

DISTRICT TRAINING GRANTS POLICY

Summary

This document defines the agreed policy for training grants and includes the criteria and operating procedures for administering the grants process, as well as providing guidance on making applications to the fund by individuals, churches, circuits and district groups who wish to avail themselves of these resources.

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DISTRICT TRAINING FUND

1. Policy Statement

The District Training Fund is a resource to support growth and development of Ministers (Presbyters and Deacons), Lay People and churches within the District as they seek to engage in God's mission and Christ's ministry.

The District is committed to encouraging training and development of individuals in relation to the roles they undertake within church, Circuit and District life, by supporting them with grant aid where it is appropriate and possible.

Applications for Training Grants may be made for the support of ministry, personal development and ecumenical work within the South-East District. All applications should be made on the appropriate District Advance Fund Grant Application Form, and submitted to the District Grants Secretary.

If the application is for a Circuit or local church grant for training, applicants should complete the District Advance Fund – Training Grant Application Form (Circuits). If the application is for an individual grant for training, applicants should complete the District Advance Fund – Training Grant Application Form (Presbyter/Deacon) or District Advance Fund – Training Grant Application Form (Lay Person). Applications for training grants may be submitted to the District Grants Secretary at any time of the year.

The District Training Fund is administered through the District Grants Group who in turn report to the District Council. On all matters relating to the District Advance Fund, the decision of the District Council is final.

2. Procedure for obtaining a grant

1. Before submitting an application the applicant must obtain the support and approval of the relevant authority as follows:
 - 1.1 where the application is for a Circuit, the approval of the Circuit Meeting.
 - 1.2 where the application is for a local church, the approval of the Church Council and the Circuit Meeting;
 - 1.3 where the application is for an individual, it must be supported by a minister. If the application is submitted by a Superintendent Minister they must ensure their application is supported by an Assistant Chair. If the application is submitted by an Assistant Chair they must ensure it is supported by one of the other Assistant Chair's.
2. Once approval of the relevant authority has been obtained the applicant should complete the form appropriate to the grant sought and send one copy by email and one (with signatures) by post to the District Grants Secretary, (who registers all grant applications on the District Advance Fund Application Summary).
3. The District Grants Secretary sends the Application to District Chair and District Treasurer for approval.
4. The District Grants Secretary informs the applicant of the decision, and if the application is approved, how the grant can be claimed.



3. Guidelines for Applicants

1. Applications for a training grant may be made by an individual or by a local church or Circuit.
2. Applications must demonstrate a clear aim for the training for which grant aid is sought and include objectives, an action plan and details of the monitoring and evaluation process. There needs to be a clear indication of the potential benefits to both the applicant and the church.
3. Both termed grants (to a maximum of 5 years) and single grants are available.
4. Applications should be approved by one of the following: a Circuit Minister, the Circuit Superintendent, or an Assistant Chair. Applicants may not approve their own application.
5. Grant applications must be submitted for approval before the training begins (preferably at least four weeks before) as retrospective grants will not be made, unless specific agreement to consider making a grant retrospectively has been given by the Chair or District Grants Secretary.
6. The District Grants Group is empowered to approve an amount to be granted and the timing of any grant. Grants of up to £1000 may be approved by a sub-group comprising the District Chair or an Assistant District Chair, the District Grants Secretary, the District Grants Treasurer and/or the District Treasurer. Grants for amounts over £1000 may only be approved by the District Grants Group. The Group reports all of its decisions through the District Grants Secretary to the District Council.
7. A District Training Grant can be made for up to a maximum of one third of the cost of training. The Circuit, local church and/or the individual (as appropriate) will be expected to match the grant given by the District.
8. The maximum grant that can be provided by Methodist sources is restricted to two thirds of the cost of training.
9. Other than in exceptional circumstances a grant will not include the cost of travel.

4. General Information

1. Applicants have the right of appeal to the District Council against a decision of the District Grants Group. The decision of the District Council is final.
2. District Training grants will be subject to monitoring by the District Grants Group.
3. In order to avoid tying up funds unnecessarily, grants which have not been taken up within three years of approval will normally lapse.
4. Grants to individuals are valid whilst the applicant is resident within the District and in membership of a Methodist Church in the District. Where a person moves to a new District any outstanding grant will lapse from the date of their removal from the District. He/she should seek continued funding from the new District as appropriate.