

Grant Applications for Ignite Team and Lay Pioneers

Questions and Answers

This document sets out questions that have been raised by parishes during the launch and application phases of the process by which parishes can apply for an Ignite Team Member and/or a Lay Pioneer role, along with the answers to those questions. This is a live document which will be added to over time as further questions are asked. Please send any questions that you would like answering to Chrissie Oakley (Chrissie.oakley@blackburn.anglican.org), Chrissie will develop a response and add it to this document.

Questions related to the application process and recruitment

What are the rough timings of the application process and the start date?

The application process runs on a cyclical basis as set out in the [Parish Guide](#). The first round of applications will have a deadline of 28th February 2025, the review panel will meet during March to assess the applications and determine which to progress. Successful parishes will complete their recruitment during the spring/early summer with the intention of the new employees starting in post in July.

We know that it will take some parishes a bit of time to develop their vision and work out when is the appropriate time to apply for one of these roles. The application process will run every 6-months until all posts are filled. This will enable parishes that are not currently ready to develop an application to spend time as a PCC discerning whether this is right for them, and gives them the opportunity to apply in one of the later application rounds.

Will there be an overarching Diocesan job description/person specification (that can be adapted by the parish for local context) to ensure some comparability/ measurability/ accountability and that key objectives are met?

For Ignite roles, consideration has already been given to the role description and person specification that will be needed for the work. The Ignite Project Manager will be available to work with parishes to adapt this to the local context and ensure that the required outcomes and objectives which were set out in our funding application can be met.

For Lay Pioneer roles, there is not currently a standard job description available as we would like parishes to be innovative and consider the types of roles that might be best suited to their local area. The Urban Ministry Enabler will be available to support the parish during the application process and help them to identify what will be required from the role in order to get the most benefit for both the parish and the wider community.

What will be the suggested salary for these positions?

How much is the Ignite grant in year 1? Is there a specific salary to be paid?

In seeking grant funding from the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Fund, it was necessary to set out our proposed salary expectations and therefore how much grant funding was needed. However, we know that the actual salaries offered may vary from these proposed salaries depending on the specific role being advertised and the skills and qualifications of the applicant.

Our grant funding allows a salary of between £26,000 and £32,000 (2023/24 prices) for a full-time Ignite Team Member, this will enable a parish to pay an appropriate rate for the skills of the specific applicant who is successful in recruitment to the role. This recognises that some applicants already have considerable experience in youth ministry where others might be new to these type of work.

The budget for the projects allows a salary of between £13,000 and £14,200 (2023/24 prices) for a 21 hours/week Lay Pioneer. As parishes are developing their role profiles, the Ignite Project Manager, Urban Ministry Enabler and SMMI HR Advisor will be available to assist in developing their role profiles and ensuring that the salary is appropriate for the role being advertised.

In addition to the salary, the grant funding allows for pension provision, national insurance contributions and a level of additional expenses. All budget lines within the funding allowed for a level of inflation each year. The specific details of the grant funding available for your area of interest can be obtained from the Ignite Project Manager (for Ignite roles) or the Urban Ministry Enabler (for Lay Pioneer roles).

Any additional expenditure over and above that included in the grant funding i.e. to cover the cost of activities that the parish may wish to organise, will need to be covered by the parish.

One of the challenges will be recruiting professionals, to a part time role on a fixed term contract. We struggle to bring people to the area on full time roles. How do we square that circle?

The Lay Pioneer roles have been designed with M:Power graduates in mind (but are not exclusively for M:Power graduates, and parishes without M:Power graduates are very welcome to apply). On this basis we know that there are already people in the diocese who are interested in these types of positions. We acknowledge that there are challenges with encouraging people to move to the region to work however, we hope to attract those already living in our area enabling us to provide work for them locally.

We know that some people do not want full time work and these types of roles are often attractive to people who want to balance work around other commitments, such as caring responsibilities.

We do understand that there will be challenges in recruiting this number of new roles and any issues that arise as we start this process will be regularly reviewed via the Project Steering Group and Strategic Programme Board.

