

Grant funding

Background

Jesus prayed for his disciples on the night before he died. He wanted his disciples to be *in* the world but not *of* the world (John 17:14-15). That's why we need food and drink. That's why he commands us to love. And that's why we need money. We're not to want too much - to become rich and powerful and feel we no longer need God but nor do we need none. We'd starve. We'd get nothing done. But we *do* need money.

**GIVING, GENEROSITY
& THANKFULNESS**

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD

UPWARDS INWARDS
OUTWARDS



Churches always need money of course!

We need heat and light and the consumables that allow our services to proceed.

Sometimes we need larger amounts. It may be an emergency presents itself: we must enact emergency repairs — we need a new roof or get rid of dry rot. Sometimes that money will pay for something planned and in the future. The list is long: something positive like an upgrade to our buildings like installing a disability access ramp to help more people to enjoy our services, or a new kitchen, a better sound system, or maybe the salary for a community worker. But we *will* need money.

The catch-all word used to describe the thing we want to do is **project**. We want a grant to fund a project.

Many of our Churches need more money that our members alone can afford. Even if members give a money sacrificially, the bills are beyond us. We could hold another fair or simply put off those repairs. Or we can seek grants.



What is a grant?

At its simplest, the word 'grant' means that someone gives us money. A Church representative completes an application form making a case for funding for a pre-defined purpose — a new disability ramp, a new sound system, or wages for a new youth worker.

The funder gives us some of the money, the repair and upgrade goes ahead, and the Church does not foot the entire bill because the grant-awarder pays for part of it.



Background considerations

Restricted and unrestricted funds

1

Firstly, the grant can only be spent on the project set out in the grant form. In the jargon of the money world, we say the money in the grant is *restricted*. It would be illegal to obtain a grant for, say, a disability ramp, and then spend the money on salaries or heating or Parish Share or a pre-existing debt.

Background considerations

Core/Revenue or Capital

2

A grant awarder can decide what their money is spent on. In our context, the most common use is a building such as a Church or Parish Hall. It could be repairs but it could be a new kitchen, toilets, ramp or other upgrade. Projects involving building work are often called *capital projects*. The cost of the capital project will include the new bricks and mortar, but also the salary for the workmen, the cost of an architect, decorating and making good. Apart from simple, routine maintenance, these projects are once and for all payments.

Some projects require continuing funding. The most common subject is salary: we need money to pay someone's wage. A grant form will not ask say simply 'wage' though. Rather, it will be wages attached to a project—youth work, for example, or a manager for a community centre, women's refuge, café, or whatever. This kind of funding is sometimes called a core cost (some funders refer to it as revenue cost). Other core costs include heat and light, maybe broadband and phone costs, photocopying and food. The list is long.

Background considerations

It's about people!

3

As a good generalisation, grants are awarded for people. The project being funded, whether it's capital or salary, building or core, is given in order to improve the lives of people. Even if our project involves preserving heritage — we want to repair a fourteenth-century icon, a tomb or buttress — we will need to explain to the grant funder how and why this heritage improves the lives of the people who will then see and experience the heritage. When compiling a grant form, we must always remember: grants are for people.

Background considerations

Devising a project

4

This leads us to the fourth important point:
it's very rare that someone will approach us and
our Church and just give us a large sum of money.
That sort of gift generally only occurs with a legacy.

We have to go out and find it.

The process of obtaining the grant can take several years from
initial consultation and planning, to signing off the completed
work.

Project methodology

Every project is different, but a typical project will follow a route something like this:

Someone in one of our Churches notices a problem, a gap. They have an idea. We need to repair this feature, build that feature. Consulting with your parishioners and local community is an important part of identifying your needs.

1

Next, we must do some research. For example, if it's a building project, we may need to get plans drawn up by a qualified architect. We'll then get professional quotes from either by paying a quantity surveyor or approaching a series of qualified contractors and asking each to make a bid for the work. By now, several people will know about the project and maybe a small team has been assembled to oversee the project.

2

The next part of the planning stage involves the grant form. We need money to actually do the project — the building work, installation, renovation. In many respects, this is the hardest stage.

If we are lucky, a single funder will supply 100% of the amount we need, but many funders will not. We usually need a series of grants unless the projects is very simple indeed. For example, some of the larger grant awarders will not be interested until we have already sourced half the money for the grant.

A phrase we'll often hear at this stage is **match funding**. We must find an amount toward the project and the grant will help fill the difference.

3

Finally, we start the project. Bricks are laid. Electricians and joiners come on site. Plumbers and plasters, painters and floorers. The process often requires an architect to oversee the process from start to finish. They will liaise close with you the **client** and with the company who provide the skilled workers, the **contractor**.

4

Afterwards, it important to evaluate whether the project has been successful and met the needs you identified as part of your application. The funder may wish to visit your project after has finished to see how their monies have been spent.

5

Why do funders give money to a project?

At the heart of any project (simple or multi-stage) is a grant form or series of interconnected grant forms.

The grant form is simply a document on paper or through an Internet portal, which allows you to make a case.

Before you start, it's often useful to find out why the grant awarder is giving away money. There are three simple classes:

- Someone gets a tax break for giving money to worthy causes.
- Someone feels good if they see their hard-earned money making a positive difference.
- A Council or Government is given a large sum of money to spent in a local area to improve local services.

Your Church will need to compile a grant form

Use the form to demonstrate that you know why the funder is giving grants and why we fulfil all their criteria. Therefore,

1. Read the guidance notes extremely carefully. Use the phrases they use. Acquaint yourself with the jargon.
2. Make every word count. There is no space for waffle. The boxes on the form often have a word limit. Clearly projects differ but try to fill each box.
3. Answer the question that the form asks and not the question you would like to address. Like an exam, read the question thoroughly.
4. Grant forms often require attachments. It might be annual accounts for the previous year, photographs and mock-up images, costings, letters of support, quotes from suitable contractors.
5. Get someone to proofread the form, checking for length, spelling and grammar, and eligibility. If the grant awarder has a limited budget and two forms are identical in length and scope but only one is a pleasure to read, then the easier-to-read form is more likely to get the grant.

Even an experienced fundraiser makes mistakes, so keep copies of everything. That way, when someone from the grant awarder phones with a query, you can look extremely professional because you have everything at your fingertips.

Good luck!

A close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The person is wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a desk and other papers.

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