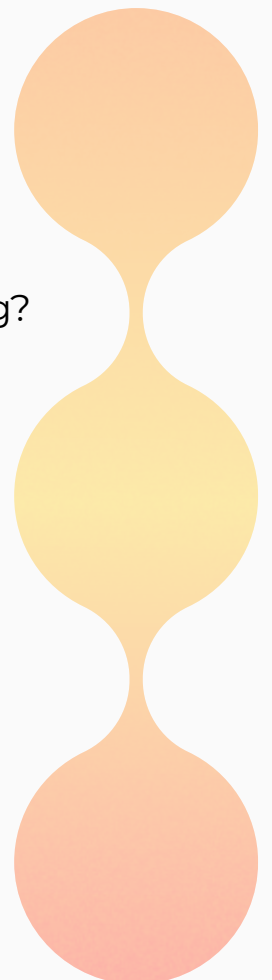
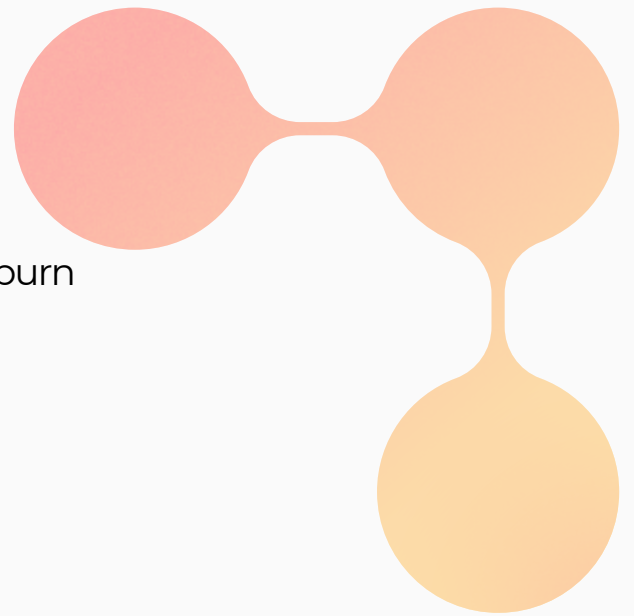


Parish Guide to Grant Applications for Ignite Team and Lay Pioneers



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A message from the Bishop of Blackburn



In June 2024, it was wonderful to be able to announce that the Diocese of Blackburn had been awarded £25.5 million by the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board to invest over nine years to further enhance our aim to be 'healthy churches transforming communities' across the county.

This investment will support the Diocese in continuing to grow the church across Lancashire in depth and number while simultaneously shaping a younger, more socio-economic and culturally diverse church.

The funding we have received provides investment to cover a range of areas, one of which is to enhance our work to be a church that reflects the communities we serve. Through this we will move to being a younger church and a more socio-economically diverse church. To enable this to happen we will be recruiting: -

- 30 new parish-based posts to form the 'Ignite Team' across Lancashire. These individuals will work to build a church community to reach children, young people and families and support an increase in the numbers attending worship regularly.
- 18 parish-based Lay Pioneers. These people will support mission in our urban churches; enabling greater outreach in these communities.

This is an exciting opportunity and I would like all parishes to pray and carefully discern whether one of these parish-based posts could support in furthering the mission within your local context. This guide sets out the opportunity available, along with when and how you can apply for a parish-based post. Please share this information with your church community and prayerfully consider whether one of these roles is right for you.

I look forward to seeing what missional opportunities are unlocked across the diocese through this amazing investment.

+ Philip Blackburn

Introduction

This is an exciting opportunity to partner with the Diocese to see your church become younger and/or more socio-economically diverse, so that it better reflects the parish you serve.

Inspiring Children & Young People

The Diocese of Blackburn currently has approximately 5,000 children and young people attending our churches out of a total population of 288,000 people who are under the age of 18. This demonstrates the scale of the challenge, but also the opportunity available in generating a Younger Church. In addition we have over 44,000 children and young people who attend one of the 181 CofE primary schools and 10 CofE High Schools across the Diocese, almost all of which have headteachers with a Christian faith.

It is recognised that where churches are seeing growth in children's/youth ministry, there is often a dedicated employed leader supporting this. Applying for one of 30 funded posts for an Ignite Team member will enable you to work effectively locally with communities and schools to raise the level of understanding about the Christian faith, reach more young people, and grow our church younger.



