

MISSION ENABLING FUND (MEF) GUIDELINES

Introduction

The purpose of the Mission Enabling Fund (MEF) is to encourage parishes in the Diocese of Nottingham to focus their resources on making the Mission of Evangelisation the defining characteristic of their parish community and the individual lives of the people who make it up. The Fund is to be used to help parishes to lead the people of our Catholic community into an ever-deeper Encounter with Christ, inspiring Discipleship and forming Missionary Disciples. It will be employed to equip and support these people to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in bringing others to Encounter Jesus through their discourse and the witness of their daily lives - individually and as an attractive, welcoming, Christ-filled parish community.

The key elements are: -

- Helping parishes
- Focusing resources on Evangelisation
 - By leading Catholics into a deeper Encounter with Christ
 - By inspiring Discipleship and developing Missionary Disciples
 - By equipping and supporting Catholics to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in bringing others to Encounter Jesus.

Mission Enabling is about acting to realise Pope Francis' vision in "Evangelii Gaudium" ("The Joy of the Gospel"):

"I dream of a 'missionary option', that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation." (EG, 27)

The Mission Enabling Fund is for the specific purpose of enabling distinctive parish and deanery mission opportunities to be developed. These guidelines establish the framework by which the Mission Enabling Team (MET) sets overall priorities on allocation of Fund resources. This guides those considering making an application, and members of the MET and the trustees' Finance Committee, who assess, approve or recommend applications.

The MET would encourage applicants to ensure appropriate detail is provided to support their application in a two-stage process. Initially, only a simple outline will be needed, sufficient to allow lower value projects to be approved. This will also allow high value projects to be assessed for invitations to make a detailed Stage-2 submission.

For these larger Stage-2 applications, a breakdown of the costs of the project will be requested, together with evidence of consultation and analysis supporting the feasibility of the proposed work.

The MET reserves the right to delay consideration if insufficient detail is provided.

The Episcopal Vicar for Finance & Administration, the Chief Operating Officer and the Head of Stewardship are responsible for overseeing the administration of the Mission Enabling Fund. Applicants wishing to clarify any element of the process, or to discuss their application, should speak with one of these people.

Nature of Grants

Applications may arise in the following ways: -

A Mission Initiative from a Single Parish

Such applications will usually be focused on mission within the local area served by the parish. The Parish Priest should be named as the applicant.

A Multi-Parish Mission Initiative

This might be from a parish cluster with a single Parish Priest, or more than one parish, with more than one Parish Priest, or an entire Deanery.

A Chaplaincy or Curial Department

Applications will be considered from Chaplaincies or Curial Departments. The same criteria and guidelines outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 apply to such applications as for Parish applicants.

Process for Application and Disbursement (see also the flowchart in Appendix 1.)

The Mission Enabling Team (MET).

The Bishop, having consulted with Bishop's Council and the Trustees of the Diocese, has set up the MET. Membership is determined by the Bishop.

The MET is the key strategic mission advisory group to the Bishop. Its purpose is to provide the prophetic voice of the Spirit and a broader vision, so God's mission is revealed and lived out actively within and outside the local Church. It will review our overall direction as Church, establish priorities for the development of our mission and foster collaborative initiatives between parishes and diocesan teams, departments, councils, chaplaincies and other groups and ministries. The MET will meet regularly throughout the year.

People will be called and chosen, because of their specific gifts. The intention is for the MET to represent the people of the diocese as a representative group not a group of representatives. By building up a sense of trust and unity among all its peoples, the diocese will be recognised as a visible and credible sign and instrument of communion with God and so fulfil its mission.

The MET would: -

1. Be representative of the diversity of works and people of the diocese.
2. Consist of people who are capable of visionary thinking, as Catholics, at a diocesan level.
3. Draw on the experience and wisdom of the Church on the ground, so as to remove the real or perceived gap between those who work at 'official', Curia levels and the 'real' diocese.
4. Ignite and re-energise our direction forward in mission.

The MET does not have a direct operational function. Having been approved by the Bishop, its recommendations and guidance for mission will inform the priorities and decisions of the various leaders and operational groups of the diocese and its parishes.

The MET will be the recipient of all applications for MEF funding. It will review these against the agreed Diocesan Mission direction and priorities, and against MEF criteria. Initially it will ask for all funding applications to be submitted using the simpler Stage 1 form. Funding for smaller projects (up to £10,000) that have MET support will normally be approved by the MET at this point. Applicants for larger projects that have Stage 1 MET support, having received Finance Committee confirmation of affordability, will be invited to provide the more detailed information sought through a Stage 2 application, using the appropriate form.

