

Strategic Development Funding Application Process - Second stage

1. Those invited to the second stage are requested to develop and submit a more detailed proposal, to include a robust project plan which will illustrate how you propose to deliver your project. This should cover the items set out under the following headings.

Project Summary

2. This should provide a succinct overview covering no more than two pages. You should use this area to describe any project or plan changes, alongside highlighting any issues that were raised in the letter inviting your application forward. If there have been any relevant changes to your overall strategy, they should also be included in this summary. Often, there are changes in the proposed costs between the first and second stage which result in a change in grant request. If this is applicable, the rationale behind those changes should be outlined here. It is also important to ensure that you include exactly how much you are requesting a grant for.

Project Description

3. This should provide a clear description of the project, which should include as a minimum:
- How the proposed project addresses the need for promoting church growth within the largest urban areas (if the project is not targeted within the largest urban areas, please explain the reasons); and one or both of younger generations and deprived communities;
 - A clear rationale for the project, including how it has emerged from prayerful discernment about which of the many options for change will have the greatest impact;
 - How it fits in with the wider diocesan strategy;
 - The vision and opportunities resulting from the project;
 - What the project aims to achieve, and what the specific outputs and outcomes will be;
 - How the proposed project is expected to achieve its outcomes;
 - A clear linkage between numerical growth, growth in discipleship and social impact and an explanation of how the project will achieve each of these;
 - How the project will generate growth elsewhere in the diocese;
 - The potential to replicate the project elsewhere in the diocese and in the wider Church.

Project Management and Governance

4. 75% of all change projects fail to deliver expected outcomes on time and within budget. Good project management is intrinsically linked to the success of a project and this section should outline your plan. The main areas to consider are:

- Project Planning (good initiation).
- Stakeholder engagement and communication.
- Project management capacity.
- Governance, accountability and reporting.
- Active management of risk.
- A focus on measurement and monitoring desired outcomes.

5. The plan should explain how the diocese will manage the project, with a realistic assessment of its capacity (people, skills, time, finances etc.) to do so alongside “business as usual”. Appropriate programme management and/or project management expertise are now a requirement for projects supported by Strategic Development Funding. Dioceses may therefore, as part of their proposal, seek funding for these or other posts where additional capacity or skills are required to ensure successful delivery if these are not already in place. The proposal should also explain the governance arrangements for how the project will be monitored and overseen within the diocese, and how (and by whom) those involved in the project will be held accountable, as appropriate, for its delivery.

6. The proposal should include a plan (e.g. GANNT or other alternatives) for implementing the project as an appendix. This should cover the key activity and include delivery milestones for the length of the funding period. This should include What needs to be done – Who is going to do it and – by When?

7. For the initial twelve months, it would be helpful to see a greater level of detail in the plan including a breakdown by month. Milestones should be included that signify the completion of key activities such as, for example, the successful recruitment of teams, building works completed or the launch of new congregations. If you have made progress in any of these areas since Stage I, it should be highlighted here. It is also important to illustrate how you will maintain momentum between the submission of your plan and the award as well as outlining any activities that you can continue to undertake “at risk”. This is an opportunity for you to describe “what great looks like” in practice.

8. Where funding is sought for posts, we suggest that job descriptions are attached to the proposal, together with the arrangements for recruiting (e.g. where it will be advertised, who will be responsible for recruitment, composition of panels etc).

9. Either in the main section or separately, the plan should address the issues of culture change and how the diocese is planning the change management which the work will need. This will need to include, for example, who will be involved in helping to champion the project and how communication will be managed. The SIB will ask how the leadership team are involved “on the ground” so this should be outlined here.

Financial information

10. A clear budget over the period during which the project is to take place should be submitted as both a summary in the main document and full budget (Excel format) as an appendix. This should include:

- A clear distinction between what is being supported through the funding and what is being supported by the diocese and (if applicable) third parties.
- A clear distinction between any capital and non-capital items.
- The budget should clearly demonstrate how the project will be sustainable after the SDF funding period and ideally include the two years after the funding period ends.
- Clarity about the funding period and financial profile of the project.
- Clarity about what overheads are included.
- Milestones against which you will claim e.g. specific outputs, outcomes or deadlines which would usually be quarterly.

11. Please note that there is an expectation that the diocese will be willing to commit significant financial resources to the project which are proportionate to its historic and current wealth.

Risk Assessment

12. The proposal should demonstrate that the diocese has considered the possible risks that might prevent the proposal from being implemented or undermine its success. This should be presented as a simple risk assessment and include:

- Your main risks with their mitigation.
- Identify the risk owner
- You may find it helpful to categorise the risks by impact and likelihood.
- Include your approach to managing the key risks on a regular basis.