In some parishes, there are perhaps no (or limited) volunteers as all falls to the vicar. It seems any application from such places might not succeed. Have I misunderstood this?

In order for these roles to be successful in delivering the missional activities required, they will need to be supported by others within the parish. We understand that in many areas this is a challenge and we know that many of our parishes struggle for volunteers however growing ministry will need the involvement of those within the parish to welcome newcomers and help arrange new initiatives.

As the employer of the new post, the PCC will need to be fully supportive of the application and the vision which the parish is seeking to achieve. Through prayer and PCC encouragement, we hope that parish members will be willing to get involved and provide the needed support. Whilst a parish may not currently have all the elements required to develop a fully robust application, the cyclical nature of the application process provides time for parishes to review their mission and apply at a later stage when more of the church community may have had time to consider the proposals and grow their volunteer support network.

Can parishes apply for both roles?

Parishes are very welcome to apply for both an Ignite Team role and a Lay Pioneer if they meet the requirements for both roles. However, over time the parish needs to pick up funding these roles and therefore it is important that the PCC carefully considers the long-term costs associated with the roles and whether this is something they are able to sustain in the future.

Would the parish have any part in any interview process?

As the employer of the new post, the PCC will have full involvement in the recruitment and interview process for their staff member. The central SMMI HR Advisor will be able to provide the parish with support in developing role profiles, reviewing applications, interview questions and how to conduct the recruitment process however as the employer, the parish will be the lead recruiter.

It is essential that anyone from the parish who is involved in the recruitment process has completed the Church of England safer recruitment training prior to commencing any involvement in recruitment.

Is it in a one hit application? So if you apply and are not successful in the first cohort, would your application still be considered for the next cohort or not?

If a parish applies in one application round and is not successful can they then apply again in a later cycle?

This is **not** a one hit application process. We hope that parishes will work with the Ignite Project Manager or Urban Ministry Enabler to develop a high quality application for submission to the panel however, if there are more applications than roles available, some parishes will not be successful. In this instance, the panel will provide feedback to the parish. The parish can then decide whether it wishes to resubmit its application for consideration at the next panel meeting, adjust its application and then resubmit it, or withdraw from the process.

For Ignite roles, the Youth and Children's Team and the Ignite Project Manager will be available to assist with planning for and developing a renewed application. The Urban Ministry Enabler will provide assistance when applying for a Lay Pioneer role.

As the incumbent of a plurality which works very closely together I would want us to make a joint application but with one PCC being the employer, please can we do this?

Can neighbouring parishes combine applications? Share a worker?

Given that vision to impact beyond the particular parishes that employ ignite team members, are you encouraging combined bids from parishes in a town working together, or would you rather focus on supporting individual parishes?

For Lay Pioneer roles, the application needs to come from one parish.

For Ignite roles, we would prefer the application to come from a single parish however, we are happy to receive applications from parishes in plurality and multi-parish benefices provided there is agreement as to which parish is the legal employer.

We may initially also accept applications for Ignite roles which serve more than one parish/benefice however, one parish will need to agree to be the lead parish and enter into the formal funding agreement with the Diocese Board of Finance in order to manage the funding. Parishes will also need to agree to one line manager and this person must be on the electoral roll of the lead parish. A written agreement will be required setting out the responsibilities between the parishes including how the role holders time will be allocated, this should be discussed with the Ignite Project Manager. The parishes will need to ensure that there are plans in place for long-term sustainability and that all parties are involved in this.

Will there be any support and advice for how best to recruit someone?

We have recently recruited a central SMMI HR Advisor to support with all aspects of HR advice related to SMMI roles, this includes, recruitment as well as employment legislation and contractual guidance. If your parish is successful in your application for one of these roles, our HR Advisor will contact you and support you through the process of recruiting and employing to the role.

My parish is receipt of LICF and we are looking to employ somebody to grow our church via music - growing the choir through schools work and helping to launch new congregations with more contemporary worship styles targeting youth and young adults. It's not specifically a youth role but there will be a focus on younger people because that's where we want to grow. Which of the two streams is most appropriate for us to look at applying to? Or can we apply to both and see what sticks?

