



Uniting Church in Australia  
Synod of Western Australia



A WELCOMING  
**CHRISTIAN  
COMMUNITY**

# **MISSIONAL PROPERTY FUND**

## **APPLICATION GUIDE**

### **(FOR CONGREGATIONS)**

**DECEMBER 2025**

**V1.0**

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## 1 INTRODUCING THE MISSIONAL PROPERTY FUND

The Missional Property Fund is designed to provide funds to improve, develop, purchase, or lease property directly linked to enhancing the mission of the church. It must align with the congregational mission plan approved by the Presbytery Thrive committee.

- The Missional Property Fund was established by a decision of the Synod in 2025 and is effective from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2026.
- This application guide aims to supplement the Uniting Church Property Sales Proceeds Policy by assisting congregations with guidance about applying to funding from the Missional Property Fund.
- We encourage congregations to consider how this fund can help extend your vital work and further the mission of the Uniting Church in Western Australia.
- The Mission Resourcing Committee will consider and determine all applications from the Missional Property Fund (with consultation with other relevant parts of the Synod/Presbytery)
- Funds can be provided as a grant, loan, or under a shared equity arrangement. The financial situation of the congregation will be considered in the process.
- Congregations can apply for initial funding to conduct feasibility of ideas such as creating a business case, perform engineering assessments, or conceptual designs.
- A Missional Property Fund grant can be submitted in conjunction with a Future Mission Fund grant.

## 2 USING PROPERTY TO ENHANCE MISSION (WHAT IS IN SCOPE)

The focus is mission.

**The Fund is to provide grants to improve, develop, purchase, or lease property directly linked to enhancing the mission of the church.**

Examples of property improve/develop/purchase/lease to enhance Mission: (not exhaustive):

- Improvements/development directly linked to mission – e.g. food banks, counselling services, op shops, or flexible spaces to enable community hubs, ESL classes, vocational classes, or creative spaces to connect with the community.
- Create more welcoming spaces, for example to attract a younger demographic or improve accessibility.
- Improve kitchen and hospitality spaces to support mission such as outreach programs.

- Improve street appeal and provide community engagement spaces (e.g. community garden, community art, eco-gardens)
- Improvements/Development to enable income generation to support other mission.
- Partnerships with agencies or other charities (where the outcome linked to mission of the congregation or to provide income to support other mission)
- Creating safe play areas or multipurpose rooms for youth programs, after-school activities, or family support groups to support Children/Youth/Family mission activities.
- Café or Social Enterprise Space - Creating a café or co-working area to engage the local community and generate sustainable income.
- Property Development or leasing to enable merging of congregations (which in turn improves missional outcomes)
- We are a pilgrim people – leasing of alternative premises in a more suitable location to enable mission in the community (and potentially redevelopment of the existing property to provide income)
- Church Plants – lease or purchase of property for a Church Plant.

Presbytery (especially Thrive and [Presbytery Minister for Mission](mailto:pmmission@wa.uca.org.au) (Rev Luke Williams, [pmmission@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:pmmission@wa.uca.org.au)) can provide advice on Mission, and they will be consulted in the application consideration process.

Congregations can apply for initial funding to conduct feasibility of ideas such as creating a business case, perform engineering assessments, or conceptual designs.

We encourage applying in stages to reduce risk and make sure your project is practical. For example, to ensure there is buy in from the congregation, the concept is feasible, and that other stakeholder factors are considered (e.g. Local Government, Planning restrictions, Community).

If improving/developing a property for a missional purpose, funding to incorporate environmental design principles in the development can be considered. (e.g. energy efficiency, water efficiency, solar power etc)

Funding can include the entire property development lifecycle (not exhaustive):

- Land purchase/lease
- Planning / Development applications / Approvals
- Professional fees such as Project Management / Consultants / Architects
- Site Preparation / Demolition of existing property / Asbestos removal
- Building
- Utility Connection
- Interior Fit-out / Window Dressings / Furniture
- Technology / Audio-Visual
- Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing
- Landscaping / Car Parks
- Accessibility features
- Sustainability features

- Signage
- Legal Fees / Building Insurance
- Safety during construction – e.g. temporary fencing
- Costs for relocation/lease or temporary structures during construction
- Costs to enhance a property to optimise sale value

Of course, the above is for a major redevelopment, the fund can be used for minor improvements also. For example, to creating welcoming spaces to enhance mission, may involve a far simpler scope of replacing floors and curtains).

