

Guidance Notes

Introduction

The Freedom Fund is the way that **Freedom Church** gives financially “beyond itself”. Freedom Church will in no way benefit directly from the fund. The Freedom Church Leadership Team and Trustee Board have decided that Freedom Church will give away the first portion of what it has received, as an act of generous obedience and gratitude, recognising that all income received is a gift from God.

How is the fund generated?

The Freedom Fund is a set amount of money (agreed by the Leadership Team and the Trustee Board) from Freedom Church’s budgeted general income. A proportion of Freedom Matters and Romsey Foodbank donations are also used to specifically fund the budget for hardship applications (area 5 below).

Who can benefit from the fund?

The fund is anticipated to bless others by meeting need in five distinct areas:

1. Freedom Church **Partners** (i.e., individuals committed to being part of our church family) undertaking activity requiring financial support such as:
 - Gap Years, Discipleship Programmes, Short Term Mission Trips, Internships, etc.
 - e.g. giving to a young person to contribute towards the cost of a mission trip.
2. **International** Initiatives such as:
 - Linked charities working overseas, Responding to humanitarian crises, etc.
 - e.g. Supporting Serve Direct, or a specific Tearfund Appeal.
3. **National** Initiatives such as:
 - National charities, National Networks, etc.
 - e.g. Kintsugi Hope, Chaplains Association, Urban Saints.
4. **Local** Initiatives such as:
 - Charities based in Romsey, Charity Projects in Romsey, etc.
 - e.g. Youth in Romsey, TVBC, Churches Together, Romsey Family Support, SCM.
5. Meeting the practical needs of people in the community experiencing **hardship** such as:
 - Clients associated with projects running out of the Freedom Centre, other local people in need, etc.
 - e.g. buying a client a new washing machine or offering a client a food shop.

Who can access the fund?

The fund is accessible, upon application, by any Freedom Church Partner or Staff member/ Volunteer associated with projects running out of the Freedom Centre. It is anticipated that the applicant will be seeking funds on behalf of an individual or an organisation known to them.

How big is the fund and how will it be spent?

For 2024 the Freedom Fund is budgeted £16,500. Although responsibility for considering applications rests with the Freedom Fund Team (see below), the following framework suggests guideline proportions across the five areas identified above:

1. Freedom Church Partners - £1500 / year
2. International Initiatives - £5000 / year
3. National Initiatives - £3000 / year

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| 4. Local Initiatives - | £3000 / year |
| 5. Hardship - | £4000 / year |

How is the fund administrated?

The Freedom Fund is overseen by a small team and is administered by the church office. The decision panel consists of 3-4 individuals from the church's congregation with representation from Freedom Church's Trustee Board and Leadership Team. Decisions will only be made to support applications when this team are unanimously in support. One member of the team will step down at the end of each year on a rolling basis, meaning that team members will normally serve a three-year term. The team will endeavour to respond to all applications within two weeks of the receipt of a completed application form. The team will be guided by the following principles:

- Recipients will generally receive support a maximum of one time a year from the Freedom Fund.
- The amount of money applied for on behalf of an individual must not exceed £500 without being supported by a Freedom Church Trustee or Leader (not including members of the Freedom Fund panel).
- The amount of money applied for on behalf of an organisation must not exceed £1500 without being supported by a Freedom Church Trustee or Leader (not including members of the Freedom Fund panel).
- Other than for applications for the Hardship Fund, the recipient must have established a method and commitment to report back on how the money has been used.
- Only applications submitted using the approved Application Form will be considered.
- The hardship fund is intended to meet an individual's needs through purchasing what they require (food, an appliance, clothing, etc) and therefore will not give individuals money.

How will the Freedom Fund Team report?

The Freedom Fund Team will report to the Trustee Board each quarter. An annual report from the fund will be created each January reviewing the gifts made in the previous year.

How is the Freedom Fund promoted?

The Freedom Fund will be promoted to Freedom Church Partners throughout the year, via Freedom News videos, Freedom News emails, Partners Evenings and MyChurchSuite.

What if I have more questions about the fund?

If you have any further questions about the fund, or if you would like a paper application form, please contact the Freedom Church office on office@freedomchurch.uk or 01794 450451 / 07761405870