Level 2 Grants

Guidelines for Applicants

# Introduction

We are delighted that you are looking for a grant from **Seeds For Growth**. A huge part of our Fund's purpose is about encouraging experimentation and pioneering in the Church of Scotland. We look forward to seeing your ideas.

The Church of Scotland’s General Assembly instructed that **Seeds For Growth** be established to support the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church. The **Seeds For Growth** Committee is particularly keen to support the establishment of new worshipping communities and inter-generational work which supports young people in their growth in faith.

There are various levels of grants available. Level 2 Grants let you to test out the viability of an idea or undertake a bespoke area of work which would achieve long term sustainable outcomes. A project might want to put something in place for a period of time and monitor progress. Level 2 Grants can also be awarded in situations where the nature of the work suggests that year-by-year funding would be most appropriate. A project might not be ready for long-term funding, but a one-year grant would enable it to get to this place (and a Level 3 Grant application).

This document is designed to give you guidance on the information we are looking for. In particular we recommend that you familiarise yourself with the section on “Project Eligibility Criteria”. Our experience is that most of the occasions in which we have been unable to make an award are because a project does not match our funding criteria.

# Who can apply?

Application forms are usually completed by a Church of Scotland congregation or Presbytery. However, groups of congregations or Presbyteries can also work together but please contact us initially to discuss your ideas. Partnership and ecumenical working is strongly encouraged.

# How much can we apply for?

Funding can run for 6 to 12 months and the maximum Level 2 Grant available is £10,000. Note that the particular phase of work for which you making application may last longer than 12 months, however funding must be spent within this timeframe.

# Can we apply for and hold more than one grant?

Yes, you can hold more than one grant but you need to demonstrate that you have the capacity to manage the initiatives simultaneously.

You can have more than one consecutive (not simultaneous) Level 2 grants for a given initiative but the minimum duration of a single Level 2 grant is 6 months. The End of Project report will need to have been accepted before a subsequent grant can be paid.

# Can we apply if we hold a grant from the Small Grants Fund or Pioneer Mission Fund?

Yes. Seeds For Growth Grants can be held alongside grants from the Small Grants Fund and the Pioneer Mission Fund.

# Project Eligibility Criteria

Successful applications will be for projects that support at least one of the following areas:

To support the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church of Scotland through:

1. Developing mission through new worshipping communities
2. Developing and nurturing faith in those under the age of 40
3. Fostering discipleship and revitalisation within established congregations, with the aim of growing the existing congregation or developing a new worshipping community.

Applications for the following will be prioritised:

* Developing mission through new worshipping communities and church planting
* Engaging in intergenerational approaches to and participation in worship.

## New Worshipping Communities

If your application relates to the establishment of a new worshipping community, then we will expect you to have engaged with some of the following in your application. Firstly, we will expect you to have begun to think about what kind of New Worshipping Community might emerge from your work. The following “Pioneer Spectrum” (developed by the Church Mission Society) is a helpful representation of various approaches.

A diagram of a church

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Figure 1 The Pioneer Spectrum. Used with permission of the Church Mission Society.

The spectrum shows the range of pioneer ministry activities and how these activities relate to the intention of planting churches and to the concept of fresh expressions of church.

* Replicate: taking an existing model of church and trying it in a new place
* Adapt: modifying ideas used elsewhere for a local context. Note that though the diagram shows “Messy Church” as an example, we would not fund applications where “Messy Church” is the only activity – for Level 2 and 3 applications we would expect to see a broader approach with different ages of young people, and also developing faith amongst the carers of young people.
* Innovate: pushing the boundaries of what church is and seeking to find new ways to connect with people who do not currently go to Church.

**Seeds For Growth** will support any one of these forms of pioneer ministry. It will greatly assist your application if you can describe which of these you are considering, and the reasons why.

Note: The fifth circle on the diagram – “Kingdom oriented social enterprises” – falls outwith the scope of possible funding from Seeds for Growth.

We will also be looking for the following in your understanding of “New Worshipping Community”.

### A Commitment to the “New”

* *Responding to the Spirit who creates anew*
* Engaging with “new” people, people who do not engage with Church.
* Seeking to make and form new disciples of Christ.
* Exploring and experimenting with new forms of church for a changing culture. Research shows that for large sections of the population this is the most effective means of sharing our faith.