Funding requests for the Leasing of premises (e.g. Leasing a community hall or a commercial building for mission/ministry) is allowed.

### **3 WHAT IS OUT OF SCOPE**

The application needs to make the case that the funding will enhance the mission of the church.

Routine maintenance like air-conditioning service, electrical checks, fire checks, gutter cleaning, lawn mowing, and pest control must be paid for by the congregation.

Ongoing expenses such as Water, Power, Gas, Internet, Rates, Bins, and Insurance are out of scope.

Congregations still need to have budget allocated and financial reserves for property maintenance to meet compliance obligations and safety obligations, and things like hot water system replacement, and roof repair.

Funding is considered on a case-by-case basis - if your congregation can make a case that the expense related to property will enhance the mission of the church, then you are welcome to apply.

For example, if a congregation was upgrading a kitchen to provide (or enhance) missional outreach programs (e.g. soup kitchen), and the hot water system was part of the scope, then it can be included in the funding request (as part of the kitchen upgrade). If the application is to replace the hot water system because it broke and it is just used for morning tea on a Sunday – this may not meet the criteria.

### **4 WHO MAY APPLY?**

All congregations within the Uniting Church WA Presbytery can apply. The application must come from a congregation and be approved by the congregation Church Council.

Applications can be in partnership with other congregations, Uniting Church agencies (e.g. Juniper, Uniting WA, Good Sammy, BKI), and other organisations (e.g. charities or commercial partnerships)

## 5 WHAT NEEDS TO BE IN PLACE PRIOR TO APPLYING FOR FUNDING?

The following needs to be in place prior to applying for funding:

- [Mission Plan](#) submitted and approved by the Presbytery Thrive Committee  
(Contact Rev Luke Williams on [pmmission@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:pmmission@wa.uca.org.au) for help with your Mission Plan)
- [Health and Vitality Toolkit](#) document submitted to [PMpastoral@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:PMpastoral@wa.uca.org.au) for Presbytery evaluation  
(Contact Rev Claire Pickering on [PMpastoral@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:PMpastoral@wa.uca.org.au) for help with the toolkit)
- Most recent Annual Report of the congregation and annual financial statement (income, expenses, & assets, and future budget) submitted to [PMpastoral@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:PMpastoral@wa.uca.org.au)
- Your key leaders must have done [Safe Church](#) training in the last 3 years or be booked for an upcoming course. (Contact [cultureofsafety@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:cultureofsafety@wa.uca.org.au) for advice)
- The application needs to come from the congregation Church Council, so please verify the application has been endorsed by the Church Council.

In the application process, the Synod will ensure the relevant parts of the Presbytery and Synod are consulted (e.g. Presbytery Property Committee, Synod Property Board). If you have already had discussions with Presbytery / Synod, please mention this in the application.

## 6 HELP AVAILABLE TO APPLY FOR A GRANT

Please read the website and this guide as these provide useful information.

For advice on property matters (e.g. which companies to engage or property advice) please contact Property Services [property@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:property@wa.uca.org.au) (08) 9260 9800

For help with Mission Planning, the [Presbytery Minister for Mission](#) (Rev Luke Williams, [pmmission@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:pmmission@wa.uca.org.au)) is the main contact, they can assist with the Mission Plan prerequisite.

If your idea is still in its infancy and you would like help from a professional or you would like to experiment with a proof of concept, you can apply for a Future Mission Fund seed grant (for up to \$10,000) or Future Mission Fund feasibility grant (up to \$25,000).

What the Seed Grant can be used for (one or a combination):

- Engaging people to facilitate a workshop with the congregation/community to help inform mission ideas
- Engaging people to advise on and/or help apply for other grants (e.g. Future Mission Fund Grant, Missional Property Fund Grant, or other community/government grants).
- Engage a professional to source quotes and come up with conceptual ideas
- Engaging people to facilitate or run new or experimental missional programs
- Funding to enhance existing missional programs
- Funding activities or training directly linked to mission
- Purchase equipment or minor property improvements directly linked to the mission

See [Future Mission Fund application guide](#) for details

If you have questions on the grant process, please reach out to [mission.resourcing@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:mission.resourcing@wa.uca.org.au)

## **7 HOW DOES THE MISSIONAL PROPERTY FUND LINK TO THE FUTURE MISSION FUND?**

Future Mission Fund grants can work hand in hand with Missional Property Fund grants. You may notice the application forms and process are very similar between the two. Missional Property Fund grants are purely focused on property to enhance mission, where the Future Mission Fund has a broader scope.

