

# Methodist Grants Programme: Guidance for Applicants

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## Programme Overview

Benefact Trust's Methodist Grants Programme seeks to enhance the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church in the UK and Ireland.

Funded primarily by donations from Methodist Insurance PLC, the programme provides grants to Methodist churches to run building development projects that focus on church growth (both numerically and spiritually), community engagement and improving accessibility. Applicants are also encouraged to demonstrate how their planned projects will give an environmental benefit.

## Who can apply

The Methodist Grants programme is open to applications from Methodist Districts and Circuits, individual Methodist churches which are part of the Methodist Connexion and organisations associated with the Methodist Church in Britain or the Methodist Church in Ireland. The Programme also supports some heritage sites which are deemed by the Connexion to be important in telling the story of Methodism.

## What we can fund

Grants are awarded for building development and repairs for mission, outreach and community benefit. More specifically, projects supported will include:

- Significant redevelopment projects on buildings which have been identified as key to the future mission objectives of a Circuit or District.
- Work which includes the provision of disabled access and facilities.
- Schemes which bring significant community benefits beyond those to the immediate congregation, and which are supported by evidence from community consultation.
- Initiatives which demonstrate a clear environmental benefit\*.

Methodist Grants are available for repair and maintenance projects that are essential for the ongoing mission and ministry of an organisation. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have a clear strategy that forms part of their Circuit's plan for mission, and the planned work has strong support from the District and Circuit. Essential work covers work that if not carried out would result in the organisation no longer being able to function; grants are not awarded for general repairs or routine maintenance.

\*Notes for energy efficiency proposals:

- If you are planning to apply for funding for energy efficiency works (e.g. heating/lighting upgrades, solar panels, etc), you are advised to check your plans with your insurance company first.
- We require that a feasibility study/eco audit or similar has been carried out before submitting your application.
- We also require that the project endorsement letter issued by the Chair of District or District Property Secretary includes a statement confirming that the Net Zero Property Officer for the Connexion is aware of the proposed work and is content for it to proceed.

## How often can I apply?

If you are eligible to apply, you can do so provided you have not received a previous grant through this programme or our Building Improvement Grants Programme within the last two years. If your application to the Methodist Grants Programme is unsuccessful, you may apply to our Building Improvements Grants programme.

If you have received a previous grant through the Roof Protection Scheme or the Community Impact Grants programme within the last two years, you are still welcome to apply to this programme provided your previous grant was given for a different project.

## How much can I apply for?

When completing your application, you will be asked to present the total costs of your project and details of the other funding you have secured, rather than requesting a specific grant amount. If your project fits the programme criteria, the size of your grant will be calculated by our Grants Officers based on your total project costs and our assessment criteria. We will also take into account deprivation levels where your project is taking place and may apply a deprivation uplift when determining the size of your grant.

## Other funding

All applicants will be expected to have secured funding for at least 30% of their total project costs before making an application (it is not possible to submit an application form until this level of funding has been secured). We receive a large number of applications, and this policy helps to ensure that we prioritise our support for projects that are likely to go ahead. Applicants should also have a clear plan for how the remainder of the other funding for the project will be secured (i.e. it should not be assumed that Benefact Trust will cover the entire funding shortfall).

## How to apply

Please ensure that you have read this guidance document in full before starting your application form. You may also want to refer to the guidance when you are completing your application form.

To make an application, you will need to register on our online application portal, which you can access via our website.

Once your application has been successfully submitted, you will receive a confirmation email.

You will need to supply an endorsement of your project from your District Property Secretary or Chair. This can either be a letter or an email and should be scanned and uploaded with your application. It must be signed by your District Property Secretary or District Chair.

You don't have to complete your application in one session as you can save your progress and return to the application when you are ready.

There are no fixed deadlines and applications will be considered on a rolling basis. The Methodist Grant Giving Committee meets several times each year.

## When will I find out if my application has been successful?

We normally aim to respond to applications within 3-6 months.

You will receive an email once a decision has been made, and you will need to log into our online application portal to read your decision letter.

## If you are awarded a grant

Please note that all grants awarded by Benefact Trust are subject to our [Standard Grant Terms and Conditions](#), available on our website.

If you are awarded a grant, you will need to log into our online application portal to accept the terms of your grant and enter your organisation's bank details so that your grant can be paid. In most cases, your grant (or first payment for multi-year grants) will be paid upfront shortly after your bank details have been verified. However, your Grants Officer may discuss alternative payment arrangements with you if appropriate.

The Trust publishes details of all grants awarded in its Annual Report and Accounts. In addition, the Trust publicises details of various grants on our website, social media and through other publicity material. Our communications team may contact you directly to discuss publicity of your grant. Your grant should, where possible, be publicised by your organisation (e.g. through social media, on websites or newsletters). There are a range of resources to support you with publicity on our website.

Successful applicants will be asked to complete an online report form one year after the award of their grant, reporting on the extent to which the outcomes set out in their original application have been achieved

## Additional advice

Please e-mail us at [info@benefacttrust.co.uk](mailto:info@benefacttrust.co.uk) and we will respond as soon as possible. You may also like to visit our website which has a range of resources and information on it: [www.benefacttrust.co.uk](http://www.benefacttrust.co.uk)