**Southwark Diocese Fresh Expressions Fund 2023**

Purpose: *A fund of £50,000 per annum invested to generate* ***a significant increase in the number and impact of sustainable Fresh Expressions of Church (fxC’s) in the Diocese, and so contribute to church growth across all traditions****.*

**The process for awarding fxC grants:**

1. Parishes will be invited to apply quarterly for larger grants but throughout the year for the small grants. The criteria below will need to be met. Where demand for grants exceeds the funds available, those awarding the grants will review the closeness of alignment to the Diocesan strategic goals and also ensure there is a balance between church traditions as well as geographical opportunity areas across the Diocese.
2. The relevant Archdeacon will be asked to confirm that the parish is suitable for fxC funding.
3. The grants panel will strike a balance between new projects and developing existing initiatives, with a roughly equal emphasis on both. This balance will be reviewed periodically and at least annually. Small grants will normally only be given once but parishes will be able to apply for a second larger grant during the period of this funding and grants covering more than one year will be considered for the appropriate project (repeating grants).
4. To help ensure the Diocese moves towards achieving the Diocesan strategic objectives (see Appendix A), applications will be particularly encouraged from projects where the existing congregation is unrepresentative of the resident community (objectives no 2 & 5, see page 7).

**Criteria for fxC grants**

fxC grants must include some or all of the following eleven criteria:

1. The initiative must clearly be a fxC or making progress towards becoming one, fulfilling the national definition of a fxC (“A fresh expression is a form of church for the changing culture established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church”) and able to meet the majority of fxC criteria under the Church Army’s definition from June 2014 (see Appendix B);
2. The parish must have a MAP which includes the proposed fxC and also be contributing to the mission and ministry of the Diocese of Southwark through the Parish Support Fund;
3. The timescales for the project must be realistic;
4. The project should be sustainable, not overly dependent long-term on one key leader, and with some strategy in place for financial sustainability;
5. Leaders must be engaging in training and reflection, e.g. Mission Shaped Ministry course;
6. Leaders must be willing to share learning, both positive and negative with the wider church, and so contribute to mission of the whole Diocese.
7. Able to give some evidence base for anticipated fruitfulness;
8. Show evidence of a clear timetable for the work with appropriate review points built in to the plan;
9. The project must have been discussed with the Dean of Fresh Expressions before the application and there should be a willingness to work with him/her as the work progresses – accepting support and coaching as appropriate.

For the small start-up grants (£500 to £1,000) meeting criteria 1-3 will be essential with some information required in respect of criteria 4-6 but criteria numbers 7-9 will not normally be expected to apply.

For further information contact Will Cookson, Dean of Fresh Expressions will.cookson@southwark.anglican.org, Tel: 07505 128548

**Appendix A - Diocese of Southwark Strategic Goals**

The following were presented to the Diocesan Council of Trustees in November 2015 as goals for those who work across the Diocese as a whole. They are ambitious but by God's grace are achievable through our working together at every level of church life in Southwark.

As a Diocese, we commit:

1. over the next ten years, to grow our average weekly attendance by 5% by 2025 partly through having each church develop a high-quality Mission Action Plan (MAP) which includes a course for evangelism and discipleship;

2. to increase the number of worshipping communities with a primary focus on areas of population growth through investment in Fresh Expressions (fxC) in the areas where the data suggests the existing congregations are increasingly unrepresentative of the resident community and therefore unlikely to be successful in reaching them without intentional intervention;

3. over the next five years, to grow a financial resource base that allows investment in growth for the future. Key measurable include: annual financial surplus, working financial reserves equivalent to 6 months operating costs by 2020, 1% of diocesan turnover annually dedicated to major diocesan ministry and mission projects beginning in 2016, rising to 2% by 2020;

4. to grow the number of ordained vocations by 50% and lay vocations by 50% by 2025 by enabling and discerning licensed ordained leadership, ordained pioneer leadership, training and licensing of lay and pioneer ministers to work in Fresh Expressions, youth and family workers, and developing other authorised lay leadership roles;

5. to grow leadership and representation that reflects the rich diversity of our diocese and especially focusing where the data suggests groups are currently under-represented: through ethnicity, age (especially 18-40), educational opportunities, material well being, tradition.

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**Appendix B**

**What is an Anglican fresh expression of Church? - Ten Criteria**

The Church of England’s research & statistics department use the following definition. A fresh expression is any venture that works mainly with non-churchgoers and aims to become church.  A fresh expression is …

1. Missional – it intends to work with non-churchgoers

2. Contextual – it seeks to fit the context

3. Formational – it aims to form disciples

4. Ecclesial – it intends to become church

**Church Army’s Research Unit have taken this further:**

1. Is this a **new and further group**, which is **Christian and communal**, rather than an existing group modified, adapted or changed?
2. Has the starting group tried to **engage with non church goers**? There was intention to create a fresh expression of Church (fxC) not to do an outreach project from an existing church. The aim was to help the Christians sent out to start the fxC to understand a culture and context and adapt to fit it, not make the local/indigenous people change and adapt to fit into an existing church context.
3. Does the community meet **at least once a month**?
4. Does it have **a name** that helps give it an identity? An active search, not yet yielding a name, is allowed.
5. Is there **intention to be Church**? This could be the intention from the start, or by a discovery on the way. This admits the embryonic fxD (fx of Developing community) and cases of fxE (fx of Evangelism) and even some fxW (fx of Worship). The key is that it is *not* seen as a bridge back to ‘real church’, but as Church in its own right.
6. Is it **Anglican** or an Ecumenical project which includes **an Anglican partner**? ‘Anglican’ here means the Bishop welcomes it as part of the diocesan family[[1]](#footnote-1), not whether it only uses centrally authorized worship texts, or has a legal territory (parish).
7. Is there some form of **leadership** recognised by those within the community and also by those outside of it[[2]](#footnote-2)?
8. Do at least the majority of members (who are part of the public gathering) see it as **their major expression** of being church?
9. Are there **aspirations for the four creedal ‘marks’ of church, or ecclesial relationships:** ‘up/holy, in/one, out/apostolic, of/catholic’? We see the two dominical sacraments (communion & baptism) as a given consequence of the life of a missional community which follows Jesus, but not the sole or even best measure of being church.
10. Is there the **intention to become ‘3 self’** (self-financing, self-governing and self-reproducing)? These factors may look different in each local context, but are some marks of advancing ecclesial maturity. They are not to be interpreted as indicators of congregationalist independency, or breakaway tendencies, but of taking responsibility.

**Application of the criteria:**

Examples that do not meet criteria 1-7 are deemed to not be Anglican fresh expressions of Church. Factors in criteria 8-10 may be more like ‘health’ or developmental issues; their absence may indicate the need for further maturing, present weaknesses and/or dangers, but not necessarily exclusion. The presence of these factors is healthy and indicates maturing.

**Variables in the criteria:**

- We still consider examples that have since died, but lasted at least 2 years of life.

- Contextualisation of all criteria; thus no. 5 does not require public use of the word ‘Church’ where it was unhelpful in the context, but it does need an understanding that this is what is forming.

**Church Army’s Research Unit:**

**June 2014**

1. This instinct is early: cf Ignatius, ‘but whatever he (the Bishop) approve, this is also pleasing to God.’ Smyrna. VIII [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Jay argues from pre 3rd century texts that ‘the possession of an ordered and recognized ministry is integral to the nature of the Church.’ Eric G. Jay, *The Church its Changing Image through 20 Centuries*, Vol 1 (London: SPCK, 1977) p. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)