In your application, we will want to know the forms of research and discernment you have employed in order to work out what “new” means in your context. This will almost always involve committed engagement and listening amongst the community with whom you wish to work. It may also involve reflection on written material, conferences, seminars and the experience of those who have tried similar approaches.

### A Commitment to Worship

* *Discovering* the Spirit’s sending, to join God’s mission for the transformation of the world
* *Gathering* *in contextually authentic ways* *to celebrate, encounter, witness to, and glorify God and discerning the right time to do so.*

For a Level 2 **Seeds For Growth** award, we expect the beginnings of your thinking as to how your particular community may become a worshipping community. Experience suggests that moving to establishing a new worshipping community too early will lead to that community being shaped less by its context and more by previously established models of Church. Please tell us how you hope to develop worship within your work.

### A Commitment to Community

* *Cultivating restoration and belonging as signs of God’s new creation*
* Practicing mutual care, justice and responsibility
* Developing sustainability in leadership and finances

We will expect to see the beginnings of understanding of which group of people you hope to work with. This may be a group of people who already attend another project, a group who share a common experience or interest (in particular we would encourage work with groups of people who have experienced some form of marginalisation) or a group of people who have engaged with your community research. Though your initiative may be focussed on one particular group, we would still like to hear how you will foster diversity and inclusivity in the life of your worshipping community. Question 2.4 is designed for you to tell us about the kinds of people who may become part of your community.

## Working with Young People

If you are seeking funding for developing faith-based work amongst young people, we will be looking for the following aspects of your work, that it:

1. Has, at its heart, an emphasis on enabling young people to grow in faith.
2. Will include spaces where young people are able to be with their peers.
3. Will integrate with a wider number of groups where overt exploration of faith is not a key part of their purpose (e.g. drop-ins, activity-based clubs, personal development courses).
4. Includes intergenerational spaces, which could include connection with an existing congregation and/or a focus on building faith within families. Home can be the primary context for discipleship particularly if supported by a wider church family.
5. May well support the formation a new worshipping communities aimed at young people.
6. That young people have significant scope to shape, lead and participate in the places where they worship.

We will be very unlikely to fund work whose purpose appears to be the ongoing survival of an established faith community, with whose life and worship young people are expected to fit in, and which does not evidence a commitment to overall change, or shared leadership with young people.

### Fostering discipleship and revitalisation within established congregations, with the aim of growing the existing congregation or developing a new worshipping community

Seeds for Growth is committed to the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church of Scotland. We hear the command of Jesus at the end of Matthew chapter 28 to ‘go and make disciples’. In some instances, there may be a need to equip and enable those currently connected with our churches to be able to think and move missionally, or to develop those skills and outreach behaviours further. Seeds for Growth will support this revitalisation within established congregations when the application demonstrates the following

* This a new work or new progression of work that can be defined as a project, planned and measured as we require of all our funded projects
* How this project could lead to outreach to those who do not currently take part in the life of your congregation. In particular, how the project will support the first two of the five marks of mission, namely “to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom” and “to teach, baptise and nurture new believers”.
* how this project will lead to growth in your existing congregation, the establishment of a new worshipping community, or both.

Note within its criteria, the priorities of Seeds for Growth are:

* + Developing mission through new worshipping communities and church planting
  + Engaging in intergenerational approaches to and participation in worship

If required to make choices between different applications, these priorities will be applied.

# What can and cannot be funded?

We are willing to fund training, salaries, equipment or hire of space as long as you can show that this is essential to the aims of your project.

The focus of **Seeds For Growth** is outlined above. We recognise that such work (when done well) will involve much surrounding activity (such as social engagement, enabling work which is not explicitly faith based). Provided the clear focus of the project meets the criteria outlined in these sections we will support this surrounding work.

**Awards cannot be used for:**

* Church repairs
* Covering retrospective costs.
* Making up shortfall in existing congregational income.

# Match funding

“Match funding” is funding which is used to “match” the funding provided by a grant maker and comes from other sources.

**Seeds For Growth** is designed to provide grants for missional projects, which have few potential funders in the wider funding world.

There will be no requirement for match funding although grant applicants are strongly encouraged to identify potential additional sources.

Additionally, where appropriate, it is vital that your project will be financially sustainable in the long-term. We would expect to see a commitment to giving from participants, the supporting congregation and potentially other sources from the beginning of the project.

