

Connexional Grants Committee Policy

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Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Note
Resolution	98/1. The Council adopts the policy for connexional grants towards Mission and Ministry in Britain.

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	To present the Council with the policy for connexional grants towards Mission and Ministry in Britain that has been produced by the working group
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council requested a grants policy to be formulated for presentation to the Council in October 2017 • The policy is now supplied to the Council for adoption.
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	MC/17/50 Connexional Grants Committee

Connexional Grants Committee Policy

1. Following consideration of paper MC/17/50, the Council appointed Professor David R Matthews, Dr Daleep S Mukarji and the Revd Michaela A Youngson to work alongside the Connexional Secretary and representatives of the Connexional Grants Committee to formulate a grants policy for presentation to the Council in October 2017.
2. The group has met and a policy has been shared with the SRC, and is now presented to the Council for adoption.

*****RESOLUTIONS:**

- 98/1. The Council adopts the policy for connexional grants towards Mission and Ministry in Britain.**

Connexional Grants towards Mission and Ministry in Britain: Policy, Criteria and Practice

This document contains three sections:

- Section A – Policy
- Section B – Criteria for each category
- Section C – Practice Guidelines

Section A - Policy

The Church in One Mission: God's Mission.

1. The Church's task is to participate in God's Mission. This is affirmed in several Conference statements as well as Part 10 of *the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church* (CPD) entitled the Church in Mission. SO 1000(1) affirms that "In Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself. Through the Church, the Body of Christ, within which the Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place, God seeks to reconcile the world itself into a unity in Christ. In this mission, necessarily undertaken both locally and globally, the vocation of the Church is to be a sign, witness, foretaste and instrument of the Kingdom of God."
2. In 2012, the Conference received the *Future Mission Together* report which challenged the Church to a vision in mission. Furthermore, SO 1000(2) states that "The Methodist Church is committed actively and intentionally to work towards a world transformed by the love of God, sharing the love of God and celebrating its place within a worldwide family." *Future Mission Together* had at its heart the conviction that "there is no essential difference in the mission of God wherever it is exercised, for God's mission is one and that mission is both local and global."
3. SO 1000(3) states that "Every member of the Methodist Church is expected actively to engage in this mission which lies at the heart of the nature, identity and self-understanding of the Church."
4. In *Called to Love and Praise* (Methodist Conference 1999) the Conference affirmed that "The Gospel has to be both spoken and lived. The gospels show that 'good news and good works are inseparable', and that to preach the kingdom of God involves a commitment to justice and peace. So, although Christians may differ in their respective commitments to evangelism and social justice, the two tasks belong together."
5. In 2000, the Conference adopted *Our Calling*: "The Calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of Christ's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. The Church exists to:
 - Increase the awareness of God's presence and celebrate God's love (Worship)
 - Help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care (Learning & Caring)
 - Be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice (Service)
 - Make more followers of Jesus Christ (Evangelism)"
6. In 2004, the Conference affirmed the *Priorities for the Methodist Church* stating that, in partnership with others wherever possible, the Church will concentrate its prayers, resources, imagination and commitment "to proclaim and affirm its conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and all the world;" and that the Church would give attention to:
 - "Underpinning everything we do with God-centred worship and prayer
 - Supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor in Britain and worldwide

- Developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved
 - Encouraging fresh ways of being Church
 - Nurturing a culture in the Church which is people-oriented and flexible.”
7. Drawing upon the Standing Orders, the One Mission Statement, *Our Calling* and the *Priorities for the Methodist Church*, grants for Mission and Ministry in Britain are provided to support mission in Britain through an approval process led by and implemented by the Connexional Grants Committee (CGC) on behalf of the Church. The CGC supports projects and programmes for mission and ministry in the Methodist Church in Britain as well as for the mission, service and activities of Partner Churches across the globe.
 8. This policy focuses on strategy for Mission and Ministry grants in Britain. A policy for global partnerships has been approved by the Methodist Council (see *Partnership, Focus and Evolution: A strategy for expressing One Mission through our Global Relationships (MC/16/8)*).

