



# FutureDharmaFund

**A Guide to Applying for Funding**

**V1.1, May 2019**

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# PART 1: INITIAL PLANNING

## Introduction

FutureDharma provides financial support to existing projects and new initiatives within the Triratna Buddhist Community.

We fund projects which address the following three key priority areas:

- Helping to **unite the sangha** through Sangharakshita's lineage of practices and teachings, and by encouraging a spirit of Kalyana Mitrata.
- **Making life-transforming Dharma available** to people of any age or background, around the world.
- Creating the **depth and intensity of practice** needed for the arising of the Bodhicitta.

We operate a two different processes, depending on whether you are applying for a Small Grant (£3000 or less, see p.5) or a Major Grant (more than £3000, see p.7).

## Initial planning

Your application is more likely to succeed if it demonstrates that your project has been carefully planned. In practice, this means that we need to know:

- Have you spoken to the people you're hoping to work with to make the project happen? Are they inspired by your idea?
- Have you spoken to the people you believe your project will benefit? Are they excited about your plans?
- Have you thought through the practicalities? How long will each stage of the project take? What resources will you need to make each stage happen, and have you researched the items in your budget?
- What relationships will you need to build within the Sangha to make your idea a reality?

Please think about and discuss these questions with the people concerned before filling out an application form.

**We receive a large number of strong proposals every year - far more than we can fund. Usually we are only able to support approximately one in four proposals we receive, and so we look for well planned, high-value projects to support.**

## Application deadlines

We do not have formal deadlines for applications - you can submit one at any time.

- Applications for Small Grants will be processed **within three months**.
- Major Grants can take **around four months** to process after we've received your full application.

Please see the specific guidance about our two funding streams for details and guidance on how to time your application.

### **Acknowledging FutureDharma**

**It's a condition of all of our grants that you acknowledge our support in all of your publicity - websites, programmes, publications - as well during any events you host.**

This is very important to us: more people will contribute to FutureDharma if they connect us with the work we fund!

## PART II: WRITING YOUR FUNDING APPLICATION

We offer two funding under two different schemes: “Small Grants” for projects that require £3000 or less; “Major Grants” for projects that need more than £3000.

Dividing applications this way means that we can process small, urgent funding requests more quickly, and give due consideration to more ambitious projects.

### **SMALL GRANTS**

This scheme provides a number of small grants up to a maximum of £3,000 for inspirational Triratna Dharma projects and initiatives which have immediate funding needs.

Small Grants can also be used to support smaller local projects which are prevented from establishing themselves due to a lack of local funds.

We’re especially interested in funding projects which can seed future growth, and create a major impact further down the line.

Small Grants can be for a single year or event, or you can request up to 3 years funding under the Small Grants programme, so long as the total for all years is no more than £3,000.

As this programme is designed to provide seed funding, we will not accept annual applications for the same project year after year. If you are seeking funding for more than one year which will come to more than £3,000, we will recommend that you submit your application under the Major Grant programme.

### **Writing your Small Grant application**

After you’ve done some **initial planning** (see pp.3-4), you can begin thinking about how to write your application. In the Small Grant application form, we ask you to consider a few key areas. Please think about each carefully in relation to your ideas for your

project.

### **Vision and needs**

What's your vision for the project? What needs does it address? Does it contribute to any of our 3 key priority areas? If not, what do you see as its key contribution?

### **Planning**

What planning have you done for the project so far? Have you set out the necessary steps to make your project a reality? If not, how might you get to this point?

### **Value for money**

How are you going to make sure that your project represents good value for money?

### **Seed potential**

Does your project have the potential to grow into something bigger? If so, how will FutureDharma funding help this happen? How will it support itself financially after any funding ends?

### **Future Dharma collaboration**

Would you be willing to collaborate with Future Dharma with its fundraising efforts? This could mean producing a video story of your project, sharing your contacts and connections for fundraising or acknowledging our support in your publicity.

## **Small Grant deadlines and timing**

We usually meet monthly to assess Small Grant applications. Due to the large number of applications we receive, and the need to consult other regional bodies about projects, it can take us **up to three months** to come to a decision about an application. If you let us know a request is urgent we will try to process the application more quickly, although this might not always be possible. Please take this into account when planning your project.

**When you're ready to apply for a Small Grant, please download the small grant application form from our website or email us at [applications@futuredharma.org](mailto:applications@futuredharma.org)**

## **MAJOR GRANTS**

This scheme provides funding of £3000 or more for larger Triratna Dharma projects and initiatives which mainly have short-to-medium term funding needs.

We award Major Grants to projects that promise to substantially benefit the Triratna community, either locally or globally.

Major Grant applications can be made for anything between a single event and up to 5 years of annual funding. Normally, requests for up to 3 years of funding are recommended, unless a project has a highly-developed and coordinated long-term strategy, which has been worked out in consultation with other bodies.

