

New Places for New People

Starting new Christian
communities:
A practical guide

Chapter 21

How to Set Up
Funding
Processes for
Circuit-led
NPNPs

How to Set Up Funding Processes for Circuit-led NPNGs

A District will need to have launched one or more district-led New Places for New People (NPNG) projects before it can fund any circuit- or local-church-led NPNGs. For ease of reference, throughout this chapter we will refer to circuits only (to save writing out 'circuit or local church' every time), but please remember that the following could all apply to NPNGs started by a local church too.

Once a District has launched a district-led NPNG, it can begin to fund circuit-led NPNGs. The funding process for circuit-led NPNGs will mirror the funding process for district-led NPNGs (see page 5). The only difference will be a change of roles:

1. The District NPNG Team (see page 11) will guide and accompany Circuit NPNG Teams* in their preparation work, fulfilling the same role of partner/advisor that Evangelism and Growth staff occupy in the funding process for district-led projects.
2. Circuit NPNG Teams will initiate the circuit-led projects by discerning a context, vision and focus for the project; playing a role in submission for funding (see below); and leading on any necessary recruitment (ie a similar role to that played by the District NPNG Team in the funding process for district-led projects).

* The 'Circuit NPNG Team' referenced here and elsewhere in this chapter could be any group of people committed to pioneering an NPNG. It may involve lay volunteers, paid lay workers, presbyters, and/or deacons. Though it may not always include the Superintendent, the group should have the support of the Superintendent for their project.

Funding process set-up

The District NPNG Team will work with Evangelism and Growth staff to develop a vision for NPNG in their district, which will include:

- prioritising starting a new Christian community in every circuit, by making it an integrated part of the district's mission plan/strategy
- encouraging and equipping circuits and local churches to launch NPNGs
- sharing learning and best practice on pioneering with circuits and local churches
- exploring how the district will support an ongoing, long-term commitment to starting new Christian communities in circuits across the district in a variety of contexts, including Church at the Margins
- creating a policy and process to ensure the equitable allocation of funds to eligible projects (including what will happen if there are more eligible projects than there is funding available).

The District NPNG Team will then share this vision at Synod (or similar gatherings of circuit leadership teams) to inspire circuits and encourage them to apply for funding.

How circuits access funding

As the funding process for circuit-led NPNPs mirrors the funding process for district-led NPNPs, it includes the same seven steps: preparation, presentation, completing the Funding Submission Form, confirmation, recommendation, audit and approval, and funding.

Every district has been allocated funding for circuit-led NPNPs. The amount allocated is different from district to district, based on the District Advance Fund (DAF) formula. Funding will need to be accessed by districts through this new process by the end of 2025/2026. All circuit-led NPNP projects should be match-funded or match-resourced (for more information on match-resourcing, contact the Project Officer (Funding Allocation and Distribution) at bondj@methodistchurch.org.uk Across the Connexion, at least 60 per cent of funding should be used for Church at the Margins projects).

Preparation

The Circuit NPNP Team, in company with the District NPNP Team, will begin (at any time) a journey of support, prayer, and discernment in order to design and prepare for their circuit-led NPNP project. We recommend the circuit NPNP team meet with the District NPNP Team at least three times during this time of preparation. This may involve building a Circuit NPNP Team, discerning where to locate the project (see page 14), and undertaking some experimentation and testing of ideas.

Presentation

In order to claim this funding, the District NPNP Team should produce a presentation and complete the Funding Submission Form (found at www.methodist.org.uk/fundingnnpn). The purpose of this is two-fold: to tell the story of the project to all of those who have an interest, and to evidence how the eligibility criteria agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee (found at www.methodist.org.uk/fundingnnpn) have been met.

The District NPNP Team will select three to four key influencers/leaders within the district (eg people with the potential skill and vision to lead or inspire future circuit projects) to form a 'panel' with one or more of their own team members. The panel will hear the project vision, ask questions, and offer feedback to help the project be as good as possible. The presentation should focus on the questions and headings found at www.methodist.org.uk/fundingnnpn

If the panel consider the project has not met the eligibility criteria, they can ask for more preparation work to be undertaken. For minor work, they may choose not to reconvene the panel, but to receive assurance that the work has been undertaken via another means (eg via email). For major work, the panel should reconvene and receive a second presentation.

Funding Submission Form

Once completed, the Funding Submission Form (found at www.methodist.org.uk/fundingnnpn) should be countersigned by the District Chair, and then submitted to the Project Officer (Funding Allocation and Distribution) on or before:

- **1 August** (in time for the October meeting of the Mission Committee – see page 75)
- **1 March** (in time for the May meeting of the Mission Committee – see page 75)

Confirmation

The Funding Submission Form will be reviewed by the Project Officer (Funding Allocation and Distribution) to confirm that the NPNP meets the eligibility criteria. If the Project Officer considers the project has not met the eligibility criteria, they can ask for more preparation work to be undertaken. For minor work, they may choose not to reconvene the panel or receive a second set of submission paperwork, but to receive assurance that the work has been undertaken via another means (eg via email). For major work, the panel should be reconvened and a second set of submission paperwork should be undertaken.

Recommendation

When the Project Officer (Funding Allocation and Distribution) is satisfied the NPNP meets the eligibility criteria, they will recommend the project to the Mission Committee for funding.

Audit and approval

The Mission Committee, at either their October or May meeting, will audit and approve the recommendations. This audit will be an overview, not a detailed examination – the Mission Committee will be encouraged to ask searching questions to promote accountability, but not to review extensive paperwork. The Mission Committee can ask for further work to be done in any of the previous stages, and can withhold funding until that work has been completed. The Mission Committee can also decide not to fund a given project, in which case clear and thorough feedback will be provided to all parties on why that decision was taken. There is no process to appeal the decisions of the Mission Committee.

For Connexional Year 2021/2022, the Strategy and Resources Committee will audit and approve, as the Mission Committee has not yet been set up.

Funding

When the Mission Committee approves a project, the Project Officer (Funding Allocation and Distribution) will liaise with colleagues in the Finance and Resources Team to release funds within four weeks.

Questions:

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact the Project Officer (Funding Allocation and Distribution at bondj@methodistchurch.org.uk or visit www.methodist.org.uk/fundingnnp).