Overall purpose and intention

9. The purpose of awarding grant funding is to encourage new ideas in mission, the taking of risks, the development of capacity, leadership and infrastructure for mission and to support equality and diversity. It is important to bear in mind that grants and connexional funds represent a small fraction of what is spent by the Church in ministry and mission across the Connexion. Mission and evangelism are very central to the life, witness and service of the Methodist Church and will continue to be a major commitment of the Church and its resources in the years ahead. This grants programme should be seen in that context.
10. The overall intention of the CGC is to use limited funds for ‘high quality’ exceptional projects at the cutting edge of mission that have influence or set an example to others.

Eligibility

11. Grants are offered and available for the following groups in the following order of priority:
 - i. To support the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church at local, circuit and district levels.
 - ii. To Methodist bodies and ecumenical institutes working in Britain.
 - iii. Occasionally to recognised and approved non-Methodist organisations and independent charities which are appropriately constituted and adhere to the overall calling and priorities of the MCB. These must have some evidence of Methodist partnership or benefit.
12. Additional eligibility criteria for grants to non-Methodist bodies and Independent Charities:
 - The work must be related to *Our Calling* and the *Priorities for the Methodist Church* clearly stating which ones are being addressed
 - The application must be measurably supported by the Methodist Church at local, circuit, District, regional or connexional level. Knowledge and understanding must be shown by the independent charity of the way the Methodist church works.
 - A working partnership must be made between the charity and the Methodist Church before a joint application is presented showing, at the minimum, part funding and shared governance of the project. The delivery of the proposed programmes should necessarily involve local Methodist communities.
 - For projects to be done in partnership with the Connexional Team, discussions with the appropriate member of the Team is essential and agreements about ways of working must be authorised by the Connexional Secretary before the application is made.

Policy for all grants

13. Grants are only awarded to projects that are:
 - to be used in the context of *Our Calling, Priorities for the Methodist Church*, and various policies of the Council;
 - clearly eligible, meet grant stream criteria, deliver sufficient benefit and impact (through satisfactory planned implementation);
 - for work for which there is a clearly identified need;
 - innovative with explicit anticipated and quantifiable outcome;
 - time limited or have a plan for attracting alternative sources of funding within 5 years;
 - applications for an amount of funding which is in line with uncommitted funds/free reserves held by the church, circuit, district or organisation;
 - in acceptance of a formal contractual grant agreement (which may include conditions) and a commitment for reports, accounting and evaluations.

14. Essential criteria for grants:
 - approval processes need be transparent, accountable, simple, flexible and effective;
 - must be a means to an end - supporting the mission of the church;
 - should not create dependency where these funds are expected for the continuation of the work;
 - the project funded has potential to demonstrate lessons that will benefit the wider connexion and could be easily replicable elsewhere;
 - the work funded is an example of good practice and excellence;
 - connexional grants will not normally be made to organisations whose sole or main purpose is to give out small amounts of money to individuals.

15. Where limited grant funds are available the following principles shall apply in the awarding of connexional grants:
 - Methodist projects will be given priority over applications from non-Methodist groups
 - Mission and Ministry in Britain applications will be given priority over Property applications (further information about criteria for each category is listed in Section B).

16. The CGC is responsible for determining applications, communicating the decision and any ongoing discussions.

17. The CGC is committed to good governance, which includes the monitoring, evaluation, learning and dissemination of grants awarded.

18. The CGC is strongly committed to funding projects where there is innovation and/or risk in accordance with the Council's Risk Management Policy.

19. The CGC welcomes and encourages proactivity for applications to be submitted where the project builds capacity and promotes long-term sustainability for mission and ministry of the Methodist Church in Britain.

20. The grant application process will be made as flexible as possible.

21. Grant offers will expire 3 years after funding has been confirmed.

22. Grants for research will not be funded.
23. This policy remains under continual review to ensure the grants are awarded in accordance with priorities as agreed by the Conference.

