 

**Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance**

**Guidance Notes**

**for Parish Vision Grant Fund**

**and Parish Vision Loan Fund**

**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 £5,000 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 £5,000, 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**

The aim of the scheme is to help parishes make more and deeper disciples for Jesus Christ.

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

1. **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
* Worshipping in spirit and truth
* Giving generously of our time, talents and money to the cause of Christ

1. **Being witnesses to Jesus Christ**

* Sharing the Gospel of salvation with confidence
* Meeting human need: actions as well as words
* Planting 10 Strategic Church Plants and 200 New Local Congregations
* Caring for God’s creation

1. **Growing leaders for Jesus Christ**

* Developing a diocesan-wide culture of vocational discernment so that all may hear God’s call and use their gifts in the service of the Gospel.
* Discerning and forming theologically literate lay and ordained leaders, rooted in prayer and with a deep love of the Lord Jesus
* Nurturing a healthy partnership between clergy and laity by fully implementing the Lay Majority Ministry framework
* Forming and supporting a pipeline of highly motivated deacons and priests in order to enable the Diocese’s clergy deployment strategy.

1. **Inspiring children and young people**

* Discipling and nurturing children and young people in their Faith
* Holding regular worship that is accessible and appealing to children and young people and their families.
* Enabling growth in the numbers of leaders of children and young people
* Leveraging a step change in ministry with those aged 11-16
* Facilitating effective partnerships between churches and schools

**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 to employ people whose work will help and grow new and deeper disciples for Jesus Christ

• 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:

Encouraging personal and parish discipleship (e.g. attendance at external discipleship events, parish day/ weekend away)

Planting new local 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 with unresolved parish share issues are unlikely to be offered financial assistance.

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 incumbent and 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 Vision and Strategy Team for Vision 2026 funding.

**Supporting Documents and Eligibility**

The following documents are required:

• Completed application form

• Mission Action Plan/Vision Action Plan or equivalent

• Action plan to monitor implementation and measure the impact against your targets

Additional documents required for grants of over £5,000:

•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 share deal agreed with Directors

• 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 job Description should make clear how the worker is to be line managed and by whom. Particular care should be taken if the incumbent may be on sabbatical leave at any point to ensure that the post holder is fully supported in their absence.

• 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/ Families 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.

• A supporting letter/email to be included with the application from the Diocesan Youth Advisor or the Diocesan Children’s Work Advisor.

**For all employed posts**

We advise an early conversation with Andy Cooke HR Manager in respect of Job Descriptions, Contracts and Pension Contributions – [Andrew.cooke@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:Andrew.cooke@blackburn.anglican.org)

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 £5,000)**

**Please note that the maximum amount of funding is 50% of the total project cost with a maximum grant of £25,000.**

**If your parish qualifies for LICF funding then you may apply for additional funding towards the second 50% from the LICF Top Slice. Please note that this fund limited and subject to separate approval up to a limit of £20,000.**

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

1. **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)

* What reserves you are retaining and why these are not being used to fund the project

• 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 for applications for LICF parishes and applications for feasibility studies.

For applications for up to £5,000 matched funding of 25% is required unless the parish qualifies for LICF funding.

**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 l.

**Assessment of your Application**

For the short form applications of £5,000 and under the Archdeacons and Diocesan Secretary will review and award the grants.

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

For applications in excess of £5,000 the Financial Assistance Group will assess the scheme and report to the Finance Committee who will decide the application with the relevant archdeacon and report their decisions to the Directors of the Diocesan Board of Finance for their information.

If a parish is asking for an additional 50% to be met from the LICF Top Slice then the additional 50% grant is to be approved by the Finance Committee.

Any application which the Financial Assistance Group would like to recommend for support but does not meet the above criteria is to be referred to the Finance Committee.

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**

**Chair of the Financial Assistance Group**

The chair shall be one of the Archdeacons and from 1.9.24 shall be the Archdeacon of Lancaster, Venerable David Picken.

**Stewardship Resourcing Officers**

Stephanie Rankin (Lancaster Archdeaconry)

Tel 07717 116483 Email [stephanie.rankin@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:stephanie.rankin@blackburn.anglican.org)

Christy Sawyer (Blackburn Archdeaconry)

Tel 07483948381 Email [Christy.sawyer@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:Christy.sawyer@blackburn.anglican.org)

**Diocesan Board of Education**

**Youth and Children’s Work**

Sarah Earnshaw Tel 01254 503405 Email [sarah.earnshaw@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:sarah.earnshaw@blackburn.anglican.org)

Ben Green Tel 01254 503407 Email [ben.green@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:ben.green@blackburn.anglican.org)

For an informal chat or further help and advice, please contact Kelly Quinn

Tel 07385 819825, email [kelly.quinn@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:kelly.quinn@blackburn.anglican.org)

Applications may be submitted by email or posted to:

Mrs Kelly Quinn

Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd

Diocesan Offices Clayton House

Walker Office Park

Blackburn

BB1 2QE

Updated 28.8.2024 to be approved by the Finance Committee

**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**

August 2024