that you include any professional fees which may be incurred (eg architect, QS, solicitor)

6. Matched Funding

We favour proposals that have at least 50% potential funding identified before we consider making any grant/loan, except in cases of applications for feasibility studies.

For applications for up to £2,000 matched funding of 25% is required.

Conditions for Financial Assistance Awards

Please note that funding for any work will not be released until all external funding is secured and all relevant permissions are in place.

Loans are repayable over a 4-year term and are interest-bearing. There will be a legally binding agreement between the PCC and the DBF.

Detailed conditions attaching to financial assistance awards are attached at Appendix I.

Assessment of your Application

For the short form applications of £2,000 and under the Archdeacons and Diocesan Secretary will review and award the grants.

For applications for assistance of up to £5,000 the matter will be dealt with by the Financial Assistance Group and notified by them to the Directors of the Diocesan Board of Finance.

If additional information or a visit is required, we will contact you.

For applications in excess of £5,000 the group will assess the scheme and report to the Directors of the Diocesan Board of Finance who will decide on the level of assistance to be awarded.

If successful, any additional information and the terms of the grant/loan will then be agreed with the applicant.

Any offer of assistance must be accepted or declined within one month of the offer. The grant/loan will then be released when the conditions set out in the offer have been met.

Grants and loans not taken up within 18 months of the offer being made will be revoked and a further application will be required.

An offer of assistance may be rescinded if the project looks as though it will not come to fruition. This is to ensure maximum and efficient use of monies available.

What happens if your application is unsuccessful

We will write, briefly explaining why your application was unsuccessful.

If you feel your application has been treated unfairly your concerns can be expressed in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Finance, who can be contacted via the Diocesan Offices.

The Chairman will investigate the complaint in consultation with two members of the Board and their decision will be final.

Evaluation of your Project

Money is scarce and we wish to ensure that projects deliver the maximum outputs possible.

Evaluation is a structured way of thinking about what is happening and why. If we give you a grant we will ask you to evaluate your work.

If you fail to return your completed evaluation form no further funding will be released. You may be selected at random for a visit.

Diocesan Offices Contact List

Stewardship Resourcing Officer Stephanie Rankin

Tel 01254 503273

Email stephanie.rankin@blackburn.anglican.org

Diocesan Board of Education

Youth and Children's Work Sarah Earnshaw

Tel 01254 503405

Email sarah.earnshaw@blackburn.anglican.org

Ben Green

Tel 01254 503407

Email ben.green@blackburn.anglican.org

Please contact Kelly Quinn if you need any further help. She will put you in touch with the appropriate person. Tel 01254 958836, email kelly.quinn@blackburn.anglican.org

Applications may be submitted by email or posted to:

Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd
Diocesan Offices
Clayton House
Walker Office Park
Blackburn
BB1 2QE

Appendix I

Financial Assistance Awards

Conditions

Many funding bodies place conditions upon all the awards they make. In line with this and, given the desire for good stewardship of Diocesan funds for the benefit of the whole Diocese, the Board of Finance reserves the right to require the immediate repayment of the full amount of financial assistance awarded if:

All Awards

General conditions

- The use of the grant does not comply with the purpose of the award or otherwise fails to meet the criteria for financial assistance as set out by the Board of Finance
- Funds are secured which are in excess of the budget detailed in your application. Where external funding is secured, which results in any Diocesan award not being required either in part or in full, it is expected that external funding will be accessed in the first instance
- The total funds required are not sufficiently secured
- The Diocese is not informed of any material changes to the work during the life of the award
- There is a failure to complete and return monitoring forms
- There is a failure to create a project file, containing invoices, management accounts and outputs achieved This should be available for inspection by Diocesan Officers
- Parish Share ceases to be paid at the agreed level
- There is no audit trail

Awards affecting Property — Additional Conditions

The Board of Finance reserves the right to reclaim the total amount of the award, plus any pro rata increase in value of the building or site, should the property be sold.

Up to £10,000:

- The property is sold or otherwise disposed of within 25 years

Grants over £10,000:

- The property is sold or otherwise disposed of

Employment Grants — Additional Conditions

The Board of Finance reserves the right to reclaim the total amount of the award if:

- The post is not filled. Please note that no funding will be released until an appointment is made
- The post does not run its full term
- Equal Opportunity procedures are not applied in the appointment process
- There is a failure to comply with Health and Safety requirements
- Disclosure and Barring Service checks, where required, are not completed

Your acceptance of any award is regarded as acceptance of these conditions

**The Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance reserves the right
to amend these conditions at any time**