Growing a More Diverse Church

We are aware that 35% of the population served within the Diocese of Blackburn (nearly 0.5 million people) live in parishes that are in the lowest decile for indices of multiple deprivation (2019 data). There is a real need for additional ministry resources in urban estates and lower income communities to help spread the Gospel and minister in these areas and through this make our church more socio-economically diverse.

Applying for one of the 18 Lay Pioneers will support our urban parishes in serving those lower income areas that often the church struggles to reach. The Lay Pioneers provide parishes with an opportunity to be agile and imaginative in the role a staff member may fill. They may be an evangelist, a community development worker, a chef, a family support worker, a nurse or a work coach. The precise role will depend on local need and the vision of your church.



What can parishes apply for?

We have grants available for two types of roles which parishes can apply for.

Option One:

Ignite Team

(full-time roles, 35 hours per week)

Parishes can apply for one of the 30 Ignite Team roles. These will be locally employed and will work with the Diocesan Youth Team to: -

- **Enable** more engagement with local young people and their families through running events that lead to contact i.e. youth events and socials
- **Nurture** young people in the church community providing the opportunity to introduce worship in a familiar setting
- **Disciple** those young people through such activities as bible studies and collective worship, leading to an integration into the wider church family

We particularly encourage those wishing to appoint a post to minister to young people aged 10+ to apply.

Alongside the local work in the parish, the Ignite Team will meet regularly to share ideas, undertake training together and build support networks. Depending on the level of training that role holders have already undertaken, additional training courses will be available to support ongoing development.



Option Two: Lay Pioneer (part-time roles, 21 hours per week)

Parishes will be able to apply for one of the 18 Lay Pioneer roles. These will be locally employed to serve in areas of lower income that the parish church is struggling to reach. Ideally, these will be people already living within the community who are known and trusted, who God is calling out to serve Him in making more and deeper followers of Jesus.



The posts may be lay evangelists however, we are keen to encourage creativity and as such, other roles that enable local mission in an urban context will also be considered, for example a chef or a nurse. Those appointed to the roles will be encouraged to participate in the M:Power Programme as this provides a fantastic opportunity to learn more about ministry in an urban context, unless they are already M:Power graduates.



Who can apply?

We would encourage all parishes to prayerfully consider whether God is calling them to apply for one of these posts. The application process is therefore open to ALL parishes providing: -

- The parish is not currently in receipt of funding from the Strategic Development Fund (SDF)
- In the previous year, the parish has either: -
 - contributed its full parish share
 - contributed the agreed level of parish share following a parish share meeting, and have made a firm commitment to meeting the current year's request/agreed parish share
- That the parish meets the following safeguarding requirements: -
 - It has a designated Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), and where the PSO is a member of clergy, a second or deputy PSO is appointed who is not a member of clergy or related to the incumbent
 - Safer recruitment is followed for all roles including voluntary roles
 - All required safeguarding training for church officers is up to date
 - The Parish is using the safeguarding dashboard/hub to ensure compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures
- The parish has submitted its Statistics for Mission, Diocese of Blackburn Data Collection Form and Financial Return – these are essential as information from these returns will be needed to monitor the impact of the national funding
- For Lay Pioneer roles, the parish should be in the lowest decile for indices of multiple deprivation. This is likely to mean the parish is in receipt of Lower Income Communities Funding (LICF) in the form of a credit to their parish share calculation.

How do parishes apply?

Parishes can apply using an application form:

- For the Ignite Project this is available from the Ignite Project Manager
- For the Lay Pioneer Project this is available from the Urban Ministry Enabler

Contact details for the Ignite Project Manager and Urban Ministry Enabler can be found at the back of this document.

Help and support is available to assist your parish in completing an application and you should make use of this support.

Please contact the Ignite Project Manager or Urban Ministry Enabler to let them know that you are planning to apply for a role. This will enable us to provide you with the necessary assistance in completing your application.

The application form has been designed to help parishes think about the steps they need to have considered before submitting an application. We want to encourage applications but also need to ensure we have sufficient information to make a fair assessment.



Who will assess parish applications?

Once applications are received, they will be assessed by an independent panel. The panel is 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'

The panel will consider applications and determine where posts will be most missionally fruitful. This assessment will consider the following: -

- Parish vision
- Local support
- Safeguarding
- Resourcing
- Finance

Over time, there will need to be a fair distribution of posts across the Diocese and amongst different church traditions however, there are no set formal criteria or quotas in relation to this. Diocesan Officers will monitor where posts are allocated and provide appropriate information on tradition and demographics to the independent panel as the programme progresses.