There may be cases such as mission in a new location, where the Missional Property Fund is used to lease/purchase property, and the Future Mission Fund is used to fund people and other resources to kickstart mission and ministry.

We encourage the use of the Future Mission Fund seed and feasibility grants to help your congregation in the application process for both full Future Mission Fund and Missional Property Fund applications (and external grants such as Community Grants, Lottery West, and Affordable Housing).

## **8 APPLICATION FORM**

The Application Form for the Missional Property Fund funding is available on the website.

The Application Form and relevant attachments are sent to [mission.resourcing@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:mission.resourcing@wa.uca.org.au)

For non-minor Building works, the “Form 2 – Application to Build” (available on the website) is still needed for Synod/Presbytery assessment and approval. If relevant, please include this as an attachment in the email along with the Missional Property Fund Application Form.

## 9 PROCESS ONCE APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED

Once submitted, the application will be reviewed and will be forwarded to the relevant parts of the Synod/Presbytery for review and comment. The Mission Resourcing Committee will oversee the process, including the review and consideration of the application.

Applications involving changes to property or development/purchase/lease of property will be reviewed by the Presbytery Property Committee and the Synod Property Board.

For non-minor building works, the Missional Property Fund application process will work in concert with the building approval process. In other words, if the “Form 2 – Application to Build” is approved before the Missional Property Fund application, great, if not, as part of this application process we will arrange the “Form 2 – Application to Build” to be considered/approved.

The Presbytery/Synod are working on streamlining the processes so please watch this space. Feedback is welcome.

If the Presbytery/Synod have questions or requests for additional information, these will be sent to the primary and secondary contact people listed on the application. We may request a representative present at a meeting.

Any application above \$100,000 or for a period greater than 12 months will go to the Synod Standing Committee for additional approval (once recommended by the Mission Resourcing Committee) (This can be via Circular Resolution for expedited applications)

In the application process, we will consider how the missional outcome will be achieved, for example, if the application is to enhance the property to be more welcoming and provide spaces for children, then the congregation also will need a plan (outlined in their approved Mission Plan) on how the space will be used for the mission to outreach with children (i.e. Does the congregation has the capacity to run these children mission programs). Note: In conjunction, there may be a Future Mission Fund request to assist with ongoing mission program expenses.

Other guidance:

- For feasibility grants the expectation around detail is reduced. Costs can rough estimates.
- Costings plus or minus 15% are suitable where practical. We encourage applications to include a contingency budget (e.g. 15%) in case there are cost overruns.
- We recommend using SMART principles to describe outcomes in the application (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound)
- For major property upgrades / new property the ability for the congregation to fund the ongoing costs will be considered.



- Grants may be limited according to the amount of funding available at any time. The funding allocated to each application will be determined by the Mission Resourcing Committee to ensure the best use of the overall funds available. The current financial situation of the congregation, along with other external funding options available (e.g. community/government grants), will be considered in determining the funding amount and method of funding (e.g. grant, shared equity, or loan).
- We strongly encourage collaboration with other congregations (one congregation needs apply for the grant, however, highlight it is in collaboration with other congregations)
- Grants are for the future, and funds won't be provided for retrospective costs (except in exceptional circumstances)
- It is recommended that applications are submitted at least 4 weeks prior to a Mission Resourcing Committee meeting, to ensure there is time for the various bodies to be consulted. Mission Resourcing Committee meets approximately every 2 months (exact dates can requested from [mission.resourcing@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:mission.resourcing@wa.uca.org.au)). Applications can be expedited if required.

## 10 PROCESS ONCE APPLICATION IS CONSIDERED/APPROVED

The primary and secondary contact will be informed in writing of the approval of the funding along with any conditions (or otherwise).

The Chief Financial Officer of the WA Synod will reach out to discuss how and when the funds are transferred (e.g. upfront or instalments). Multi-year grants will be paid in instalments (e.g. once a year, half yearly, upon meeting a milestone etc).

Any unused funds will need to be paid back.