One of the great things about the Lay Pioneer roles is that it enables parishes to be innovative in their approach to growing ministry. Over recent years we have seen a number of parishes undertake multi-generational approaches to church growth through the development of a Lay Pioneer role. The Lay Pioneer role may be ideal in this scenario because it will enable your parish to develop the role to suit your circumstances where an Ignite role may not provide the same level of flexibility. We would suggest you speak to the Urban Ministry Enabler as well as the Ignite Project Manager so that we can work with you to develop the best option for your parish.

Questions related to funding including the transfer of costs to the parish

The grant funding declines over 6 years for each role, are there other grants for funding these roles currently available or is it expected that there will just have to be increased giving?

What happens if the parish can't fund the year 4/5 requirement when we reach that point?

The grant funding provided by the SMMI fund is a defined amount and was applied for on the basis of it being a tapered grant where parishes start to pick up the cost of funding the roles over time. However, the tapering should allow time for the parish to consider the options available to fund the role in the longer term. This is likely to be a combination of increased stewardship offered to support the work of the parish alongside the parish seeking to secure additional grant funding through its own grant applications.

The Diocese is employing a Community Development Funding Officer whose role will be to support parishes in identifying potential grant opportunities and assisting the parish in their applications to apply for further grants. It is hoped that through forward planning, increased stewardship and additional grants, the parish will be able to develop the funds to continue these roles as the national funding decreases.

We know that there are grant funding sources available and these often focus on urban, more deprived locations and therefore we hope that our urban parishes will not be put off applying for one of these roles due to concern around future funding because experience suggests these often have a better chance of gaining additional grant support.

By applying, is the PCC committing themselves to this for the full 5 years, or are there break points available? For instance, if after two or three years the PCC feels that the role isn't bearing the fruit they had hoped for, is it possible to end the contract at that point? What recourse does the parish have if the goal & vision set for the role are not met?

When applying for one of the Ignite roles, is the PCC making an absolute financial commitment for five years? If, after a few years, the anticipated benefits of the role are not being realized in the parish, will there be an opportunity to end the contract early? Are there review and assessment points built into the process?

As part of the process for parishes to apply for one of these roles, they will need to set out their vision for the role, the parish mission action plan and what outcomes they hope to achieve through employment of the role. These elements will form a key part of the assessment process to determine which parishes should receive one of the roles, it will be necessary to have a clear future plan for success.

Over the course of the project, the central support teams will be on hand to assist parishes with guidance and advice for both the employee and line manager. It is hoped that through good advance planning, PCC support, high-quality recruitment and line management, along with continued monitoring of progress, a positive outcome will be achieved and the vision and goals will be met. As the employer, the PCC is responsible for the role and therefore if there are concerns these should be discussed with the Diocese Team so that appropriate action can be taken.

Whilst a PCC can decide that it no longer wishes to participate in the programme, it is important that they recognise that external grant funding has been allocated to them and is therefore no longer available to other parishes in the Diocese. If the benefit of this funding is not obtained, this could have implications on the ability of the Diocese to achieve its strategic goals and future opportunities to secure further funding.

As this funding has been provided by the SMMI Board, we will need to report back on our progress with delivering the outcomes we set out in our funding application. We will therefore be working with parishes to collect information and data on the activities the role has been undertaking in order to feedback to the Board on our progress. At a whole programme level, the Diocese will be carrying out an annual review to look at progress in delivering against the whole programme, and in 2027 an external review will also be undertaken.

What would be the full cost to the parish at Yr 6?

What is the expected total cost for each role each year? Is there a set salary increase each year or will it be pegged to annual % stipend increase?

From experience can you give a rough idea of how much it will cost to employ a children/youth leader - including pension contributions/NI etc?