Section B – Criteria for each category

24. SO 213B (2) states that: “The Connexional Grants Committee shall be responsible for all connexional grants, for which it will establish a clear published application process and set criteria.”
25. It is also made clear that “apart from grants for chaplaincy work or property projects and from the World Mission Fund, grants shall be available only for work of connexional significance.” (SO 213B(3)). This standing order also prohibits grant making to meet expenses or in return of services or membership.
26. Each of the grant categories and their essential purposes are agreed by Council, with each having their accepted priorities, budgets, criteria, application forms and decision making processes agreed by the CGC.
27. The types of grants currently in the Mission in Britain category are:
 - Property grants
 - Mission and Ministry in Britain grants (includes Heritage grants).
 - Chaplaincy grants
 - Mission Action on Poverty and Justice grants (MAPJ SO 1004)

Property Grants

28. Principles for Property Grants:
 - The vision for property grants is to support vibrant, growing and new churches in missional projects.
 - Property grants do not have to be deemed of connexional significance, but the criteria has been shaped so grants are awarded only for new builds or substantial remodelling/significant alterations (as opposed to maintenance or minor works). It was envisaged that this would result in a smaller number of grants being made with the possibility of some of substantial size.
 - It is also now expected that the proposed building project should demonstrate how it is necessary in fulfilling the circuit or district mission and development plans. Some funds should be provided by the church, Circuit or District where possible.
 - The maximum grant is £200,000. Applications must be completed via the Property Consents website to ensure that all the necessary information is gathered, and should be submitted by relevant deadlines if the request is for over £50,000.
 - If when reviewing an application, the CGC considers there is a case for awarding more than £200k (where the application is of considerable priority in accordance with the decisions and priorities agreed by the Conference), a panel will be appointed to consider this request and make a recommendation to the SRC. The SRC will then make a decision whether to approve and where the funding would come from if agreed. This panel would comprise two members of the CGC, two members of the Property Development Committee, and one person nominated by the Connexional Secretary.
 - Applications are only available for locally owned (by circuit or district) properties and grants are not available for connexionally held properties.
 - Applications will not be considered if the project has already started.

- It is also possible for MAPJ or Heritage grants to be part of a property project, and in such situations the MAPJ or Heritage criteria (listed below) would be applied by the property grants stream in assessing applications of this nature.

29. Criteria for Property Grants:

- Projects will be new builds or significant alterations and/or refurbishments;
- All property projects will be missional, the alterations to be made to buildings must enable mission, through inclusion, building-related outreach activities and community engagement. Once alterations have been made they should make a significant impact;
- Where they are significant alterations and/or refurbishments, projects will put the fabric and structure of the building into a good state of repair;
- Projects will address all of the relevant criteria for efficient energy use and sustainability, as detailed in the CIBSE standards¹;
- Projects will at least conform to the requirements of the Equality Act as it applies to disability access, and all other relevant buildings regulations;
- Projects contain multi-use, flexible spaces², and will obtain the necessary energy performance certificates so that they can be let out/used in this way;
- Projects will provide space for either a congregation which is growing or for several congregations (or fellowships) to share;
- The maximum grant is £200,000 (although as stated above the CGC has discretion to refer applications for a higher amount to a panel for further consideration if deemed of significant priority in accordance with the decisions of the Conference)

Non-Property Grants

30. Non-Property grants consist of: Mission and Ministry in Britain (including Heritage); Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice (MAPJ); and Chaplaincy grants.

Grants for Ministry and Mission in Britain (including Heritage)

31. Grants for Ministry and Mission in Britain (including those for Heritage) are expected to be of connexional significance and it is the role of the CGC to define and interpret the meaning of this concept.

32. The CGC works with the current understanding of connexional significance:

i. *The project involves, or has the potential to involve, several Districts. The involvement could be at church or circuit level but must cross district boundaries.*

Or,

ii. *Although the work will only take place in one location it will fulfil at least one of the following:*

- *The project's outcomes will benefit the wider Connexion through the furthering of God's mission in innovative and far-reaching ways.*
- *The work will be mission-focused and targets an aspect of society outside church culture where the applicant's specific geographic or demographic situation offers the potential to achieve a very high impact to both individual and community.*
- *The project will be an ecumenical partnership which has the potential to achieve a very high impact for the wider Connexion.*

¹ including high performance insulation as well as addressing pre-existing issues, reduction of incoming mains power, ensuring use of energy efficient heating and lighting, installation of solar panels.

² ie buildings which allow people to use sanctuary space throughout the week for a range of activities singly or at the same time, in addition to fulfilling the requirements as a place for worship.