When can parishes apply?

The roles will be recruited over a number of years on a phased timescale.

This will allow your parish to identify the right time for an application; enables support to be available to assist with recruitment; and provides time for those recruited to be embedded into the team. The timeline for each phase of the application process is as set out below: -

Phase	Number of posts available	Deadline for parishes to submit applications	Panel meets to review application	Parish recruitment	Roles Start
1	5 Ignite Team 3 Lay-pioneers	February 2025	March 2025	April-June 2025	July 2025
2	5 Ignite Team 6 Lay-pioneers	August 2025	September 2025	October-December 2025	January 2026
3	5 Ignite Team 3 Lay-pioneers	February 2026	March 2026	April-June 2026	July 2026
4	5 Ignite Team 3 Lay-pioneers	August 2026	September 2026	October-December 2026	January 2027
5	5 Ignite Team 3 Lay-pioneers	February 2027	March 2027	April-June 2027	July 2026
6	5 Ignite Team	August 2027	September 2027	October-December 2026	January 2028



What happens if the panel wishes to approve more applications than are available?

This is a fantastic opportunity for parishes and therefore it is possible that more applications will be received than there are roles available. Unfortunately, it's not possible to have more posts approved than were specified in the Diocese's funding application to the Strategic Mission and Ministry Board. This is partly due to the timing of the grant funding, but also to ensure that we have the support available for parishes to assist them through the recruitment process.

However, if the panel receive a large number of high quality applications they may wish to approve more than the specified number. In this instance, they can approve roles for the next recruitment round (but no further). Parishes will be advised that they have been allocated a role but will not be able to recruit into it until the next recruitment window. If all the roles for the next application round are pre-approved, that application round will not run and the independent panel will not meet.



Can parishes submit joint applications?

Lay Pioneer roles will only be allocated following an application from a single urban parish or benefice which meets the criteria of being in the lower decile for deprivation.

Ignite Team roles are available to all parishes regardless of their location. For these roles we would also prefer the application to be from a single parish or benefice however, we may initially accept applications for roles that serve more than one parish or benefice providing the following steps have been taken: -

- There is clear agreement as to which parish is the lead parish, this is the one that will employ the role and hold the contract between the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF)/Diocesan Board of Education (DBE).
- The parishes will agree one line manager for the role and this line manager will be on the electoral roll of the lead parish.
- There is a written agreement in place between the parishes as to the responsibilities to be undertaken by the role across each parish, including how the role holders time will be allocated, and that this has been discussed and agreed with the Ignite Project Manager.
- There is a plan for the responsibilities of the individual parishes in relation to the long-term financial sustainability planning for the role.

Please note that for both Lay Pioneer and Ignite Team roles, a parish Funding Agreement will be put in place between the DBE or DBF and the PCC of the parish. In the case of a multi-parish application for an Ignite Team role, this agreement will be with the lead parish and not with a group of parishes.



How are individuals recruited into the posts?

Once a parish has been informed that they have been successful in their application, they will need to develop a job advert and advertise the role. The Diocese HR team will be on hand to provide support and advice with this process helping with the policies and procedures parishes need to have in place prior to the PCC employing a member of staff. The parish will also need to name the line manager of the role, this may not necessarily be the incumbent.

It may be that your parish already has someone in mind who would be ideal for the role. If this is the case, this should be highlighted within the application form so that it can be considered as part of the application assessment. However, even in cases where a parish already has a suitable candidate in mind, full safer recruitment processes must be followed.

If issues arise as part of the recruitment process which make it challenging for a specific parish to recruit to their role, this will be discussed with the parish. If necessary, a further review will be undertaken through the diocesan governance process to determine whether the recruitment should continue or whether the role should be offered to another parish in order to maintain the momentum across the programme.



When does the parish need to start financially contributing?

Initially the roles are fully funded through the generous grant that the Diocese has received. When parishes are developing their applications, they should contact the Ignite Project Manager or Urban Ministry Enabler in order to gain more information on the amount available through the grant towards the salary and additional costs that might be incurred.

However, to enable long-term sustainability of the roles, overtime it is necessary for the costs to transfer to the parish. This transition uses a sliding scale as set out in the table below. As the Ignite Team and Lay Pioneers are recruited over a number of years, parishes will be at different stages of the financial transition depending on when the role was approved and appointed.

