

Guidance Notes for Home Mission Grants in the West and South Partnership

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1. Purpose

Home Mission Grants are awarded to help Baptist churches and individuals to fully engage in the mission of God and share his love within their communities.

2. Guidance for applicants

A. The Application Process

Churches seeking to apply for a Baptists Together Home Mission Grant should contact their Association Team prior to making an application.

Where the applicant is a church it must be in membership with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the regional association appropriate to its geographical location.

In all cases an application requires an application form, financial statements, a form reflecting on your journey during the past year, and a resolution made at a Members' Meeting/Core group meeting (or equivalent). *See list below.*

Most documents can be submitted electronically, but the original (i.e. hard copy) of the resolution is needed. Only one copy of documents is required.

Following receipt of an application your regional association will arrange a visit which will report to your association grants group. Decisions provisionally made here would normally then be passed to your association Trustees or Executive, and from there come to the inter-Association Partnership for further consideration and confirmation.

Applications for grants should be submitted by the end of February. If successful, a grant will not normally be paid before 1st January the following year. In the case of church-based students, churches will have to cover the full costs for the first 4 months of the first academic year, unless they have applied a year earlier.

B. Mission through Ministry Grants

These grants are awarded to churches already engaging in the mission of God, to encourage and further equip them in reaching out to their local community. They are normally only paid to churches with Baptists Together accredited Ministers, who pay their Minister the Home Mission stipend (or appropriate proportion thereof). They are also available for ministers-in-training and recognized ministers from other denominations in LEPs.

Churches applying for a Mission through ministry grant will need to complete the following:

- Mission through Ministry Application Form (AF1)
- HMY reflection form [designated as HMY0, HMYx [replace 'x' with the year/length of time you've received a grant (such as 1, 2, 4...)] depending on the where you are on the HM grant 'journey'. HMY0 in the year of initial application; HMY1 in Year One; HMY2 in Year Two and so on...)
- Mission through Ministry Church Resolution Form (RF)

- Mission through Ministry Financial Data form (AF2 automated Excel spreadsheet)
- Churches are also required to submit a copy of their most recent accounts (ie. from the preceding year)
- Your HM Visitors will send their form directly to your association contact.

In considering an application the Partnership will be applying the following guidelines:

Mission criteria

- Evidence that the church is seeking to connect with its local community in ways that are appropriate to its culture and in addition to its worship services.
- Connecting with people in the community (and not just by the minister).
- A mission strategy for engaging with what God is doing in the local community and in the various connection points with people outside the local church by congregational members.
- Processes for 'discipling' congregational members – equipping and enabling them to grow as disciples of Jesus and as a result engage in the mission of God.
- In allocating grants we will also bear in mind the presence of other missional churches in the surrounding area, giving priority to those places where there is currently no other Christian group engaging in God's mission.

We recognise there will be particular contexts that currently don't meet the above criteria but where maintaining an incarnational Christian presence is of strategic importance. Under such exceptional circumstances a grant application might be considered.

Practical criteria

The following points should be borne in mind when considering making an application:

- A church applying for a grant should normally be contributing 5% of its general income to Home Mission.
- The normal maximum grant is 50% of stipend.
- All grant supported churches should pay their minister a stipend equivalent to the Home Mission stipend figure agreed each year by the Baptists Together trustees (or its pro rata equivalent) and adhere to the recommended terms of appointment agreed by the national settlement team. Churches should also pay their minister all legitimate expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Pioneers and church planters may apply for a grant that remunerates for the equivalent of one or two working days per week (depending on what is 'worked' for that purpose).
- The church should ensure that giving by the church to non-Baptist causes does not normally exceed % of the total given by the church to Home Mission and BMS World Mission.
- Grants will not normally be given to churches with paid staff other than the minister for whom grant support is requested.

