



PIONEER MINISTRY
CHURCH OF IRELAND

INFORMATION

Guide Book



Foreword

By definition “pioneering” is about the employment of new ideas and new methods in situations where older ideas and older methods no longer make an adequate impression. Pioneer ministers - lay or ordained, volunteer or stipendiary - will be people who have a vocation from God, tested and authorised by His Church, to bring these ideas and methods into the treasure house of Christ’s ministry. The gifts which a pioneer minister will bring to his or her area of service will be as varied as the situations in which they are deployed, but will have a common thread in proclaiming and living out the Gospel in those situations.

In some instances pioneer ministry may be radically different from other more traditional ministries with which they will work. In other instances they will shade into one another more obviously. Whichever may be the case along the spectrum of ministry, all should be bound together within the meaning and promise of St Paul’s words:

“There are different types of gifts, but it is the same Spirit who allots them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working but in all of them it is the same God who is at work.” (1 Cor. 12:4-6)

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one Faith and one baptism; one God and Father of all; who is over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:4-6)

May God bless His Church through this ministry which you are exploring or experiencing.

+John Armagh

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1

An *introduction* to Pioneer Ministry

Pioneer Ministry is a growing movement within the Church of Ireland to reach those with little or no connection to church. Whilst the greater majority of pioneers will be faithful volunteers working in local contexts, there may be those who want to explore a vocation as a pioneer minister, with opportunities across the church for selection, training and deployment into full-time pioneer ministry.

Further, in every diocese, parish or other current ministry within the church there may be an idea or aspiration to reach new people in a new way that grows into a proposal for a full-time pioneer to take the helm.

A new Pioneer Ministry Fund has been established to support the selection, training and deployment of a number of pioneers each year, commencing in 2024. The fund will meet the total costs of training, and will part fund the costs of employment and ministry for up to 5 years. Training will be delivered part-time, alongside deployment into the ministry, for the first 3 years.

This guide provides more information on how pioneers may be discerned, how proposed ministries might receive funding, how recruitment & appointment will work, and what happens once deployment and training begins.

At the core of all discernment, development, recruitment and deployment, every new pioneer and every new ministry will be:

Missional – reaching those with little or no connection to church.

Contextual – working within and culturally appropriate to a particular community or locality and context.

Ecclesial – growing a new community of faith over time.

Formational – developing disciples and not just gathering a crowd.



Discerning Vocation: A guide for those exploring vocation in Pioneer Ministry

This guide is aimed at helping prospective pioneers to understand how pioneers may be selected for training and deployment, and crucially, what are the characteristics of a pioneer.

How pioneers may be selected for training and deployment:

THERE ARE THREE KEY STAGES:

Stage 1 – is the critical stage of discernment, review, application, and recommendation as being suitable for pioneer ministry.

Stage 2 – if recommended as suitable a candidate may apply for any pioneer ministry vacancy or role within the Church of Ireland. This appointment process will be undertaken by the parish, ministry or diocese who will oversee your deployment.

Stage 3 – if appointed, deployment begins into a pioneer ministry along with any training pathway recommended or required by Stages 1 and/or 2. For the vast majority of ‘pioneers-in-training’ this will mean undertaking a 3-year part-time Certificate in Pioneer Ministry whilst being deployed.

This guide primarily addresses the steps involved in Stage 1

FIRST STEP: DEC 2023 – FEB 2024 Call & Discernment	A candidate or others (Rector, DDO, Warden of Readers, Pioneer Ministry Hub Leaders etc) discern a calling to reach those with little or no connection to church
	An initial meeting with a suitably appointed person within the Diocese

SECOND STEP: FEB 2024 Diocesan Review	Complete a Personal Profile for Pioneer Ministry and provide references
	Engage with Diocese and Review
	If recommended as suitable for Pioneer Ministry Selection, meet with the Bishop who may approve or otherwise

THIRD STEP: MARCH 2024 Pioneer Selection	Interview by Diocesan Pioneer Selection Panel
	Psychological Assessment
	Advice from the DPSPS to the sponsoring bishop – recommended for Pioneer Ministry, not recommended, or conditional recommendation

For more information on pioneer ministry please visit www.pioneerministry.org

What are the characteristics of a pioneer?

The discernment process will test a candidate's suitability for pioneer ministry. Whilst each diocese may set role specific criteria at the recruitment and employment stage, the discernment process will look for the following in the life of prospective candidates:

1. How they have responded to God's calling to be a pioneer.

A demonstrable track record of innovation in their life. Candidates should have a track record of 'firsts' and exhibit initiative in having started something new, which is contextually-appropriate to their setting. Comfortable with problem solving. Reflecting on situations, learning from them and make appropriate changes for the future. Show imagination in and openness to learning about outreach into contemporary Irish culture. Be passionate about making disciples of Christ in every context.