# How do we apply?

Application forms for Level 2 Grants can be sent to the Grants Unit ([grants@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:grants@churchofscotland.org.uk)) at any time and are assessed on a rolling basis.

In addition to this document, you should make sure you have the following (available by emailing [grants@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:grants@churchofscotland.org.uk)):

* **Seeds For Growth** Level 2 Grant Application Form
* Model minute. If you are a congregation, an Extract Minute from the Kirk Session will be needed supporting the application.
* If you are applying on behalf of a Presbytery then a document from an authorized person (such as the Business Convener or Clerk) confirming support for the application is acceptable.

Please read through the form and these guidelines carefully before completing your Level 2 Grant Application Form.

# Support for applicants

Online training sessions will be offered to support the making of applications to **Seeds For Growth**. We can answer questions about the form; however, we cannot review draft applications. Dates of these sessions will be available by emailing [grants@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:grants@churchofscotland.org.uk)

For help discovering new outreach opportunities that suit your setting we recommend to you a free training programme called Culture of Innovation. This fun and informal programme works through missional thinking and ‘how to try’. It helps you assess your own context, imagine possibilities and quickly bring together plans. Culture of Innovation has film snippets from some talks by Father Lorenzo Lebrija followed by group activities. It breaks down into 5 sessions

1. Future thinking
2. ‘What if’ wonderings
3. Generating insights
4. Developing ideas
5. Trying

It can be found on Church of Scotland Learning. Information on that is found here <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/church-of-scotland-learning>

Filling in the application form

We would advise the following process

* Read through the guidelines document, then the application form, then the guidelines again
* Fill in the form
* Leave it for a few hours up to a couple of days and come back to it
* Ask somebody unconnected to the project to read through your completed form to be able to objectively point out little mistakes or to tell you that something is unclear
* Ask somebody aware of the project to read through your completed form to be able to add another perspective.

Make sure you **fully answer all the questions**. The following sections provide some notes designed to help you understand the sort of information we are looking for.

## Part One asks for some factual information about the organisation that will carry out the work and the contacts.

* Neither of the contacts/signatories should be someone whose role will be funded should this application be successful and they should be unrelated both to each other and to any such person (by unrelated we mean people who aren’t family members, such as siblings, parents and children, married couples or civil partners or people living at the same address).
* Should the person filling in the form, through an open recruitment process, become an employee of the project during its lifetime (or another individual with whom they are in a close personal relationship does so), please inform **Seeds For Growth**, and we will also ask you for the name of another key contact.
* If you are applying to work with a group of churches or presbyteries or ecumenical partners then this part of the application lets you tell us about the members of the group.

## Part Two – About the Project

**Q2.3 Tell us the background of the project, what has brought you to this stage.**

Tell us the key points of the story so far.

Whether this is a totally new venture or organic growth, there has been a journey to get you to this point. This could include: previous work, crucial encounters and experiences or consultation and research which have helped you to identify a need in people or an opportunity to strengthen something further. If you are looking to establish a new worshipping community or work with young people, you may tell us about experience or learning you have gained from other projects, conferences and courses.

**Q2.4 Describe who the project is aimed at and the reasons you want to work with them.**

Who are the people the project is designed for? Why do you want to work specifically with this group? How will the project either directly work with or enable work with people who do not currently go to Church?

**Q2.5 and 2.6 Select each of the Seeds For Growth** **criteria the project fits with and describe how your project will meet each of these.**

This is a very important section as the criteria will be what guide the committee’s decision about which projects to fund. The criteria are what we are trying to achieve as the strategic outcomes for **Seeds For Growth**. A significant number of applications do not move to an award because it is not apparent that their principal areas or work match our funding criteria.

Your project needs to match one or more of the three key criteria. Strong answers to the question will focus on “who, what, where, when, why, and how” helping us to visualise how the project will meet the chosen criteria.

**2.7 How long do you expect the phase of work, for which you are seeking funding, to last? (Note that Level 2 Grants must be spent within 12 months, and re-applications are possible after 6 months).**

This phase of the work may last longer than 12 months even if that is the maximum period over which funding might be awarded.