- Normally, we have expected grants to be awarded to churches calling an accredited minister. **Where a church wishes to call an unaccredited minister partly financed by grant funding, the Partnership will need to give their approval prior to a call being issued.**
- The financial capacity to 'support' a stipend initially for a minimum of three years (including any grant that is awarded) is required.
- In order to enable stability and planning, the Partnership normally anticipates funding in respect of new grants continuing for a maximum initial five year period, usually at a reducing rate (assuming the basis on which the grant was awarded remains unchanged). The process will involve an initial review and mission accompaniment* of some kind in the year before a grant is expected to begin, a light touch intermediate review for the first three years the grant is paid followed by a full review in the spring of the fourth year.
- We ask that churches & emerging Christian communities begin to explore alternative funding after 3 years, with the aim being that they will no longer require an HM Grant beyond the fifth year. Additional grant applications beyond this may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - [Other sources of possible grant funding to explore are: The Baptist Insurance Company. Refuse Tax grants (if within 5miles of refuse sites), and the Christian Funders Forum.
- **If the minister or 'worker' leaves the church/ emerging expression of church the grant will not automatically continue.** A full review will take place to determine this.
- Historically, once a grant has been agreed it has often been assumed that the grant would remain in place if needed for the duration of that ministry. This assumption is no longer appropriate or possible. **The expectation is that the grant will normally reduce to nil as quickly as possible rather than funding continuing indefinitely.**
- In situations where a grant is discontinued, payments will continue to be made throughout the required notice period.
- Where the continuous decline in income of a church means it is impossible to keep their current minister, a Baptists Together Mission through Ministry Grant **will not normally be suggested or offered.** This challenging financial situation will need to be communicated at the earliest possible opportunity to one of the regional ministers so that the Association can help the church to discern its immediate needs, priorities and options. This will also enable the current minister to discern and decide about their options with as much notice as possible.

Reserves Policy

In determining the level of grant, account will be taken of the level of general reserves held by your church or missional expression.

C. Special Ministry Grants

Churches applying for a Mission through ministry grant will need to complete the following:

- Special Ministry Grant application form (SMGA)
- HMY reflection form [designated as HMY0, HMYx [replace 'x' with the year/length of time you've received a grant (such as 1, 2, 4...)] depending on the where you are on the HM grant 'journey'. HMY0 in the year of initial application; HMY1 in Year One; HMY2 in Year Two and so on...)
- Special Ministry Financial Data form (SMFD - automated Excel spreadsheet)

Special Ministries are ministries in a context usually outside of an existing church; these may be an 'emerging' initiative or a church planting/replanting situation.

The Association makes these grants in consultation with the wider partnership.

The normal practical criteria (as per the previous page) and processes do not apply, but the Association must be able to demonstrate that the situation being funded is missional.

There must be an accountability structure in place to oversee the work which is being financed and periodic reviews should take place to assess the development of the work.

Where an individual is working part time and/or bi-vocationally the expectation would be that the finance they receive would cover their time at a rate equivalent to a minister on standard stipend.

A similar pattern of three yearly reviews will be followed, with two intermediate reviews followed by a more thorough review. The relevant Association will determine the manner in which this will be done.

D. How to complete The HMY Questions (see the HMY series of forms)

The following is an example of how to complete the questions on the last page of the HMY forms

1. *What proportion of the church is outward looking? E.g. 75-80% in this example.*
2. *What proportion of people within your Christian community has intentional connections with your wider 'community'? See point 7. E.g. 90% in this example.*
3. *How many people or organisations outside the church are you proactively partnering with? Please write the number of people or organisations outside of the church/your Christian community that you are partnering with.*
4. *What proportion of your Christian community are engaging in proactive discipleship? E.g. over 75% in this example.*
5. *How many people who are spiritually curious or new to the faith are you proactively discipling? Please simply write the number.*
6. *What proportion of your Christian community is currently living as missional disciples? E.g. 10-15% in this example.*
7. *What proportion of your Christian community is actively responding to missional opportunities and challenges? As a church being re-planted and rebuilt as individuals we are fairly new to the thinking about being missional disciples- but together we will be exploring what it means to be church and as His disciples living as 'missionaries in our own land'. We know that we must move beyond building buildings that say 'come to us'. We are exploring how disciples should live and serve - in order for our practice to reflect our theory! E.g.20% in this example.*

E. Mission Project Grants

5.1 Mission Project Grants will be given in order to encourage and enable Baptist Churches to respond to the mission needs of their community as part of their ongoing work and ministry. They will be one-off grants for new projects or for a significant development within existing projects. These projects must have a mission focus, in that their main aim should be to benefit people from the community, which the church is seeking to serve.