- *The project will be focused on innovation where the level of risk is high but the possible level of benefit is commensurately high.*
- *It will be considered strategically important by the Methodist Church, and is impossible or overwhelmingly difficult to do elsewhere, and places an unreasonable financial burden on the District/Circuit in which it is placed.*

Or,

iii. *The Project will celebrate the story of the Methodist Church through using Methodist heritage to:*

- *challenge and deepen the faith of Methodists from different parts of Britain, or from other countries, in a way which enables them to engage more fully in mission;*
- *inspire members of the local community, outside the Church, to think about the meaning and practice of Christian faith or engage with Methodism;*
- *inspire people from different parts of Britain, or from other countries, to explore the meaning and practice of Christian faith or engage with Methodism.*

33. While not formally stated as criteria, in practice the following are also considered when assessing mission and ministry connexional significance grant applications:

- that the methodology of the work demonstrates *excellence* and *good practice*, and the model is reasonably *replicable* in other parts of the connexion;
- the work has potential to *learn lessons* that will benefit the wider Connexion by providing new information to deepen understanding on how effectively to pursue *Our Calling* and the *Priorities*.
- grants are awarded for fixed periods of time and would not normally be awarded for more than the initial five years. However in exceptional cases and subject to a thorough evaluation a further grant might be made.

Chaplaincy Grants

34. Principles for Chaplaincy Grants:

The Church supports chaplaincy across a range of disciplines, including the armed forces, education, health care, prisons, housing estates, rural/agricultural, the industrial workplace, and Anna chaplains (chaplaincy to older people):

- The vision is to provide opportunities to serve God in the name of Christ beyond traditional ideas of chaplaincy.
- Grants will be awarded to chaplaincy projects which further develop the involvement of volunteers.
- Chaplaincy grants do not have to meet the criteria of connexional significance.
- Chaplaincy appointments are for up to five years. They will not be permitted to enter the stationing matching process without full funding being arranged in advance.

35. Criteria for Chaplaincy Grants:

- Where they are district chaplaincies, they will be within the context of a district chaplaincy plan;
- The district or another body will contribute at least one-third of the total cost;
- If HE chaplaincy, evidence will be provided that the beneficiary institutions/organisations have been approached for funding;
- Each chaplain's performance must be monitored and reviewed annually by the body making the funding application, in liaison with the institution in which the chaplain serves.

Mission Action on Poverty and Justice (MAPJ)

36. Standing Order 1004 reaffirms the position of the Conference towards MAPJ:

“The Conference has declared its commitment that the Methodist Church, in faithfulness to its missionary calling to evangelism, social caring and political justice, will strive to use its resources for all in society, recognising that this will mean especially taking sides with those experiencing poverty and inequality of resources, and has challenged the Methodist people to respond seriously and imaginatively to the issues raised by that commitment. To give expression to that commitment the Conference has instituted and continues Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice.”

37. Further details on the purpose and criteria for the fund are also set out in SO 1004, which incorporates changes adopted by the 2016 Conference after the review of the former Mission Alongside the Poor Programme³. One important aspect in SO 1004 is that MAPJ grants “whether for personnel or property schemes must be wholly for the purpose of the Methodist Church” and should meet the criteria set out (outlined in SO 1004 (3)).
38. The CGC will usually fund up to a maximum of £50,000 and no more than 50% of project costs of MAPJ applications.
39. The CGC encourages connexional groups to promote the availability of MAPJ grants and for the Methodist people to be innovative and bold in seeking new ways to serve the communities within which God has placed them.
40. MAPJ Principles and Criteria:
 - That grant applications to support Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice (MAPJ) should be welcomed and encouraged and that when funds are scarce applications to support MAPJ work would be given priority.
 - That project proposals should not be tied to any one set of available definitions, but they should show, when stating the need for the project, that the group of people they wish to serve are unable to live in dignity because they have difficulty accessing material resources such as, but not limited to, food, housing, clothing, transport, services that support work such as childcare.
 - That project proposals be required to provide evidence that the project supports those for whom material resources prevent them from living in dignity, using the Action for Children definition as a guideline for what that means in practice.
 - That the definition of poverty used within MAPJ focuses on people having “sufficient resources available to meet their material needs.”
 - That the assessment of grant applications should not be based on a project’s geographical location, but on the people whom the project is intended to serve and that this be made clear in any guidance.
 - That the Connexional Grants Committee should encourage hybrid projects which combine local service delivery with advocacy of action on poverty and justice.
 - That all projects be asked to consider if the project could provide an opportunity for the stories of those facing poverty to be more widely understood.