The cost will vary depending on the employment package put together by the individual parish. The PCC is the employer and therefore each PCC will determine the exact employment terms for their employee which will result in different pension contributions and annual salary increases. Whilst an assumed salary increase was included in our estimate of costs when calculating the amount of funding required, this is not linked to a stipend increase and it will be for the parish to determine any salary rise each year based on inflation, whilst ensuring this remains within the overall grant funding allocation. Any costs over the grant allowance will need to be covered by the parish.

The level of national insurance payable will depend on the number of people employed by the parish, in many cases employers national insurance will not be applicable as there is an employment allowance available.

An Ignite role starting in the first recruitment round (2025) with a starting salary of £31,320, 10% employer pension contribution, expenses of £1,660 and a 3% annual pay increase would cost £41,864 in year 6.

The table below shows three scenarios for the costs associated with employing an Ignite Team member. These are based on starting salaries of a) £28,080 b) £31,320 and c) £34,560. The scenarios assume: -

- no national insurance is payable
- that an employer pension contribution of 10% is paid
- there is an expenses allowance of £1,660 each year
- that an inflationary pay increase of 3% is paid each year
- that the roles start in 2025

Please note that these are only scenarios and the actual costs for your parish will vary depending on the actual salary offered and the terms and conditions of employment.

	Scenario A (salary of £28,080 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario B (salary of £31,320 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario C (salary of £34,560 plus pension and expenses)
Year 1	£32,548	£36,112	£39,676
Year 2	£33,524	£37,195	£40,866
Year 3	£34,530	£38,311	£42,092
Year 4	£35,566	£39,461	£43,355
Year 5	£36,633	£40,644	£44,656
Year 6	£37,732	£41,864	£45,995

In these scenarios the parish contribution would be as shown in the table below: -

	Scenario A (salary of £28,080 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario B (salary of £31,320 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario C (salary of £34,560 plus pension and expenses)
Year 1 (0%)	£0	£0	£0
Year 2 (10%)	£3,352	£3,720	£4,087
Year 3 (30%)	£10,359	£11,493	£12,628
Year 4 (50%)	£17,783	£19,730	£21,678
Year 5 (70%)	£25,643	£28,451	£31,259
Year 6 (100%)	£37,732	£31,259	£45,995

A 21 hour/week Lay Pioneer role starting in 2025 on a salary of £13,629, 10% employer pension contribution, expenses of £1,160 and a 3% annual pay increase would cost £18,724 in year 6.

The table below shows three scenarios for the costs associated with employing a Lay Pioneer. These are based on starting salaries of a) £12,974 b) £13,629 and c) £14,283. The scenarios assume: -

- no national insurance is payable
- that an employer pension contribution of 10% is paid
- there is an expenses allowance of £1,160 each year
- that an inflationary pay increase of 3% is paid each year
- that the roles start in 2025

Please note that these are only scenarios and the actual costs for your parish will vary depending on the actual salary offered and the terms and conditions of employment.

	Scenario A (salary of £12,974 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario B (salary of £13,629 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario C (salary of £14,283 plus pension and expenses)
Year 1	£15,431	£16,152	£16,871
Year 2	£15,894	£16,636	£17,377
Year 3	£16,371	£17,136	£17,899
Year 4	£16,862	£17,650	£18,436
Year 5	£17,368	£18,179	£18,998
Year 6	£17,889	£18,724	£19,558

In these scenarios the parish contribution would be as shown in the table below: -

	Scenario A (salary of £12,974 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario B (salary of £13,629 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario C (salary of £14,283 plus pension and expenses)
Year 1 (0%)	£0	£0	£0

	Scenario A (salary of £12,974 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario B (salary of £13,629 plus pension and expenses)	Scenario C (salary of £14,283 plus pension and expenses)
Year 2 (10%)	£1,589	£1,664	£1,738
Year 3 (30%)	£4,911	£5,141	£5,370
Year 4 (50%)	£8,431	£8,825	£9,218
Year 5 (70%)	£12,158	£12,725	£13,292
Year 6 (100%)	£17,889	£18,724	£19,558

Questions relating to Ignite roles

For parishes with existing Children's Ministry, what options for ongoing funding/training might be possible?