Evidence

13. Dioceses will be expected to refer within their application, as far as is feasible, to the examples or evidence (including hard data) on which they have based their proposal and illustrate their understanding of why the approach works. This could come from evidence of the success of a comparable activity within the diocese or from within another diocese (e.g. an existing initiative to be expanded, extended or replicated); from the Church Growth research programme; or from another reputable source.

14. Where the approach or activity is being undertaken in the diocese for the first time (e.g. is being replicated from a successful model in use elsewhere), the application should be able to demonstrate that the diocese understands the determinants of success and that these are incorporated into the proposal: for example, if it is critical to recruit the right person, then the proposal should include a job specification and evidence that they are likely to be able to attract a good candidate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

15. Proposals should include an evaluation plan, which states clearly the outputs, how the diocese will measure and record the outcomes, capture any learning and promulgate it within the diocese and to the wider Church.

16. The proposals should include:

- A measurement framework – What? Why? How? Who? When?
- The lag measures. These measure a result that you are seeking to achieve (for example, attendance has increased; giving has increased).
- The lead measures. These are the measures of the steps which will have the most impact in achieving the project's aims (these should be predictive and influenceable by those involved in the project or activity).
- Activity (monitoring) against outcomes (evaluation).
- An annual trajectory of outcomes.

Sharing Learning

17. Please set out your initial thoughts about how you might, in due course, share your learning from the project with other practitioners within your diocese and beyond (for example, by holding seminars, workshops or electronic media). We appreciate that this is an area which will develop as the learning from the project emerges and are looking for a commitment to practitioner-to-practitioner learning at this stage, rather than for precise details about how this will be achieved. It may be helpful to consider though what resources you will need to capture and share learning as the project progresses.

18. We suggest that you include the costs of sharing learning in your proposal.

Consultation

19. Please briefly set out the process of consultation and review which you have undertaken to shape the project plan and to achieve support for it (for example, with the Bishop's Council, Diocesan Synod, Area Deans).

Criteria for Assessing Project Plans

20. Diocesan proposals will be assessed on the basis of 'Strategic Impact' and 'Programme Delivery Confidence'.

21. **Strategic Impact** will be assessed by reference to the following factors:

- To what extent does the proposed programme address the need for growth in the largest urban areas, among young people and deprived communities?
- Has the proposed programme emerged from prayerful discernment about which of the many options for change will have greatest impact?
- Does the programme promise a good harvest in terms of the growth in the number of new disciples in proportion to the funding invested? And is this promise based on a coherent and well-evidenced theory:
- Have the interventions been done before? Did they work?
- What's the convincing wisdom and logic that the programme will work?
- Is there a track record and evidence of fruitfulness i.e. is God at work?
- Will the growth in the number of new disciples be sustained through growth in their discipleship? What broader social impact will the programme have? Is there a clear linkage between numerical growth, growth in discipleship and social impact?
- Will the programme have a generative impact within the diocese i.e. over time will it generate growth elsewhere in the diocese?
- Is there potential to replicate the programme elsewhere in the diocese and wider Church?
- Will the programme generate learning through testing innovative or experimental approaches that will inform the wider Church's plans for growth?

22. **Programme Delivery Confidence** will be assessed by reference to the following factors:

- How committed is the diocese to the proposed programme?
- Does the programme flow from the diocese's strategy?
- Is the senior leadership team engaged with it?
- Is the diocese willing to commit significant financial resources to the programme which are proportionate to its historic and current wealth?
- Is there a realistic plan of delivery setting out milestones linked to budgets, skills and capacity? Is the plan financially sustainable?
- What is the track record of the diocesan team in delivering SDF (or other) programmes against their goals?
- What is the diocesan team's track record in respect of learning and continuous improvement?
- What are the skills and capacity available within the diocese, including dedicated programme management capacity?
- How strong are the governance arrangements in relation to the programme?

- Have the risks attached to the programme been assessed and mitigations put in place?
- Is there an effective stakeholder engagement and communication plan relating to the programme?

23. These are of course in addition to the components requested in the guidance above, e.g. a clear project plan and the diocese's approach to managing change.

24. The Strategic Investment Board will direct funding towards those proposals which offer the greatest strategic impact in relation to the funding requested and where there is greatest delivery confidence. Where it has to choose between diocesan proposals with similar impact and delivery confidence, the Board will favour proposals:

- From dioceses with the least resources in relation to their population;
- Involving investment in deprived areas.

Further Information

25. If you have any queries, or are considering submitting an application, please contact David Jennings on 020 7898 1492 or via email at: david.jennings@churchofengland.org.

Strategy & Development Unit
Church House, London SW1

July 2019