Finance Committee

The Bishop and Trustees have established a Finance Committee (FC) to receive and review submissions for Mission Enabling Fund loans and grants, and to approve applications or to make recommendations as appropriate.

The FC will be guided by the priorities and guidance provided by the MET when making grants. Its role will be to confirm the affordability of projects in excess of £10,000 for the diocese and for the parish, or other applying body. The FC will check financial records of the parishes applying to determine ability to provide sustainable resources. If an applying parish has not lodged its annual financial return, it may be asked to provide this before their application can be accepted.

Trustees

High-cost projects that are in excess of the prevailing delegated funding approval levels (currently £50,000), but which have been recommended by the MET and the Finance Committee for approval, will be referred to the full Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

Note

Parishes and other applicants that wish to apply for a grant should use the Stage 1 or Stage 2 Application Form, as applicable. These are available on the diocesan website and from the Diocesan Finance Office.

Applications will not be considered for events / initiatives which have occurred / begun prior to the date of the MET meeting.

Principles for all applications

The MET will be guided by the Mission Enabling Fund grant principles, which applicants should consider.

Features of Grants

Capital Projects

Funding is not available to support building projects. Should an application include a capital or a building improvement element within a wider proposal, the MET will need to be assured that this is essential for the purposes of mission and is an appropriate proportion of the overall cost.

Salaries

Funding a contribution to salary costs will be considered but only for a maximum of 3 years. A job description is required. Applications should explain how the role will be funded beyond three years. If the funded role is to be discontinued, the grant does not include redundancy costs incurred.

Period of Funding

Grants for a 'one off' event will be a single payment; otherwise, they can be paid annually for up to three years. For initiatives intended to extend beyond 3-years, the MET will want to understand how these will become independently sustainable beyond that period.

Repeat Funding

Applications are for up to three years. Grants are set for this period to encourage the initiatives to become self-financing and to ensure a fair distribution of the Fund across the Diocese and around different projects. Repeat funding is only given in exceptional situations, with priority always being given to new applications.

Match Funding.

Normal practice is to agree to support up to half the cost of a project, depending on the financial ability of the applicant to undertake the project from its own resources. However, requests will be considered in particular circumstances for funding a higher proportion. Payments will be made annually and ordinarily would be for equal amounts each year.

Grant Value

The MET has the authority to approve grants from the Mission Enabling Fund to the value of [£10,000] for each parish project and [£50,000] for each wider area, deanery or diocesan initiative. Beyond these values the MET will make recommendations to the Diocesan Trustees for projects it supports.

Changes to the Grant

The MET will not normally increase a grant once it has been agreed.

Termination of Projects

In the event of a project not continuing for the anticipated length of time, the MET should be informed immediately. Any unused grant should be returned.

Annual Reports

A report on the progress of the project and how the funding has been used will be expected each year. The report should be submitted annually to the MET meeting which corresponds with the meeting at which the application was originally made. Subsequent annual payments will not be made until this has been received.

The MET will provide a report on the Mission Enabling Fund to the Board of Trustees at least annually.

Financial Scrutiny and Changes

Successful applicants are asked to notify the MET of any change in the cost of the initiative which would lead to an under spend of the grant by more than 5%. The MET expects a record of all expenditure to be kept and will, each year, select projects to provide them with the necessary 'audit trail' to show how the grant has been spent.

