# East Midland Baptist Association

**Mission Grant (MG)**

# Guidelines and Process for EMBA Churches

A Mission Grant is provided to help a Baptist church, or ecumenical partnership including Baptists, to engage effectively in mission by supporting a minister, minister in training, pastor or other worker. The main focus for this person will be to lead the church forward in mission. Their priority must be helping the church to reach out to their local community in whatever way is most appropriate for that situation.

**Expectations of grant supported churches**

Whilst we do not want to be legalistic, we would ask that as part of our partnering together, every EMBA church receiving a mission grant would be actively involved in Baptist family life……

* All churches requesting a grant should already be meaningfully supporting Home Mission. All churches who receive a grant from Home Mission should be contributing to the wider Baptist family through Home Mission.
* The church would be willing to become actively involved in a local cluster / learning community where the church walks with other Baptist churches developing mutual accountability and interdependence.
* The church would be willing to submit a maximum of one A4 page (typed font size 12) outlining part of your church story that is enabled through your grant from Home Mission funds. This is not a report but an opportunity for you to share what God is doing in and through your church and enables the Association to share some amazing stories with the wider Association to provide encouragement, spark new thinking and raise the profile of Home Mission Giving! We request this on a yearly basis for the duration of the grant.
* The ministers of HM funded churches are expected to attend Association Days and also the annual EMBA Ministers’ Conference *(if funding is an issue, please speak to your Regional Minister)*.
* The EMBA Grants Group strongly recommend that churches in receipt of a Home Mission Grant look to give no more than 15% of their income to other causes (5% HM, 5% BMS, 5% other); any surplus income going towards a church reducing their reliance on a grant and becoming self-funding at the end of the five-year grant period. *(The logic of this guidance is to avoid a situation where the wider Baptist family is effectively supporting the mission causes chosen by a local church, when these finances could be used to support its own minister and mission.)*

**Who can apply for a grant?**

A church applying for a grant must normally be in membership with the Association and with the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

**Who makes the decisions on the awarding of grants?**

The grants decisions are made by the EMBA Grants Group, which comprises mission-minded ministers, those with a strong finance background, the EMBA Regional Ministers and the EMBA Treasurer. Becky Nicholls (EMBA Administrative Support) manages the administration of all Association Grants.

**General Principles and Guidance**

The grant process is underpinned by a commitment between the church and the Association to listen to one another, to support each other and to be mutually open to challenge as the need for grant support is explored. It is hoped that this process will provide space for the church and the Association to listen to God together and hear His voice. This partnership is vital to ensure that the limited Baptist family funds are used effectively to support Kingdom work with a missional focus, and to enable the gospel to be shared with those who have not yet heard it.

A Mission Grant is normally provided to support the stipend of a minister; the grant will usually be for a maximum of 50% of the Baptist Union recommended stipend, excluding additional costs

such as housing, pension, expenses, etc. A Mission Grant would not normally be available to cover other church costs.

Mission Grants are typically awarded for a 5-year period. There is an expectation that the level of grant awarded will reduce by 20% of the initial grant each year with a church becoming self-financing after five years.

A grant is normally only awarded to churches where they give at least the recommended amount to Home Mission each year.

There are key points and questions which will be considered when a grant decision is made. These

include:

* Will the grant enable a church to grow and be more effective in mission?
* Is the wider church fully committed to supporting the missional plans long term?
* Does the application demonstrate financial sustainability long term with a reducing grant?
* Evidence of prayer, leadership and an outward looking perspective to the community.
* A clear and realistic mission plan.
* Evidence of activity or relationships which reach out to the community.
* An openness to change.
* A willingness to be guided by the Association Team into some suitable development work, for example joining a learning community.

**How is a grant application made?**

**Enquiry**

A church wishing to apply for a Mission Grant must first make contact with their Regional

Minister (RM) for an initial discussion. Following this discussion, the RM will arrange to meet with the church leadership and the wider church when appropriate, to consider the request for a grant in detail. After this meeting, if a church wishes to apply for grant support, Becky will email the application form to the church and the following action will be needed:

**Apply**

The EMBA Grants process is normally as follows:

January Applications sent to churches

Early March Deadline for completed applications to the EMBA Office

April – July Processing of applications / Association Visits

September EMBA Grants Group meet to consider applications

Churches notified by letter (sent by email) as to the grant awarded for the following year

The church will complete the required forms, providing the necessary supporting documents relating to the church’s mission plan and financial position. These will then need to be emailed to Becky Nicholls (EMBA Administrative Support) ahead of the deadline provided.

All new grant applications will receive an Association Visit as part of the application process. Typically, this is two visitors chosen by the Association, who meet with the church leadership, and possibly the wider church one evening to reflect with them on their application, provide encouragement and support.

**Consideration & decision**

Once all the required information is provided, the application will then be taken to the EMBA

Grants Group for consideration.

**What specific information should be included in a grant application?**

**Completion of Forms MG1 & MG1A**

These forms provide some statistical information about the church as well as the resolution

where the church meeting agrees to make a grant application.

**Mission Plan**

Please provide answers to the following questions (maximum of two sides of A4, typed in font size 12).

* What are the church’s current mission plans and priorities?
* In what ways do you hope to grow in the coming years?
* How will a Mission Grant enable this to happen?
* How do you envisage being self-sustaining within five years?

**Financial Information**

* The latest set of audited / independently-examined accounts including a summary sheet indicating the funds in the current / general account as well as any savings / deposit accounts OR draft accounts awaiting examination (Final accounts to be sent when ready).
* Current year’s budget
* Forecast for the following year

**When are grants agreed?**

The EMBA Grants Group meet twice a year, in March and September. The September meeting is where the majority of grant applications are considered, grants are awarded for the following year and existing grant supported situations are reviewed.

**How are grants calculated and paid?**

When a Mission Grant is agreed this is calculated and expressed as a percentage of the Baptist

Union Home Mission stipend; for example a grant of 50% stipend in 2021 based on the BU HM stipend of £24,500 will equate to a grant payable during the year of £12,250. The amount paid will normally vary in line with changes in the stipend; this is usually confirmed each year by BUGB. Grant payments are normally made monthly, around the 15th of each month. Grants will be paid for those months when the church has a minister in post.

**What happens after a grant is awarded?**

The church will continue to receive encouragement, guidance and support from the EMBA.

In subsequent years (years 2-5) of a grant, an application will still be needed but less information will be required. Following the initial application in the first year, future applications will focus on providing an update to the EMBA Grants Group; adding to the information provided in the initial application rather than replicating it.

In Years 2-5 of the grant process the application will comprise of:

* **Form MG1** - church members meeting resolution and declaration by church officers
* **Updated Financial information** 
  + The latest set of full audited / independently-examined accounts including a summary sheet indicating the funds in the current / general account as well as any savings / deposit accounts
  + Current year’s budget
  + Forecast for the following year
* **A Mission Update** providing an update on the answers to the four questions posed in the original application; highlighting the progress made by the church. Additional questions asked will be:
  + What has the church learnt or discovered in the last year?
  + As a church, what are your revised priorities for the coming year(s)?
* **EMBA Regional Minister commendation (MG2)** *(supplied by EMBA)*

***If you have any queries / questions relating to the grant process please contact your Regional Minister or Becky Nicholls (EMBA Administrative Support):***EMBA Office, c/o West Bridgford Baptist Church, Melton Road, West Bridgford, Notts NG2 7NF Email: bnicholls.emba@gmail.com Tel: 07763 401 793