A team or institution is also not limited to only one Major Grants application and is welcome to submit multiple expressions of interest for different projects or initiatives.

### **Application process**

We ask those wishing to apply for a Major Grant to begin by reading and considering the **initial planning** guidance (pp. 3-4). Once you have done this, you can then begin the application process as follows:

- 1) Fill in and submit an **expression of interest form, available at [futuredharma.org](https://futuredharma.org)**
- 2) We'll get back to you **within around two months** to let you know whether your project is suitable for FutureDharma funding, and whether we have the resources to consider supporting it. If so, we'll invite you to put in a full application.

At this stage we'd be very happy to discuss the project in detail, and to offer you guidance and support in developing your final application.

When considering your initial idea, make sure you've planned in enough time for this stage of the application process.

- 3) If we invite you to **submit a full application**, you can do so at any time during the



year. We will let you know the final results of your Major Grant application **within around four months after receiving it.**

If at any stage your application is unsuccessful, for example because there was an unaddressed area in your application, or because resources were short and another project was prioritised instead, we will provide you feedback and suggest next steps.

### **Writing your Major Grant application**

If you've submitted an expression of interest form, and we've invited you to apply for a Major Grant, we'd like you to consider a few key questions while writing your application. Please think about each carefully in relation to your project.

#### **Vision**

- Can you articulate your vision clearly and concisely? Have you tried sharing your vision with others? Have you taken feedback on board?
- In what ways does your project harmonise with the principles of Triratna, and with Bhante's vision of the Dharma?
- How does your project relate to FutureDharma's **three key priorities** (see p.3)

#### **Needs**

- What needs does your project seek to meet?
- Can you show us that you've talked your project idea through with those you seek to benefit, and with your spiritual friends? You might need to consider the views of both your local Sangha, and those of wider institutions in the Movement: for example, your Local Area Council or Buddhist Centres that might be hosting the

project.

- Do people you've spoken to about it think that your project serves a real need? Are they enthusiastic about your idea?

## **Planning**

- How realistic is your project's main aims, given the resources you're asking for?
- Can you provide strong arguments or evidence - perhaps by pointing us to other, similar projects, carried out either by you or others - as to how you're going to achieve what you set out to do?
- Have you devised with a clear, step-by-step plan for how you're going to see the project through from beginning to end?
- Is the team of people you're planning to work with on this project large enough? Is there sufficient and appropriate experience between you to achieve your project's aims?

## **Impact and value for money**

- Is your project going to have a broad impact (affecting lots of people a little), a deep impact (affecting a few people very significantly), or both?
- What evidence can you provide that the project is going to have a significant impact?
  - Examples of evidence for broad impact: Average visitor numbers at a Centre; participant numbers in previous or similar projects.

- Examples of evidence for deep impact: Brief “case studies,” describing how similar or past projects have benefited people; descriptions of how you believe your project might deeply benefit individuals or groups of individuals.
- Can you show us that your project is good value for money? I.e. that it will provide a level of benefit proportionate to the amount of money you’ve asked for?
  - One way of doing this is to compare your idea to other similar projects that you know of - for example, the running costs for a Centre for holding a course.
  - If your project is trying to do something totally new, and a cost comparison is difficult, we will take this into account.

### **Sustainability**

- We’re particularly interested in funding projects that need a kick-start, but will be able to generate their own funding in the long-term. How will your project move towards securing its own ongoing funding?
- Does your project include a way of helping to support and grow FutureDharma?
  - Could your project include a period of actively working with FutureDharma on an appeal?
  - Have you built into your project a way of documenting it (photographs and videos) so that we can turn them into a publicity video to help us gather support?
  - Are you willing to make a short (5-minute) video yourself about how your

project has, or how it will, change somebody's life?

## **Timings**

We assess Major Grant applications three times a year - in early Spring, Summer and late Autumn - at FutureDharma trustees meetings.

Processing a Major Grant application can take us several weeks, and you might be waiting up to four months for a decision. However, if you would like to hear back from us more quickly, you can time your application so that it coincides with a trustees meeting.

- If you would like to hear back from us by the end of **November**, please submit your application to us by the end of **September**.
- If you would like to hear back from us by the end of **February**, please submit your application by the end of **December**.
- If you would like to hear back from us by end of **August**, please submit your application by the end of **June**.

**Reminder: you cannot submit a Major Grant application until you've sent us an Expression of Interest, and we've invited you to submit a full application.**

## **Feedback**

We are happy to discuss your major grant application with you at any stage of its development. Please do get in touch if you have questions, so that we can help you make your application as strong as possible.

If your application is unsuccessful, we will provide you with feedback on how to improve it for a later funding round.