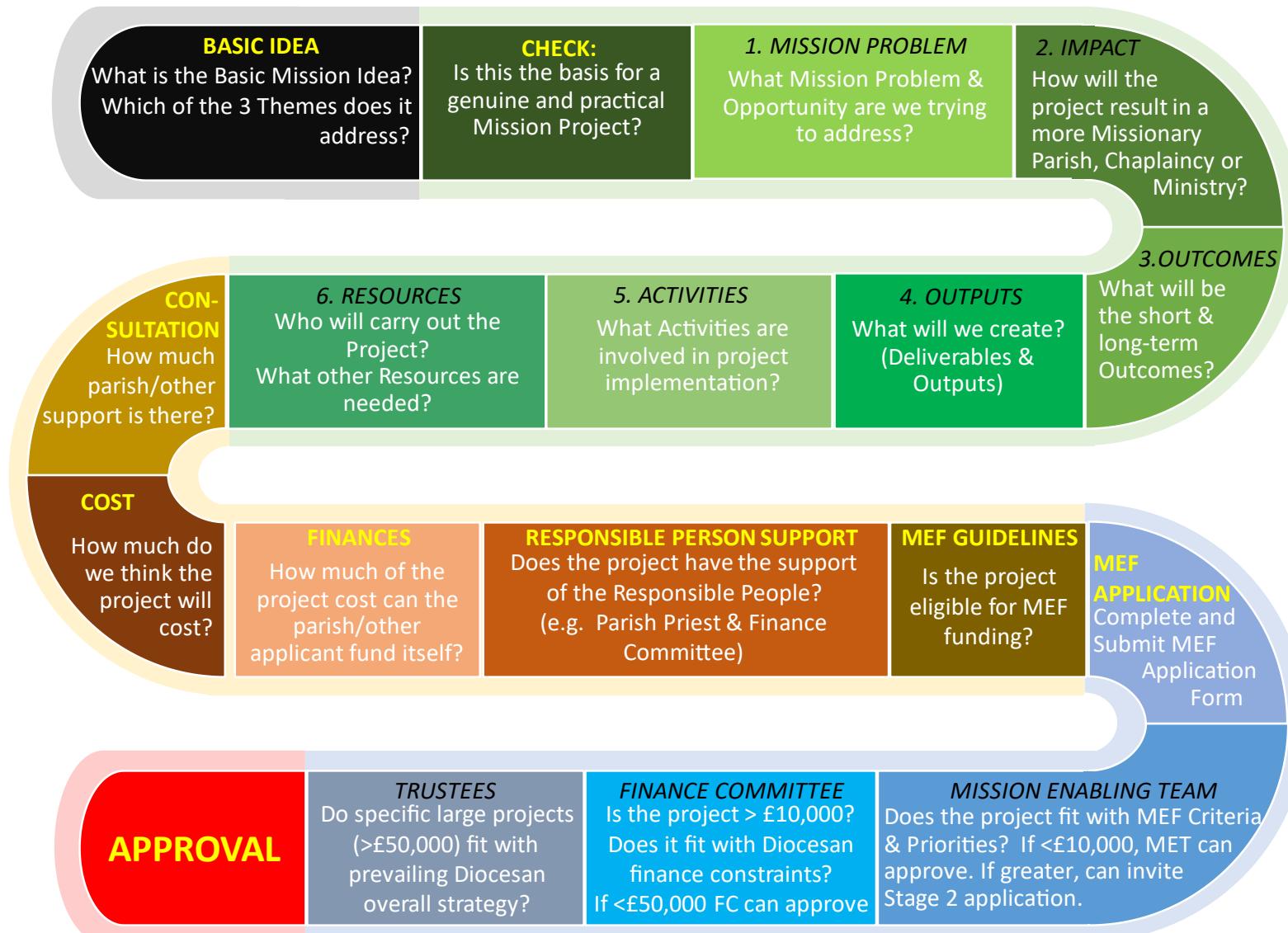
Unused Grant

If the Annual Report indicates that some of the grant has been unused in the particular year, and will not be needed to meet agreed project purposes in the subsequent year, the MET requests that this money is returned so that it may be used by others.

APPENDIX 1

MISSION ENABLING FUND – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING APPROVAL FLOWCHART

Applies to Both Stage 1 (up to £10,000) and Stage 2 (over £10,000) Applications.



APPENDIX 2

CRITERIA

In assessing each application, the MET will bear in mind the following criteria:

Evidence of mission being undertaken, especially beyond existing parishioners.
Evidence, where appropriate, of consultation and co-operation with community groups
Evidence of factors creating significant new opportunities for evangelisation (e.g., large increases of population due to new housing developments).
Present parish staffing provision (employees and volunteers)
Satisfactory Job Description for projects employing staff
Evidence of funding being used to support ministry and mission in line with the specific Mission Enabling Fund Purposes (Appendix 3)
Evidence of good collaboration

APPENDIX 3

Applications should be for specific projects that directly address the following areas: -