5.2 Whilst any project will be considered, please note that priority will be given to those which fall into one of the following categories:

5.21 Innovative and creative evangelistic initiatives which will involve working with those who cannot yet be considered as disciples of Jesus Christ with a view to enabling people to discover and respond to his love with faith and discipleship.

5.22 Initiatives which are intended to help alleviate poverty or its effects. Where groups are excluded from resources or deprived of certain facilities, they may be regarded as poor for the purposes of these grants.

5.3 The partnership will be unlikely to fund:

5.31 Building projects – unless the grant application is for a clearly defined aspect of that project that links with the church’s mission strategy.

5.32 Large projects – where a grant of £1,500 is not going to make any significant difference

5.33 Projects which churches are clearly able to fund themselves.

5.34 Projects which are not linked with a church’s ongoing mission strategy.

5.35 Projects where the church has recently received a mission project grant.

5.36 When the church hasn’t contributed appropriately to Home Mission.

5.4 Applications for Mission Project grants will be considered twice a year and the maximum amount payable for any one project is £1,500.

5.5 Before completing the application form, you should contact your Association team who will be able to advise you on what funds may be available.

F. Chaplaincy & Ecumenical Officer Grants

7.1 Grants can be made by an Association in consultation with the wider partnership towards the cost of Educational or Industrial Chaplaincies and towards the costs of Ecumenical Officers. The amounts paid will depend on the particular circumstances. When a review of the post takes place by all parties involved the relevant Association may reconsider their contribution or even their involvement. Likewise if the Association are no longer convinced that this is something they should be involved in they can raise this with their ecumenical partners at an appropriate point.

7.2 The grant will be reviewed in line with the timescales of partner denominations with intermediated reviews most years and more thorough reviews when considered appropriate.

3. Guidance for visitors and assessors

These notes are for people who have been asked to visit a church or ministry applying for a grant from Home Mission. Thank you for your willingness to be a visitor. Your work is crucial and we take your reports very seriously. They are a key part of the process that helps us to determine the amount of any grant that might be needed.

A. The Visit

- Although grants have to be applied for each year, comprehensive visits do not necessarily have to take place every year.
- The Association will provide you with a copy of all the paperwork that has been submitted by the applicant in connection with the application.
- Your Association should be able to advise you on the most appropriate people to meet with in the specific situation you are visiting.
- **Special Ministries** – ideally you should meet with the person being supported and 2 or 3 others. These could be deacons in a church-sponsored ministry or members of a management, Core or Steering group.

B. The Visitors' Report

- Please be as objective as possible in your report!
- There are a great variety of situations in this category. Please don't feel that you need to be rigidly bound by the questions in the form, but tailor questions to the situation you are visiting.
- Please note that 'minister' refers to the person undertaking the ministry being supported by this grant, who may not be an ordained minister.
- The report should be sent to the designated person for your association; contact details are at the end of these guidance notes.

4. Contact Information

To enquire about a grant please contact your Association:

<p>Southern Counties Baptist Association</p> <p>Amy Allen (Administration Manager) Southern Counties Baptist Association Baptist House 129 Broadway Didcot Oxfordshire OX11 8XD</p> <p>Tel: 01235 517673 Email: office.administrator@scba.org.uk</p>	<p>South Wales Baptist Association</p> <p>Karen Kaneen Association Administrator South Wales Baptist Association 54 Richmond Road Cardiff CF24 3UR</p> <p>Tel: 029 2049 1366 office@swbabugb.org.uk</p>
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<p>South West Baptist Association</p> <p>Carl Smethurst South West Baptist Association 36-38 Wonford Street Exeter EX2 5DL</p> <p>carl@swbaptists.org.uk</p>	<p>West of England Baptist Network</p> <p>Alisdair Longwill West of England Baptist Network Little Stoke Baptist Church Kingsway Little Stoke BS34 6JZ</p> <p>Tel: 0117 965 8828 alisdair.longwill@webnetwork.org.uk</p>
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