We know that there are many parishes in the Diocese that already have dedicated staff supporting with youth/children's/family ministry and we want to learn from them and utilise their expertise with those employed as part of this project. For this reason we intend to invite other youth/children's/family workers who are not directly part of this project to attend the monthly meetings and to be part of the wider Ignite network. This will provide the opportunity to share best practice across the Diocese and help those who are newer to this type of work to learn from the experience of others and provide a greater peer support network for youth and children's leaders who are from other churches in the Diocese. The current training available within the Diocese will still continue, this is provided by the Youth and Children's Team and is free for parishes to access. The Diocese Team will also continue to offer the Children's Ministry Conference, ALM sessions (stand alone or as a series) and a Youth Leader Conference.

The funding available for the Ignite project to enable PCCs to employ a new team member is aimed at parishes which do not currently have a paid youth/children's/families staff member. This is because the funding is aimed at increasing the number of people working in this area and through this growing the level of ministry available across the Diocese. However, if there are parishes which currently have unpaid youth/children's/family workers or individuals who are only paid for a very small number of hours a week, we would advise having a discussion with the central team to look at what options may be available in order to support growing the level of ministry that is on offer in these parishes.

The main drive is for God to significantly increase the ministry with young people in parishes and in the end to grow the numbers of young people attending worship regularly and coming to know Jesus for themselves. If it can be demonstrated that employing an Ignite Team member in addition to the current employed leader would double or better the current number of young people actively participating in the parish then the application would be taken seriously.

The grant applications info says: 'We particularly encourage those wishing to appoint a post to minister to young people aged 10+ to apply.' Is there any feel about the weighting of the 30 places between children/youth leader posts?

No formal weighting has been set for the allocation of posts however, our data suggests that the challenges with working with young people over the age of 10 are more complex than when working with younger children. We are therefore keen to enhance our ministry across the diocese with this

age group and therefore want to encourage parishes to prayerfully discern whether reaching out to work with young people of high school/college age is the right thing for them to do.

Can the roles be job share - for example having 2 part time people for a full time job?

The Ignite posts are designed to be full-time roles. Whilst it may initially seem that this is the same as two part-time roles there is some complexity associated with sharing the role. Our funding allows for the provision of a laptop and phone for the employee, clearly if there is a job share there are two employees and therefore, unless an arrangement is put in place for them to share the resources, there would be an increased cost associated with this. There is also provision for training as part of the Ignite team roles which, for some people, could involve a course at Emmanuel Training College, again this isn't something that it would be easy to share.

However, we are just setting out on this journey and as such know that we have a lot to learn along the way about how this will work in practice. As such, we are very happy to speak to parishes to understand where there may be unique circumstances which we haven't considered and to look at options to support with the resolution of these.

My PCC has previously not had a good experience as employers and so no longer want to employ members of staff, even with support. However, one of the church schools in the parish has offered to take on the HR role of being employers (as they already employ a lot of staff) whilst allowing us to remain line managers and to pay for their role etc. The PCC are comfortable with this as they are technically on the payroll of school but with the Parish agreeing to pay the salary. Is this viable?

It is great that the PCC is keen to look at options to enable you to apply for an Ignite role however, having a school as the legal employer is not a viable option in this instance. Whilst we are keen to work closely with all our church schools, we need to be careful in how we promote our Christian values within the core curriculum.

We will be looking for our Ignite Team members to work closely both within parishes and liaising with schools in building an understanding of Jesus and growing children/young people in their discipleship. However, the PCC needs to lead on this and therefore should be the legal employer of the role.

There are schools who employ chaplains but they usually have a different brief – to run school worship, support SIAMS, etc. The key focus for the Ignite Team is to enable the bridge back to the local church, so it is important that the church is the employer as this leaves no ambiguity as to the purpose of the mission.

For the Ignite programme will fruitfulness be measured by increasing attendance at services as per current stats collected, or through other types of work such as in schools etc. How will the success of the programme be judged by SMMI Board?