2. A demonstrable willingness to take risks and show courageous faith.

Be a self-starter with a willingness to build from nothing. Take appropriate risks and be prepared to exercise step by step experimentation. Negotiate disappointment well and learn from failure or mistakes to improve further actions.

3. A demonstrable ability to communicate the faith effectively to those outside the church.

Demonstrate how they have communicated the Christian faith to those outside the Church naturally, sensitively, and effectively, even at times when such communication is met with opposition. Demonstrate how they are good listeners to those on the margins of church.

4. An ability to work collaboratively in creating and working with a team.

An ability to develop vision with others for a new project. Releasing and equipping others for pioneering ministry. Able to identify and invest in future pioneering leaders. Helped people to share responsibility for the growth and success of a new project. Looked beyond their own areas of responsibility with a wider regard for the whole.

5. Well-developed abilities to handle complexity and initiate change.

Live with uncertainty. Open to use and learn about adaptive practices of learning which can be applied to different contexts. Motivate others to engage with change. Deal well with conflict. Show how they have been open to dealing with change in a project they have been involved with and be open to promoting "mixed ecology" understanding of church.

6. Demonstrable maturity and robustness to face the demands of pioneering mission and ministry.

Lay aside personal preference for the sake of the community being served. Cope effectively with pressure, ambiguity, change and disorientation. Have a consistency of character in varied circumstances of pioneering. Demonstrate a willingness to live sacrificially and endure hardship. Persevere for the long-term rather than take shortcuts for quick results. Work across different cultures. Show strong emotional intelligence.

7. A mature and well-developed devotional life

Demonstrate a discipline of personal prayer, worship, study and healthy rhythms of work / life balance which can sustain them in pioneering situations. Develop their ability to relate prayer and worship and what the Holy Spirit is already doing in their context. Have the patience to wait for and discern God's timing.

8. *The ability to learn, reflect and respond theologically as a pioneer.*

To make sense theologically of their pioneering work. To interpret and apply the Bible in different contexts for the transformation of contemporary culture. To understand how missional ministry is shaped by culture and context. Understand contemporary cultures and the practice of starting new forms of church within them.

9. *A clear vision of the place of their envisaged ministry within the response of the Church of Ireland to God's mission in the world.*

Candidates should be familiar with, and committed to, the teachings, traditions, emphases and characteristic spirit of the Church of Ireland and the Anglican Communion, and the continual reshaping of the Church for mission. All will be baptised Christians and it will ordinarily be the case that candidates will be Confirmed within the Church of Ireland, though in some instances this may not be appropriate (eg. ecumenical appointments). They should understand and be committed to the Church of Ireland as a 'mixed ecology' church, of both what has been inherited and what can be new.

For more information on pioneer ministry, and who to contact in your diocese please visit www.pioneerministry.org

3 Developing Ministries

A guide for those who seek to create a new Pioneer Ministry Funded Project

This guide is aimed at helping bishops, dioceses, parishes, chaplaincies and other ministries to develop a proposal for a new pioneer ministry.



How To Develop A Proposal For A New Pioneer Ministry

THERE ARE THREE KEY STAGES:

Stage 1 – is the critical stage of vision, discernment, developing a proposal, and where appropriate, being granted approval for central funding.

Stage 2 – the recruitment and / or appointment of a person recommended as suitable for pioneer ministry

Stage 3 – commencement of the new ministry led by a pioneer minister (who may or may not be undertaking part time training towards a Certificate in Pioneer Ministry – dependant on experience and / or qualifications)

This guide primarily addresses the steps involved in Stage 1

FIRST STEP: DEC 2023-FEB 2024 Vision & Discernment	A parish, chaplaincy, ministry, diocese, bishop, other ministry, discerns a need for a pioneer minister, or an opportunity for a pioneer ministry
	An initial summary proposal developed and costs explored, in conjunction with appropriate persons in the diocese
SECOND STEP: FEB - MARCH 2024 Forming the Proposal	Meet with Pioneer Leadership Team rep/s to develop the proposal
	Funding and appointment / recruitment plan
THIRD STEP: APRIL 2024 Assessment & Funding	Create fully formed proposal for Pioneer Ministry - scope, mission, governance, finances, legal issues etc.
	Consideration by Pioneer Ministry Council
	Recommendations from PMC as suitable and ready, suitable but not yet ready, not suitable
	Approval of funding by Pioneer Ministry Approvals Body

FORMING THE PROPOSAL – WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED?