**2.8 What do you hope your project will look like at the end of this funding period? In particular, how will it be different from your current situation?**

Strong answers to this question will usually contain a change word and by that we mean a word like increase, decrease, reduce, improve. They should describe the ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘how’ of change. For example, if we had an outcome that was ‘new parents will feel more confident in praying’, the ‘who’ is new parents, ‘what we are hoping to change’ is how confident they feel in praying to God, and how do we hope that will change is ‘more’. The ‘how’ refers to the *direction* of change rather than *how will we change it*. The direction of change is the increase, decrease, more, less.

**2.9 What work will you do, in order to see this change happen?**

These are the activities (some funders call these outputs) of the project. If your desired change was “Young people discover more of the relevance of the Christian faith” an activity might be “Young people after attend a course which enables them to explore their faith”

**2.10 How will you evaluate the effectiveness of this work?**

You will need to think of indicators that you can look for and measure to aid tracking progress with the project. Indicators often have words like ‘level of’, or ‘ability to’, or ‘number of’; these are neutral things that you can measure on more than one occasion. These can be quantitative (something you can count) or qualitative (assessing quality rather than the quantity of something). An example for a qualitative measure like “willingness to participate in a time of prayer”. A quantitative measure might be the *number* of young people who participate in a prayer group.

**2.11 Details of any paid post**

**Please note:** MDS roles cannot be “topped up” by **Seeds For Growth** grants.

Any role supported by **Seeds For Growth** funding needs to be on a local contract

If an MDS staff member applies to work in any such job as an additional role to their current one this will need to be done through the normal processes (see below).

**2.12 Please tell us how you intend to recruit the right person for this/these post(s) or if there is already a person in post, please give their name, starting date, and how they were assessed and appointed to this post**

We expect posts funded with **Seeds For Growth** grants to be publicly advertised and an appointment made on the basis of a transparent and fair recruitment process; please ensure that you make it clear to us if there is any deviation from this.

Note that we will want to see the job description, person specification and written statement of employment particular (draft) for any post intended to be funded by the Grant.

**2.13 How will the person in the role be supported and line managed?**

Line managers should be unrelated to those they manage (by unrelated we mean people who aren’t family members, such as siblings, parents and children, married couples or civil partners or people living at the same address).

There is growing evidence that pioneering projects are more effective if the leader is provided with regular line management, alongside coaching and/or mentoring. Evidence of such support being in place would include budgeting for this. There are a number of potential sources of coaching. Please contact the Grants Unit if you require further information.

**2.14 Will you take part in the Seeds for Growth learning and training programme?**

**Seeds For Growth** will be running a learning and training programme for successful applicants. This will include a group who will meet on a regular basis and organised courses covering key areas in establishing New Worshipping Communities and working with young people. Please tell us if you would be keen to take part in this training.

## Part Three – Presbytery

Applications from congregations need to be supported by their Presbytery. Please note in this section the place of the project within the Presbytery, including its relationship to the Presbytery Mission Plan.

Q3.1 We fully understand that your current Presbytery Mission Plan may not be at a stage in its life where your project has been specifically named. If you want to tell us that you have been in touch with your Presbytery’s mission officer, or some other key individual within presbytery, and they had given support to your project, you may want to do so in your answer to this question but we will need evidence of this being the case.

## Part Four – Resourcing

**Q4.1a What would you use a Seeds For Growth** **grant for?**

What elements of the expenditure are you asking to be covered by **Seeds For Growth** funding.

**Q4.2 Provide a breakdown of project costs through completing the income and expenditure template spreadsheet, identifying any additional sources of funding. (Maximum of £10,000 from Seeds For Growth).**

Please provide information on the full costs of the project not just the elements which you are asking the Seeds For Growth to cover.

On the spreadsheet, please give an indication of how costs have been arrived at. Feel free to use additional cells on the spreadsheet to explain this. This is particularly helpful for those parts of your project which Seeds For Growth is being asked to fund.

**Note** that you need to ensure that the income total and expenditure totals equal each other.

**4.3 How will you ensure your project is sustainable in the long-term?**

One of **Seeds For Growth’s** aims is to sponsor projects which will be self-sustaining and ultimately contribute (both financially and in terms of people) to the ongoing life of the Church of Scotland. Please tell us how giving (both from a sponsoring congregation, from participants in the project and possibly from other sources) will contribute towards its long-term sustainability.