In developing our funding application to the SMMI Board, we set out some key metrics which we aim to deliver. We will need to report back to the Board on our delivery against these metrics. For the Ignite programme these metrics included an increase in the number of children/young people attending worship activities as recorded on the annual Diocese Data Collection Form as well as the number of activities and events organised by the new Ignite Team Member.

We will work with parishes that are successful in their application for an Ignite role to develop specific targets which we hope they will be able to achieve through the work being completed within the parish. These targets will vary depending on the parish as we know churches currently have a very different number of children/young people attending their activities and therefore it is not appropriate to apply the same target in all contexts. We hope that those parishes employing an Ignite Team Member will be able to play a significant role in supporting the Diocese in achieving our overall vision to increase the number of children/young people attending our churches.

In the event of the role not working out or the parish being unable to fund it - could there be a redeployment option within the Ignite team?

As the PCC is the legal employer of the role, the PCC will be responsible for terminating any employment should the role not be able to continue. However, we would hope that the parish discusses this with the Central Diocese Team to consider whether there are any other options available particularly in light of the fact that other parishes may be looking to employ a similar skilled individual. The employee may be able to apply for another post should one be being advertised at that time. Each circumstance is unique and this would be a specific situation that would need to be reviewed and discussed should it arise.

How might Ignite team members split their time between the parish and the wider Ignite team? We'd want to ensure they are firmly embedded within team and parish life.

We want the Ignite team to work together and support each other and as such will require them to come to monthly team meetings, to meet regularly with the Ignite Mentor and to undertake any training that is set up centrally for them. Participation in additional Diocese wide activities will be key to the success of the programme and ensure that the individuals feel supported in their role and are able to learn from others undertaking a similar job. Joining these Diocese wide events will support the establishment of good networks relationships across the diocese which we hope will enable multi-church activities to be arranged.

The amount of time expected to be spent on additional Diocese wide events (alongside the monthly team meeting and training) will be agreed with the applicant parish and depends on the skills of the employee, but we would not expect this to exceed the equivalent of four days in the year. We believe that being involved in Diocesan wide activity will upskill the employee and bring wider benefit to the employing parish.

Could the Ignite worker take on responsibility for some existing work or is the idea they are responsible for building brand new work?

These roles are designed to enhance the amount of work a parish is able to complete and therefore grow our capacity for mission. For this to happen, the role will ideally be taking on additional work over and above that which the parish is already undertaking. If your parish already employs a children's/youth worker and wishes to apply for an Ignite role, this is encouraged but your application will need to set out how the new role will work alongside your existing team members to grow the level of work that is being carried out.

Questions relating to Lay Pioneers

Roles over 15 hours can have an impact on benefits, experience suggests that people in similar roles do not wish to work more than 15 hours/week, has this been considered?

We are aware of the implications of people working more hours, this was one of the considerations when designing the Lay Pioneer role to be 21 hours/week. Whilst the funding has been granted for 21 hours, we want parishes to think creatively in what is possible from these roles and therefore if a parish wishes to apply for a role which can be completed in a lower number of hours, please do discuss this with the Urban Ministry Enabler. There is scope on the application form to set out the number of hours which will be worked and what will be delivered through this. It will be for the Grant Allocation Panel to consider this alongside any other applications that are received.

If one parish decided to recruit to a lower number of hours, this potentially enables additional funding to be available for another parish which may wish to consider a greater number of hours.

Grant Allocation Panel

Will the decision panel be people from the Diocese?

The panel includes a range of people with a variety of backgrounds and whilst some of them do have a connection with the Diocese, their role on the panel is as an independent. The panel will be chaired by Charles Hadcock. Charles worships at Blackburn Cathedral and is one of the Deputy Lieutenants of Lancashire, he is a contemporary sculptor by trade and has considerable experience in chairing grant making bodies.

The panel will be made up of: -

- An independent Chair
- The Archdeacon of Lancaster
- The Archdeacon of Blackburn
- A representative from the Diocesan Board of Finance
- A representative from the Diocesan Board of Education
- An independent representative on behalf of 'growing a younger church'
- An independent representative on behalf of 'building a socio-economically diverse church'