The National Pioneer Leadership Team, and the diocesan pioneer ministry hub, will be able to assist anyone who seeks to develop a proposal for a new pioneer ministry. A well-formed proposal will be able to address the following:

1. Governance

- The scope, mission, objectives and purpose of the ministry.
- Whether or not the ministry is part of, or integrated within an existing ministry (eg. Parish, chaplaincy etc) or will form a new ministry in the diocese.
- The ministry structure and appointments, whether ordained or lay.
- How the pioneer will be appointed.
- The tenure and review of any appointment.
- The role of the Constitution and any other policies in governing any licensed member of the clergy or any licensed lay person and, where appropriate, any employment contract.
- What remuneration and allowances are to be payable, and by what body.
- How the ministry will be governed and administered.
- The governance model and structure for the administration of the ministry, including how people are appointed to exercise control and direction in the administration of the ministry – annual meetings, appointments, management meetings.

- The management of all financial matters, including funding from and any financial assessments due to the diocese, central church or any other body, and all other means of funding. Preliminary consideration should be given towards making the ministry financially viable and self-sustaining in the long term.
- The management, maintenance, and provision for assessment of any property of the ministry – glebes, halls, places of worship etc.
- Provisions for Safeguarding.
- Provisions for worship.

2. Oversight, accountability and representation

- The role of, and accountability to, the bishop
- The role of, and accountability to, Diocesan Council.
- Representation on, and support from, Diocesan Synod, General Synod, and any other bodies.
- Any reporting requirements to diocesan and central bodies, and to external bodies.
- Provisions for review of the ministry ministry.
- Duration and tenure of the ministry.
- The role of any 'Accompanier' to the ministry if so appointed.
- Any powers of termination of the ministry.

3. Relationship to external bodies

- The charitable status of the ministry, including approved statements of charitable purposes and public benefit.
- Reporting requirements to statutory and public bodies.

4. Any other matter deemed expedient to further the mission and ministry of the ministry

In summary, a well-developed proposal will ensure the new ministry is properly established and reviewed, with clear lines of accountability and support for the pioneer, and everyone engaged with the growth of the ministry. It will provide a robust plan to attract funding from central church funds, and potentially from external trusts and grants. When 'up and running' it will ensure that the ministry is properly integrated into diocesan life, widening the mission of the diocese through new forms of creativity and outreach.

For more information on pioneer ministry, and who to contact in your diocese please visit www.pioneerministry.org

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The Right Person In The Right Place Recruitment and Appointment of Pioneer Ministers to Pioneer Ministries

Once a prospective pioneer has gone through the discernment process and has been recommended as suitable for pioneer ministry, and suitable new ministries have been approved for funding, the next phase begins – appointing the right people to the right roles.

This is essentially a recruitment phase in which it is imperative that the diocese, parish or other ministry that has created the proposal is satisfied the right person is recruited. This process will be specific to each role, with the appropriate application and interview processes to be determined at local level by the diocese, parish or other ministry that has developed the pioneer ministry proposal, all with the approval of the Bishop.

The Pioneer Ministry proposal, and corresponding vacancy may be advertised at www.pioneerministry.org and by the parishes, ministries or dioceses developing the ministry.

Anyone who is appointed to a Pioneer Ministry role will be the employee of the parish, other ministry or diocese responsible for that ministry. Alternatively, he or she may be a member of the clergy, appropriately licensed and stipended within the diocese. Save for a very few exceptional cases, it is the case that the role:

- Will be funded for up to 5 years by both the local ministry and the central fund
- Will require the pioneer to undertake part-time study and training during the first 3 years (completing an accredited course in Pioneer Ministry run by the Church of Ireland Theological Institute and Church Army)



5 Reaching Those With Little Or No Connection To Church Deployment & training in the new ministry

Ordinarily commencing in September of each calendar year, the new ministry and pioneer will have a funding plan for 5 years. Throughout deployment and training the pioneer will be supported in 4 key ways in the first 3 years:

- **Academic Tutor:** appointed by CITI / Church Army to agree training goals
- **Diocesan Pioneer Accompanier:** Support, encouragement, diocesan integration
- **Church Army Reflector:** discerning potential charism for Church Army that may lead to commissioning as a Church Army Evangelist alongside licensing as a Church of Ireland Pioneer Minister
- **Supervisor / Manager:** Rector / Minister / other person responsible for line managing the pioneer

On completion of training the roles of Academic Tutor and Reflector will come to their natural end.

Year 1	Licensed as Pioneer-in-training and ministry commences	Completion of academic studies, support by tutor, reflector, supervisor, diocesan accompanier.
Year 2	2nd year of project & training	Discernment of Church Army charism with potential commissioning as CA Evangelist
Year 3	3rd year of project & completion of training	
Year 4	Licensed as Pioneer	Evaluation and planning for ministry and funding beyond year 5
Year 5	Completion of funded position	

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**“They will rebuild the ancient
ruins, repairing cities destroyed
long ago. They will revive them,
though they have been deserted
for many generations.”**

(Isaiah 61:4)