In the early days of your project, it is likely that financial giving will be relatively small in comparison to income, but we would still hope to see some beginnings to this. We also appreciate that projects in areas of economic deprivation or with young people (who do not have large disposable incomes) are likely to generate smaller amounts of income, but we would still expect to see some degree of project generated income. It may that your project involves a piece of work through which income is generated, and this question would be the place to refer to this.

## Part Five – Good Practice

**5.1 Explain how this particular project will be managed to ensure good practice throughout.**

Provide some detail here, we are looking for evidence of good management practice. The types of information are looking for include:

* You need to demonstrate how the project is supported by the organisation that will carry it out
* Who will be responsible for managing what happens on a day by day, month by month basis?
* What relevant skills do they have?
* How often do they meet, what information will they consider?
* To whom do they report?
* How will they ensure that people are kept safe (health and safety issues)?
* What risks have you identified, how do you intend to manage those risks?

**5.2 a and b. Safeguarding**

If you are conducting Regulated work with children, young people or protected adults, you will need to confirm that you are adhering to the Church of Scotland Safeguarding policies and practices in this regard, and in particular, that all workers and volunteers have undergone the safer recruitment process, have been cleared by the Safeguarding Service, and have attended safeguarding training prior to undertaking any regulated work. **If this is not the case then any award may be delayed.**

You will also need to confirm that your congregational Safeguarding Register is up to date and been submitted to the Safeguarding Service in December 2023 or prior to the submission of this application. **If this is not the case then any award may be delayed.**

**5.3 If you are working alongside another organisation in delivering this work, how do you ensure that their work is compliant with Church of Scotland Safeguarding policy?**

### You may wish to speak with the Church of Scotland Safeguarding department to ensure an appropriate partnership agreement is in place.

# Making the Application

Once you have completed the **Seeds For Growth** Grant Application Form **the final page of the Application Form provides a check list and details of where to send the documents.**

# What happens next?

Stage 1: All applications will receive an acknowledgement email. Your application form will be reviewed to ensure that it is eligible and gives enough information to proceed to full assessment. If the application is ineligible or there is insufficient information, your application may not go forward.

Stage 2: (applies to forms from congregations only): the Grants Unit will pass details of the application to the appropriate Presbytery for confirmation that the Presbytery is supportive of the application. Application forms that are not supported by Presbytery cannot move to Stage 3.

Stage 3: The application will be considered by the **Seeds For Growth** Panel comprised of the Grants Manager, Convener and Vice-Convener. We aim to complete the decision-making process within eight weeks of the date of application. Applications are assessed at regular meetings (except August and December).

Projects will be assessed against the following criteria:

Applications should:

* Be focused on a defined *project* (rather than a *post*)
* Demonstrate a visionary approach to church growth, church planting and pioneer mission
* Set out the anticipated effect of the project at a congregational or Presbytery level
* Include a clear plan and measurable targets
* Demonstrate a commitment to good collaboration/partnership working, including ecumenical partners
* Show how the grant will help meet the costs of the project

## How quickly will awards be made?

We aim to make Level 2 awards within 8 weeks of the date of application. The money is to be spent within 12 months of receipt.

## If the application is unsuccessful can we reapply?

Basic feedback on the application will be given in the decision letter and as long as the project is eligible you can submit a modified application form at any time.

## Payment Details

If the application is successful we will write to you requesting bank details.

## Reporting

Once the project is completed, within one month you will be expected to complete a reporting form including information on how it went, what you learned and the impact that it had. You also need to report what the money was spent on. Individual receipts with a value of over £100 must be kept for possible inspection by **Seeds For Growth**.

**NOTE that you are required to show the project in your accounts as a Restricted fund – please ensure that your Treasurer is aware of this.**

We will also be holding quarterly online gatherings where people will be encouraged to share what they are doing and for us to learn from each other.

We would also welcome receiving short videos of your project. We will issue guidance on how to provide this when the time comes to report.

# Data Privacy

Please review our [privacy notice](https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/site/privacy-centre/data-protection)(click on "Grant Privacy Notice" in the drop-down menu), which outlines the way in which the Church of Scotland Office of the Assembly Trustees will use personal information provided to us in connection with awarding grants on behalf of the Church of Scotland.

**You are agreeing to this when completing the application form.**

# For Further Assistance

If you require further information, call the Grants Unit in the Office of Assembly Trustees on 0131 376 3682 or email [grants@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:grants@churchofscotland.org.uk?subject=Pioneer%20Mission%20Fund%20Enquiry)