

NEW PLACES FOR NEW PEOPLE GRANTS FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS



OUR STRATEGIC AIM: to encourage and equip innovators breaking new ground, joining in with moves of the Spirit

WHAT WE EXPECT TO SEE: increasing numbers of innovative forms of church visibly growing in depth and reach

PURPOSE OF NEW PLACES FOR NEW PEOPLE GRANTS: to provide necessary financial support to new Christian communities

PRIORITIES

Within the district budget we anticipate having relatively limited funds available for making grants so need to prioritise applications which have:

- a clear financial need (the work will struggle to be birthed or reach maturity without a district financial contribution); or
- demonstrate exceptional potential, but alongside this unusually high risk of bearing fruit only as an experiment for future projects to learn from.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, New Places for New People grants will be no more than £120k. This total will include a mix of monies from the District Advance Fund and Connexional Evangelism & Growth funding allocated to our district.

Where district finances permit, grants for up to six years will be awarded up front to give potential new communities stability. However if applications exceed funds available, grants may be for shorter periods with an indication of intended future support. Multi-year grants will be contingent on satisfactory six-monthly evaluations.

PROCESS

Grants will be considered and awarded by the District Leading Team (or a panel appointed by it). We are attempting to view New Places for New People grants not as a competitive process, but a means of together discerning how to best use financial resources that God has provided, creating a permission-giving culture that takes holy risks. The District Leading Team may from time to time initiate conversations about where we together feel opportunities should be explored, such as through the Superintendents Forum or Mission Forum.

Grant applications will usually follow a four stage process:

Stage 1 - Consult

Experience has shown that considerable investment in time is usually required to listen to local people, potential partners, other stakeholders, and of course to God, in shaping the vision for a flourishing New Place for New People. We strongly recommend that you make use of this [Connexional guide](#) and information on our [district website](#).

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If you are considering starting a New Place for New People (a new Christian community), contact our Mission Enabler as early as possible. The Mission Enabler will be available to provide ongoing support in your explorations, for example by being part of your steering group.

Stage 2 - Explain

Provide a proposal document for DLT explaining clearly your vision, journey, team, markers of fruitfulness, plans for sharing your story, plans for inclusivity, finances, risks and other information. The questions below are intended to help you frame your proposal.

By this stage your plans (including your financial contribution) must have been approved by your governing body, and by your circuit if the applicant is a church.

The Mission Enabler can help you articulate your plans and review drafts of this proposal for you, but it needs to be written in your own words.

Your draft proposal will first be read by the District New Christian Communities Overview Team. This team consists of people with experience of starting new Christian communities. They may raise questions for you to consider, or suggest further preparations to undertake.

Once you have finalised your proposal, it will be circulated to District Leading Team, together with comments from the Overview Team.

Stage 3 - Discern

You will be invited to speak with DLT by Zoom to answer any questions about your proposal. Where possible questions from DLT members will be relayed to you in advance of this meeting.

We will contact you as soon as possible after the meeting to inform you whether a grant has been awarded or declined, or explaining any matters which require further explanation or work before a grant can be awarded.

Stage 4 - Evaluate

Receipt of subsequent years funding will be conditional on receipt of satisfactory six-monthly evaluations. The purpose of these is to support you in reflecting on how your NPNP is developing, what you need to adapt for it to continue to progress, and what you have learnt along the way that you and others should be mindful of for future initiatives.

The Connexional Evangelism & Growth Team will also require a six monthly review and evaluation. The element of the grant provided from their budget will be released annually subject to these evaluations.

We expect your pioneer and other members of your team to engage with our network of new Christian communities and for your pioneer to join the Methodist Pioneer Pathway to aid ongoing peer learning and self-evaluation.

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QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR EXPLANATION:

VISION

- What community are you planning to give birth to?
- Who is it for?
- Where will it be centred?
- What will it be like?
- What will be its key activities?

JOURNEY

- How have you arrived at this proposal?
- Why is this new Christian community needed?
- Will it becoming a Christian community for people for whom existing forms of church feel inaccessible?
- Why does it inspire hope in your context?
- Why is it priority of yours? Were other ideas considered? How does it relate to your overall mission strategy?
- Which stakeholders have you listened to? What did they tell you?
- What research and data have informed your planning?
- How have you tested your ideas? What have you learned from this?
- How have you gained insight from beyond your locality? What networks of expertise will you continue to connect with?

TEAM

- Who are the members of the team responsible for steering and directing this project to date (who are responsible for the contents of this proposal)? What skills and experience do they each bring?
- Will this team continue to have oversight of the NPNP? If not who will this be transferred to and how?
- Who will lead and support the day to day activities of the NPNP? How are you comfortable they will share the same vision as your steering team?
- Will you employ a pioneer or other staff? What will their role be?
- Who will the NPNP be accountable to? When and how have they approved this proposal? (if the application is from a church, you also need the approval of your circuit)
- Who has been and will be praying for your NPNP?

MARKERS OF FRUITFULNESS

What will fruitfulness look like for your new Christian community?

Describe where you expect to be in 1 year, 3 years and 5 years for whichever of these markers are relevant (or your own equivalent framework). What will you do for these to happen? Be as specific as you can – these should become a key reference point for you to assess whether your approach needs to evolve over the coming years.

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Growing disciples

- Fostering a culture of deepening discipleship and lives being shaped by relationship with Christ
- Nurturing new leaders emerging from within the project

Sharing stories

- Creating a culture of invitation to relationship with Christ
- People discovering or rediscovering faith, and where relevant being baptised and welcomed into membership
- Supporting or inspiring future transformative mission initiatives

Passionate contextual worship

- Growing worshipping community deeply rooted in and continually informed by its context
- Expectation that lives will be changed by encountering the presence of God

Long term sustainability

- Financially sustainable after initial start up grants have ended
- New leaders and volunteers continue to emerge
- Self-governing? Or remaining under the direct supervision of your organisation?

Connexional

- Relating well to and in communion with wider Methodism
- Contributing to circuit and/or district (financially, people, expertise etc)

INSPIRING OTHERS

- How will you share the story of your emerging NPNP across your circuit and beyond?
- What do you hope to achieve from this sharing?

INCLUSIVE METHODIST CHURCH

- How will your project be inclusive?
- How does this relate to your organisation's wider journey to reduce barriers and exclusion?

(See guidance relating to Connexional strategy for [Justice, Dignity & Solidarity](#))

RISKS AND RESPONSES

- What are the main risks most likely to prevent the flourishing of your NPNP?
- How are these being reduced to an acceptable level?

FINANCES

Provide an income and expenditure budget for your project for the duration of the grant you are seeking, and the year after the grant finishes (to show how your NPNP will be financially sustainable).

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Make clear what value of NPNP grant you are requesting.

Explain:

- Who else you are seeking funding from, and how certain is this funding
- What level of available funds you hold (and your circuit holds if you are a church) and how this compares to your financial contribution to this work
- What will you do if the district is not able to provide a grant
- How, over time, your NPNP will generate its own income

OTHER INFORMATION

Please provide:

- Your last annual accounts
- Details of the bank account into which a grant should be paid
- Safeguarding policy for your new Christian community (which should have been discussed and agreed with the District Safeguarding Officer, who can provide templates and advice)
- Job description and person specification for pioneer and any other staff to be employed (which should have been discussed with the district HR Officer)
- Your organisation's plan for mission, and when this was last updated (The Methodist [Mission Planning Toolkit](#) is an excellent resource for creating or updating your plan)

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