Please note:

- Some grants will be approved with “subject to” conditions (or granted in stages), for example, if it involves major property works the grant may be subject to local government approvals.
- For property works please continue to liaise with the Presbytery Property Committee/Synod Property Services to ensure the correct procedures are followed.
- The normal Uniting Church processes still apply, for example when entering into contracts greater than \$20,000 ex GST (eg a building contract etc) or any lease – this needs to be signed by the Executive Officer Property at the Synod and not the local congregation. If in doubt, please ask Property Services [property@wa.uca.org.au](mailto:property@wa.uca.org.au) (08) 9260 9800

## 11 REPORTING AND REVIEW OF FUNDS PROVIDED

Reporting is required for all funds provided. Send your report by the second Friday in July. If your project hasn't started yet, wait until next year. If the grant is for 12 months or less only one report is required. If the grant is for multiple years, a report for each year is required. You are welcome to send reports in early.

The template for the report is in Appendix A of this document.

The Mission Resourcing Committee may request more frequent reporting if required (especially for larger grant amounts, or to assess staged or conditional funding).

Members of the Mission Resourcing Committee (or other Presbytery/Synod committees/staff) may request to visit your project or program to see how it is going.

Financial statements are required to be included in each report outlining how the grant funds have been expended. Audited (or reviewed) accounts must be presented at the end of the grant for any project or program receiving >\$100,000 or lasting more than one year (Note: This can be included within the congregations audited/reviewed annual accounts if easier). The audit/review requirements are as per Uniting Church Regulation 3.8.7.

Any program or project requiring an extension of time or a variation to the approved grant amount will require a business case to be submitted to the [Mission Resourcing Committee](#) for consideration.

## 12 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q:** Can I submit an "in principle" grant application where details such as location or amount are not known yet, such as for a new property purchase or lease?

**A:** Yes, please do. There are some situations such as searching for a property where the details of the purchase price and fit-out costs are not known yet. We recommend first applying for a feasibility grant so the scope can be refined, and a realistic ballpark estimate can be determined. Once you have this information, please apply for a full grant with an "up to" amount. Once approved, this will provide confidence that funding is secured so things can move quickly once a property is found.

There are also cases where an external grant (e.g. a community grant) needs 50/50 funding - we are happy to approve conditional grants to enable these external applications.

**Q:** How is the funding amount and method determined?

**A:** The Missional Property Fund has principles for equity and MRC will consider whether the funding aligns with the Strategic Priorities of the WA Synod/Presbytery. The Mission Resourcing Committee (MRC) will consider the financial situation of the congregation.

Under the Missional Property Fund there are several funding mechanisms:

- **Grant:** Money provided to a project with no expectation of funds to be returned (except unspent funds)
- **Shared Equity Arrangement:** Where there is shared benefit of the property assets and income generated from a development is shared
- **Loan:** The Missional Property Fund may loan funds to support a project where there is a requirement to pay principal and interest at an agreed point in the future. Bridging loans to fund the time between a property purchase and property sale can be provided. We may also suggest external funding, such as from Uniting Financial Services NSW.
- **Conditional:** Conditions may be placed on grants for example funding to buy/lease a property on the condition another property is sold within certain timeframe (and net proceeds go to the Missional Property Fund). Another example is conditional on obtaining part external funding (e.g. from external community grant).
- **Conditional Stages:** Funding may be provided in stages or subject to milestones being reached (for example if the Council development application is approved, or subject to satisfactory structural engineering assessment)
- **Hybrid:** A mixture of two or more of the above methods.

**Q:** Why does a congregation need to have a “Mission Plan” and the “Health and Vitality Toolkit” done prior to applying for a grant?

**A:** The “Mission Plan” and the “Health and Vitality Toolkit” help the Presbytery and Mission Resourcing Committee assess the grant application in the context of your congregation – we want to make sure the grant will enhance the mission of the church. Help is available with these documents via the [Presbytery Minister for Mission](#) and [Presbytery Minister for Pastoral](#) respectively.

**Q:** What is the difference between the Future Mission Fund “\$25,000 Feasibility Grant” and a grant for feasibility under the Missional Property Fund?

**A:** The \$25,000 Feasibility Grant under the Future Mission Fund has a slightly wider scope and can be used for things like engaging a consultant to gauge community and congregational support, or to engage a professional to assist with grant applications (including external grants) (along with engaging professionals for property feasibility and quotes). A feasibility grant under the Missional Property Fund can be for any amount, and is for the initial stages for property feasibility, engineering assessments, obtaining quotes, development applications, conceptual plans, etc.