- **Encounter: Discovering more deeply the importance of a Personal Encounter with Christ.**
Strengthening our Parish as a faith community centred on the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Christian life.
“I would like to ensure that people of all ages in our parishes, schools, and chaplaincies are helped to discover, or discover more deeply, the importance of a personal encounter with Christ; so that they can become convinced that they are each loved by God and are invited to grow in their relationship with him. In particular I would like to see the development of times of Eucharistic Adoration in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies.”
(Bishop Patrick: November 4, 2018)
 - Celebrating well-planned Catholic liturgies that are beautiful, prayerful, reverential and engaging and seek to welcome and elevate those who have little or no background in practicing the Catholic faith, whilst fostering and nourishing the faith of those that do.
 - Providing opportunities for Catholic prayer outside of Mass, especially Eucharistic devotion.
 - Helping young children and parents encounter Christ in a personal way and make a conscious choice to follow Him.
 - Catechising for Baptism and other Sacraments to create strong and lasting faith in Christ in his Church and invite individuals to make a conscious choice to follow Christ in their own life.
 - Supporting creation and sustaining of prayer groups and communities.
 - Providing opportunities for days of prayer and spiritual retreat which have a particular emphasis on sharing the basic gospel message, enabling moments of initial or deeper encounter with Christ and offering the space to say a first or fuller “yes” to Christ’s invitation to “Follow Me”.
 - Helping our people engage more with Scripture and Catholic writings.
 - Support for ongoing engagement following participation in mission and evangelisation programmes (e.g. Called & Gifted) and at events (e.g World Youth Day and Flame).
- **Discipleship: Through our Personal Encounter, following Christ more closely and serving him in our lives;**
Growing Discipleship in all parishioners; building missionary confidence, capacity and capability.
“because of that personal encounter with Christ, I would like to encourage each of us to hear and respond to his invitation to be his disciples, to follow him more closely, and to seek to serve him generously in our daily lives. (Bishop Patrick: November 4, 2018)
 - Training in discipleship, including adult formation.
 - Educating parishioners in the social teachings of the Church
 - Developing opportunities for growing in our Catholic Christian faith
 - Forming people for liturgical and catechetical ministries

- Refocusing parishioners' attention and other parish resources on Mission rather than self-preservation
- Supporting married couples in bringing each other, their children and their wider families to a deeper relationship with Christ
- Supporting young adults to understand God's call in their lives and to grow in their personal Catholic identity, relationships, work and spirituality.
- Preparing engaged couples for marriage
- Linking with Caritas, CAFOD, SVP and similar organisations
- Helping people to understand the gifts or special abilities given to them by God, and how they can use them in participating in his Mission. (e.g., Called and Gifted programme)
- Supporting creation of Catholic communities of faithful who share a common call and commitment to strive for holiness and to live out their faith in their daily lives through prayer, charity and evangelisation.
- **Missionary Discipleship: Aided by the Holy Spirit, becoming faith-filled, joyful and outward-looking;**
Engaging effectively as a Catholic Parish with the local community, beyond those who regularly attend church.
“with a greater recognition of, and openness to, the help, guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we can all become missionary disciples; faith-filled, joyful and outward-looking Christians who are growing in confidence to speak humbly of the difference that knowing Christ makes to our lives, and who bear witness to His love in our service of our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need.” (Bishop Patrick: November 4, 2018)
 - Resources, training, and support to empower ordinary parishioners to excel in evangelisation within their sphere of influence. This includes understanding the call to evangelise, distinguishing between what evangelisation is and isn't, ways to share the basic gospel message, sharing the difference faith has made in their lives, exploring models of accompaniment, and providing guidance and reassurance on effectively addressing tricky topics.
 - Resources to help people explore their call to Mission (e.g. book study: Intentional Disciples, Rebuilt, Divine Renovation...)
 - Building an active and inclusive Mission Leadership/Enabling Team
 - Creating a place of joyful Catholic welcome and belonging, accessible to all
 - Communicating our faith well through newsletters, websites and social media
 - Engaging with schools and colleges within the parish to help teachers, students and their families to love Christ and desire discipleship in his Church.
 - Creating social outreach groups open to all.
 - Serving the particular needs of people in the local community, especially the most vulnerable.
 - Funding for parish to pursue specific opportunities to influence the secular culture by actively working with other religious groups, agencies, or organisations to co-ordinate a faith response on key issues.
 - Support for evangelising outreach events (carol services, summer fairs)
 - Reaching out to parishioners who do not regularly attend church.
 - Inviting participation in activities such as parish missions or Alpha courses
 - Funding for initiatives that equip people to share their faith in everyday life (e.g., Sycamore programme)