



# How to ...

## Fundraise for your project

Your church has decided to take on a project, and now you need to think about resourcing it. While your usual church stewardship and fundraising activities are key to keeping everyone engaged, these alone won't raise sufficient funds. This guide helps you to identify, apply to and raise funds from grant-giving trusts.

For larger capital projects, please also refer to [How to... develop a fundraising strategy](#) as well as the [National Church's 12 capital funding guides](#).

### How to maximize your chances of success

The two key things you need to do are:

1. Identify the most appropriate funder(s)
2. Write a concise cover letter, a clear statement of need and complete the application process correctly

#### I. Identifying the most appropriate funder(s)

Many hundreds of funding bodies exist, and it can be difficult to know where to start seeking funders for your project. There are three main categories of funding sources for churches:

##### a. National grant-making bodies

These include specific church funders (such as the [National Churches Trust](#) or [AllChurches](#)) and secular bodies (such as the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#)). The competition can be high for these funds, as they receive applications from across the country, but they also offer large sums so are worth trying – especially if you have a big project.

You can find these funders listed in the [National Charitable Grants for Churches](#) guide.

##### b. Local trusts and foundations

Numerous local ecclesiastical and secular trusts exist that can support churches and small charities within the boundaries of the Diocese of Bristol. While some of these trusts offer small grants, these can be used as 'patchwork' funding - where a number of smaller awards make up a percentage of the project cost that can then be used as match funding to secure larger grants.

Local [Ecclesiastical charities](#) are listed on the Diocesan website, and a [Diocesan Funding Guide](#) lists details of numerous other local trusts that could support your project.

##### c. Your local community

Running a local appeal is not only a good way to bring in funds, but crucially it ramps up local support for the project – and demonstrating local support is key to securing larger grants. When planning an appeal, start by identifying your various audiences: for instance, your church congregation/s; groups who use the church building/s or join activities; the wider community; local businesses; and the local parish, town or county council. You might also want to identify any high net worth individuals who might support your project. You can then tailor fundraising 'asks' for each of these groups.

Six guides to community fundraising can be found [here](#).

## Other places to search for funders:

- The National Churches Trust has a very good searchable database for advice, support and funding, enabling you to conduct a specific [search](#) for funding sources.
- The [Funds for Historic Buildings](#) website has a [refined search page](#) which lists funding sources and their priorities for giving, as well as a [general funding advice page](#) with top tips on how to make an application to trusts, companies and individuals.
- The Charity Commission and the Institute of Fundraising have produced [a useful guide](#) to trustees' responsibilities when fundraising.
- The Church of England's Church Care website has information on [their grants](#) as well as [other sources of funding](#).

## 2. Write a concise cover letter, a clear statement of need and complete the application process correctly

Once you have identified the funder(s) you want to apply to, you need to prepare three things:

1. **A cover letter:** this is always required (either printed or electronically)
2. **A statement of need:** this may not be required if the application form is detailed.
3. **An application form**

The **cover letter** should briefly state who you are, what you are seeking money for, how much you are seeking, where you are based, and what difference the money will make immediately and in the future. If the trust has multiple funding streams, also specify which fund you're applying to. This should be a stand-alone document, and no longer than one side of A4 paper.

A **statement of need** is simply that. It goes into more depth than the cover letter, and should include specific details and financial information. This should communicate the need for the project and the difference it will make, provide a budget showing the total cost of the work, and detail how you're planning to access funding (where possible, demonstrate the diversity and creativity of your fundraising). Photos, architects' drawings or sketches can liven up this document. Two to three pages should be sufficient.

An **application form** is provided by the funder, and will vary from trust to trust. Once you have a clear statement of need, you can use this as a basis for completing application forms. A benefit of forms is that you can be confident that any questions the trustees may raise will be addressed. You must honour word limits, and pay close attention to any criteria or guidance.

### Don't forget...

1. Use the language that the funding provider uses to reflect their priorities. This may mean writing a slightly different letter and statement of need for each application, but it makes it easier for the funder to identify with your cause.
2. Ensure you have had a conversation with your PCC and incumbent about your ethical policy on funding. For example, will the PCC accept funds generated from Lottery sales or tobacco sales? (The latter is relevant for some Bristol-based grant-giving trusts.)
3. While many funders state: "Only registered charities may apply", this doesn't apply to PCCs as they are "excepted" charities. In accordance with the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956, "The PCC is not required to be incorporated but has the status of a body corporate with perpetual succession, but without a common seal."
4. **Top tip:** Writing the long answers in Word and then cutting and pasting them into the document has two benefits: there is an automatic word count, and you can save the answers for another application form (you'll find most application forms ask the same questions in a different format).

## The power of prayer

It goes without saying that it's crucial to keep praying for your project throughout the fundraising process. You could encourage the congregation to pray for the work through providing regular updates and notices, and also ensure that it's a standing item on the PCC agenda. While in the whirlwind of project planning and fundraising, it's helpful to keep in mind the reason for all the hard work: to build God's kingdom and to glorify Him. Many churches have incredible stories of raising significant funds against the odds, as they faithfully prayed for the work throughout.

### Other guidance to support you in writing applications:

- The [Parish Resources](#) website has a useful section on [funding](#)
- The [Church Build](#) website has an excellent funding toolkit.
- The [Devon Historic Churches Trust](#) has a really good section on pre-application procedures including a section on [Is your project vision clear?](#)
- Please see our [PCC and Parish Officers Training](#) brochure for more information about any fundraising workshops or training opportunities

Updated: August 2018