Year	Contribution available from the Diocese grant	Contribution from the parish
Year One	100%	0%
Year Two	90%	10%
Year Three	70%	30%
Year Four	50%	50%
Year Five	25%	75%
Year Six onwards	0%	100%

We want all parishes to feel able to apply for these roles and would not want concern over long-term financial sustainability to be a reason not to progress an application. This is why our grant also provides funding for us to employ a post of Community Development Funding Officer. This person's role will be to support your parish in seeking grants and increased giving so that you can fund the role in the longer-term.

How will the roles be monitored?

As with most grants, we are required to report our progress with delivering key objectives. In the case of these roles we will need to report regularly to the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board, who distribute the funds on behalf of the Archbishop's Council, to demonstrate that their funding is making a difference. The information that your parish will be required to collect and report will be discussed and agreed as part of setting the contract between the Diocese and the parish. There will be central support to help you collect and monitor this data.

Who is responsible for employing the role?

Roles will be locally employed and the local PCC will be the employer. As an employer, your parish will need to have in place the appropriate employment policies and procedures and ensure that these are being followed.

To ensure HR support is available to parishes, our grant also provides funding for us to employ an HR Advisor specifically to assist with the HR requirements associated with the delivery of our funded programme. This person will be on hand to provide advice and support to assist you with any employment related concerns.

In addition to the metrics required as part of the project, the PCC, working with the line manager, can also monitor additional objectives in order to undertake the day to day management of their employee. This information could aid with future grant applications to other organisations to sustain the role into the future.



What training will be available?

Training and cross project networking will be provided for both the Ignite Team Members and the Lay Pioneers. Parishes will need to agree to release their employee to enable them to participate in these sessions.

Ignite Team Members will have the opportunity to undertake accredited training from Emmanuel Theological College alongside diocesan training courses and monthly networking meetings. Lay Pioneers will undertake the M:Power training programme (if appropriate), meet with colleagues in similar roles via monthly networking meetings, and may undertake additional training in line with the specific focus of their role.

What happens if a parish applies for a role and is unsuccessful in its application?

We hope that parishes will be excited about this opportunity and want to apply for one of the roles on offer. However, with only 30 Ignite Team and 18 Lay Pioneer roles available, we know that not every parish can be successful in securing a role. Whilst this will undoubtedly be disappointing, it does not mean that the parish can't continue to grow its ministry.

The central diocesan teams have a range of people available to support parishes, these individuals are on hand to assist with ideas and materials so that all churches can continue to grow in line with our vision to be 'healthy churches transforming communities'. Should an application be unsuccessful our teams will work with your parish to ensure that you have the support needed.



Who can I speak to in order to get more information?

Queries in relation to the Ignite Project: -

Deputy Director of Education – Sally Schofield
Sally.Schofield@blackburn.anglican.org

Ignite Project Manager – Sam Lee
Sam.Lee@blackburn.anglican.org

Queries in relation to the Lay Pioneers: -

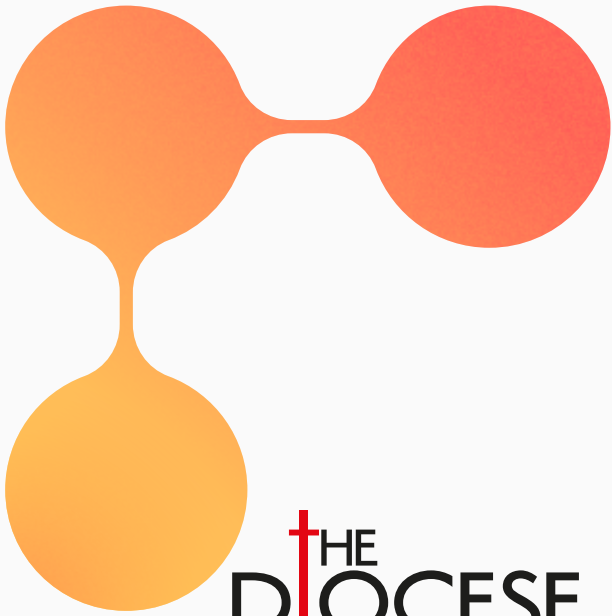
M:Power Project Lead – Rev. Rebecca Roberts
revrebecca@hotmail.com

Urban Ministry Enabler – Jenny Brown
Jenny.mpower@blackburn.anglican.org

General queries in relation to the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment: -

SMMI Programme Manager – Chrissie Oakley
Chrissie.Oakley@blackburn.anglican.org





THE
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OF
BLACKBURN
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN LANCASHIRE



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OF EDUCATION



January 2025

