**Mersey Synod Mission Fund**

**Mission Fund Procedural Guidelines – for Small Grant Applications only**

**1. Receiving Applications**

The Mersey Synod Mission Fund is open to applications from United Reformed Churches and Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEP’s) which are part of the Mersey Synod of the United Reformed Church. For LEP’s we encourage you to explore the possibility of funding from your partner denomination.

Unfortunately, applications cannot be accepted from churches which have failed to put into place up-to-date safeguarding policies, or which are in arrears or in debt to the Synod over other payments.

*Neither can applications be accepted from churches which have received grants but then failed to submit the required report and photographs detailing how the grant has been used.*

**You will find the Local Church Safeguarding Checklist at the end of the Small Mission Grant Application form, which must be completed in order for your grant to be considered.**

Applications should be submitted to the Missional Discipleship Enabler (MDE) in the first instance who will liaise with the Mission Fund Panel which is a subgroup formed from representatives of the Synod Mission and Discipleship Committee.

**Applicants are advised that seeking advice from the Mission Fund Panel at an early stage and before submitting an application is more likely to result in a successful application.**

**Each application will be considered on its own merits.**

**2. Making and Recording Decisions**

The Panel will assess each application against the agreed criteria outlined in this document.

The Panel will seek to make a unanimous decision by consensus but reserves the right to make a majority decision if agreement cannot be reached.

The Panel can agree to award a grant, defer a decision while further information is sought, refer an application back for more work, or reject an application. It is also possible the Panel may decide to reject an application for the current year because there is not enough money in the fund. Churches may re-submit an application at a future date.

The Panel decision will be recorded together with the reasons for the decision. Where an application is rejected, referred back or referred to another fund, a record of the precise reasons for the decision with reference to the criteria will be given.

Panel members will withdraw from the decision making process in the event of a conflict of interest eg if the Panel member’s church has submitted an application.

**3. Informing the Applicants**

The Panel will write to each applicant as soon as possible after the meeting telling them of the Panel’s decision, the reasons for it and any conditions attached to the grant award.

**4. Successful Applications**

Once the church has received the letter from the Panel stating that you have been successful in your Grant application the church must acknowledge this letter agreeing to the conditions attached to the grant award, as outlined in the Grant Guidelines paper and on the Application Form. Once the Panel has received acknowledgement from the church then the funds will be released to the relevant church bank account.

**5. Reporting conditions**

It is a condition of all grants from the Mission Fund that all successful applicants will be required to submit a report and photographs. *The report needs to highlight what difference the Project or Idea has actually made to your mission. This report* and photographs showing how the *money was spent will be required by the deadline stated on the confirmation letter.*

*Please note that once a grant has been made to a church no further grants to that church can be considered unless a satisfactory report photographs relating to the previous grant have been received.*

**6. Criteria against which Small Mission Grant Applications are assessed**

All applications must be submitted on the form to enable the Mission Fund Panel to assess them accurately against the definition of Mission *outlined in this Document.*

Synod aims to encourage, enable and support local churches.

**Name of Church**

If the application is made by a separately constituted project, please give the name of the sponsoring church and explain the relationship between the project and the church.

**Name of Project**

Please provide a brief project name to enable the Mission Fund Panel to identify it easily.

***The numbering below correlates with the numbering on the application form.***

**1. Your Mission Project or idea**

Describe your Project or Idea clearly and simply. Please note that funding cannot be provided retrospectively.

Mission can be expressed in many ways and here you can explain to what extent mission is expressed for your church through this Project or Idea. Clarity of vision and purpose will help the Panel understand your Project or Idea.

Grants could be for staff costs, materials or other expenses that would help the project fulfil its outcomes but would not be for building improvements. Building improvements would be considered, as before, by Resources and you would need to complete different application forms for that.

We want to be able to say “yes” to churches who have thought through what they want to do and achieve. If you need any help or advice, please feel free to contact the MDE and/or others from Synod. However, this does not extend to writing the application on your behalf.

Grant applications would need to state clearly **which of the** **mission outcomes** (at least one of them) the grant would help to achieve by referring to the Five Marks of Mission given below. Mission is hard to define, and there are many definitions to mission. This one has been adapted from David Bosch (Transforming Mission):

***‘Mission is the good news of God’s love, lived out in the witness of a community for the sake of the wider community it serves’.***

* Telling of God’s liberating love – **To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom**
* Teach – **To teach, baptise and nurture new believers**
* Tending – **To respond to human need by loving service**
* Transforming the world by God’s love - **To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation**
* Treasuring the earth - **To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth**

**Questions 2, 3, 4 and 5** provide an opportunity for you to explain how the funding for your Mission Project or Idea will work and what it will be spent on.

**Please do seek advice on completing the application form for any area where you are unsure how to answer.**

Please email the completed form and accompanying papers you might wish to attach to the Missional Discipleship Enabler (mde@urcmerseysynod.org.uk) or the Synod Clerk (synodclerk@urcmerseysynod.org.uk)