In addition to the usual criteria about meeting missional priorities and demonstrating the need for the project, in MAPJ applications:

- There will be evidence of relative poverty, whether in a rural or urban area.
- There must be a commitment to work alongside those in need, the vulnerable and disadvantaged.
- The project will be born out of a response to a local point of need, as part of God’s mission to build love and better opportunities.

³ See the 2016 Conference report *Mission Alongside the Poor in the 21st Century*

Section C – Practice Guidelines

Membership and Functions

41. The CGC is appointed by the Council with its membership set out in SO 213B(4). The functions of the CGC are set out in SO 213B(6):
- “To implement the grants policy adopted by the Council
 - To operate within an annual budget for all grant making set out by the Council, taking into account current priorities and all the relevant sources of income
 - To set clear criteria for all grant making processes, including thresholds for grant approval by the sub committees and grant streams, the definition and interpretation of ‘connexional significance’, and the general allocation of unrestricted funds for such specific purposes.
 - To monitor all grants made by the subcommittees and the grant streams
 - To recommend to the Council the number and focus of the grant streams working under each of the subcommittees
 - To approve the processes used by the subcommittees and grant streams for making decisions between meetings, and to set the limits on decisions that may be delegated for officer action.
 - To monitor grants made by Districts from their share of the Connexional Priority Fund and to make recommendations to Council
 - To establish clear processes for the longer-term monitoring and evaluation of grant expenditure and to make recommendations based on these results.”

Governance and Structure

42. The structure and processes of the CGC are approved by the Council, and overseen by the Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC). The work is split between the World Church Sub-Committee and the Mission in Britain Sub-Committee. Each sub-committee is supported by various grants streams, whose membership are also agreed by the Council.
43. The Audit Committee has responsibility for ensuring the CGC exercises appropriate scrutiny of its funds. The CGC gives an annual report to the SRC and the Council (an organisational chart of CGC processes is in Annex 1).

Resources and Budgets

44. The SRC sets the budgets and funds allocated to the CGC as part of the process of agreeing a Connexional Central Services Budget which is adopted by the Conference annually.
45. Some specific funds are designated for particular purposes (ie Mission in Britain Fund (SO 362 (3)), Connexional Priority Fund, Epworth Fund, Fund for Property (SO 362 (5a and b)) etc) Specific fundraising for these particular funds is undertaken by the church and the funds raised are allocated accordingly.
46. Regular reporting takes place to demonstrate how these funds are used to make a difference and fulfil the mission of the church.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Dissemination (MELD)

47. The MELD group exists to consider how the work funded by grants demonstrates good practice and excellence so that the model can be reasonably replicated across the Connexion. The MELD group is appointed by the Council and seeks to implement a change in culture so that grant recipients are held accountable for the monies received and to ensure that funding has been used effectively to achieve the objectives set out in the application. The CGC has developed procedures and practices for the MELD group when undertaking reviewing of grants and reporting back to the CGC.

48. If following a MELD review, a project is found not to have achieved its objectives, due to poor management rather than unforeseeable or unavoidable external circumstances, then the grant may then be subject to withdrawal and/or an appropriate level of repayment (this practice does not rule out the possibility of negotiation and additional grant conditions being imposed). This practice is in line with the CGC's commitment to good governance and management, and aims to ensure that as this practice is carried out risk taking for mission and ministry is not discouraged.

Decision making levels

49. The CGC operates with layered decision making and financial autonomy for approving grants under agreed criteria. The streams can assess and approve applications up to an amount of £50K. Any applications which require funds of over £50k can be recommended by the stream to be referred to the Mission and Ministry Sub-Committee for approval. The sub-committee can approve grants up to £100K (for property grants the threshold is £150K), but any applications that require funding of more than £100K can be sent to the full CGC for consideration.

50. The sub-committees and streams have widespread volunteer membership from the Church with experience, expertise and commitment. Electronic applications are circulated and approved when necessary and deadlines enforced. The CGC reports to the SRC and the Council on its work.

Annex 1 – Organisational chart of CGC Processes