- Q:** Our congregation are eager to get started on property improvements to enhance mission; can we request an expedited grant approval?
- A:** Yes, especially for straightforward grants, you can request an expedited approval within the application. We recommend discussing your Mission idea with the [Presbytery Minister for Mission](#).
- Q:** If multiple congregations (or bodies) are collaborating on a property project relating to mission, how do we submit the application?
- A:** We strongly encourage collaboration for mission activities. We recommend determining a lead congregation to submit the application, however, make it clear in the application that other congregations (or bodies) are collaborating with the initiative. The application must come from a congregation (and it must be approved by the church council).
- Q:** How are grants or funds paid?
- A:** The WA Synod Chief Financial Officer will be in contact with the applicant to discuss the transfer of funds. Funds may be provided in stages and may be conditional. We understand cashflow can be a challenge, so are happy to provide funds prior to the work commencing. Any unused funds will need to be returned. Reporting will verify that the spending aligns with the approved grant.
- Q:** If my congregation receives a Missional Property Grant of over \$100,000, do we need to arrange a financial review/audit?
- A:** Yes, we use Uniting Church Regulation 3.8.7 as the guide, for example for projects valued between \$100k and \$500k need to be reviewed by two suitable people (appointed by the Church Council), and projects above \$500k must be audited by a qualified person. You are welcome to include the project within the review/audit of your normal congregational finances.
- Q:** Are grants ex GST (Goods and Services Tax)?
- A:** If the congregation/body is GST exempt the grant amount is ex GST. The congregation/body is responsible for claiming back the GST as per the normal process.

**Q:** Do I need to seek multiple quotes?

**A:** This will depend on the scope, and a pragmatic approach is taken. It is recommended that multiple quotes are obtained to ensure good value for money and that quality/safe/complaint work is performed.

| Requirement      | Specialist Works<br>(eg Heritage)                                     | Non Specialist<br>Works - Category A    | Non Specialist<br>Works - Category B                      |
|------------------|---|---|---|
|                  | Projects over \$100,000<br>(ex GST) or Specialist<br>Works            | Projects under<br>\$20,000 (ex GST)     | Projects over \$20,000<br>and under \$100,000<br>(ex GST) |
| Number of quotes | To be determined by the<br>Approval Body (eg Synod<br>Property Board) | Minimum 2 quotes, 3<br>if a large range | Minimum 3 quotes  |

Synod Property Services can advise on suitable companies to provide quotes.

For companies that the Synod or congregation have not worked with before, obtaining reference checks from previous clients is also recommended.

In some circumstances it may be suitable just to engage one supplier for quote, especially if there is a history of good value and quality/safe/complaint work.

## 13 APPENDIX A: ANNUAL REPORT FOR GRANTS/FUNDING

*(Please submit form + relevant attachments to mission.resourcing@wa.uca.org.au by 2nd Friday each July. You are welcome to submit earlier if the grant has concluded).*

|  |
|--|
| Congregation:  |
|  |
| Name of project or program:  |
|  |
| Name + Contact details of person submitting report:  |
|  |
| Date project commenced:  |
|  |
| Anticipated completion date (for grant/funding):   |
|  |
| Please describe the progress of the project/program associated with the grant:<br><i>(Please include progress towards objectives and key performance indicators)</i>   |
|  |
| Please share any highlights or stories worth sharing, and hopes for the future:  |
| <i>If relevant, please include some photos.</i>  |
|  |
| Please share any lessons learnt:<br><i>(For example: any unforeseen issues, aspects that worked well, tips for other congregations)</i>  |
|  |
| Please provide a summary of how grant funds were used to date (or other relevant date):<br><i>(Feel free to attach a financial statement if easier)</i>  |
| <i>Note: If the funding was over \$100,000 and the funding has concluded, please attach audited/reviewed accounts for the funding or the congregations audited/reviewed accounts incorporating the funding expenditure. If audited/reviewed accounts are not available until a future date, please include a note on when these will be available). (Audit/review can follow the same process as the congregational financial audit as described in Uniting Church Regulation 3.8.7)</i> |
|  |
| Any other comments or words of wisdom:   |
|  |