**Northern Ireland, Treasure Ireland Grants Committee Member – volunteer position**

**National Churches Trust**

**Yours for good.**

**Duration:** Three meetings a year (requiring time to read papers in advance of meetings)

**Location:** Usually in person (usually Belfast)

**Role description**

**Do you love church buildings and want them to remain a sustainable part of our heritage playing a vital role in community life? Perhaps you have experience helping keep historic buildings open and well maintained, or have championed their social and community value, or have experience leading church building or engagement projects? And – are you passionate about all these things within a Northern Ireland context. Then please consider joining our Treasure Ireland grants committee.**

We are looking for one new member to join our independent Treasure Ireland grants committee in Northern Ireland. The committee has the key responsibility of allocating, on behalf of the National Churches Trust’s main grants Committee, funding towards repairs and maintenance, as part of our Treasure Ireland project thanks to funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Pilgrim Trust and Historic Environment Division at the Department for Communities.

We strive to ensure our committee has experience which is representative of all denominations with a range of interests and insights and experiences they can bring to our decision making. Potential candidates may be incumbents, heritage professionals, tourism experts, fundraisers or church volunteers to name a few (on this occasion we are not looking for a new architect or surveyor). We are especially keen to recruit a new member with community engagement or tourism experience.

**About the National Churches Trust**

Churches, chapels and meeting houses are impressive, exciting and surprising places, and we want to see them kept open and well used. Whether people seek quiet reflection, access to critical community services, a place to worship, or a space to explore, we believe these buildings should be cherished, supported, and available to all. Working together with churches across all four nations and all denominations, we help to maintain these wonderful buildings and keep them thrive today, and tomorrow. Our current strategy ‘For Churches’ can be found [here](https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/ForChurches_0.pdf).

**About Treasure Ireland**

Our project, Treasure Ireland, commenced in 2020 with funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Pilgrim Trust and Historic Environment Division at the Department for Communities. We have recently received a grant increase from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and continued support from Historic Environment Division at the Department for Communities ensuring we can continue our focussed work in Northern Ireland until 2026. The project aims to support improvement in maintenance and sustainability of historic places of worship by providing grants for proactive repairs and maintenance, training on a range of topics such as writing funding bids, maintenance, interpretation and tourism, mentoring support, video guides, and to increase visitor numbers. Further information on the project can be found [here](https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/impact/campaigns/treasure-ireland).

The Treasure Ireland grants committee has been set up to help us distribute £360,000 in grant funding ensuring we have local knowledge and experience feeding into our grant awards. Final decisions are confirmed by the National Churches Trust’s main Grants Committee which has responsibility for allocating the Charity’s annual grants budget of around £1.5million and includes funds we award on behalf of other Trusts and Foundations.

**More about the role**

The Treasure Ireland grants committee meets three times a year, usually in the Belfast greater area and draws from a range of backgrounds, experiences and denominations. It includes up to 8 members of which one is the Chair of the Northern Ireland Places of Worship forum, one is a National Churches Trust main Grants Committee member, one a conservation accredited architect or surveyor, as well as heritage professionals, those with project management experience or other church heritage or fundraising experience. The new member will be appointed for up to three years. At the meetings, decisions are made on our Treasure Ireland grant applications, and recommendations are given to other applications received by the Trust from churches in Northern Ireland. Further information on our full range of grant programmes can be found [here](https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/get-support/grants).

We look to the Treasure Ireland grants committee to consider the applications in front of them in the light of their experience, to help us direct our limited funds to projects which demonstrate the greatest case for the Charity’s investment and where our funds can have greatest impact and benefit, in line with our strategy.

Since the start of the project the Treasure Ireland project has received 92 applications, held 9 decision rounds, and awarded 37 grants totalling £234,759. The range of grants shows good geographic and denominational spread.

**If you have any questions about this opportunity please contact Nina McNeary, Church Support Officer, on 07922 425089, or by email at:** **nina.mcneary@nationalchurchestrust.org**

**Please note these positions are voluntary and so are unremunerated although out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed. The National Churches Trust is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion amongst its trustees, staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.**

**To apply, please complete the application form and return it to** **nina.mcneary@nationalchurchestrust.org****.**

**From those who express an interest, a shortlist will be selected and invited to a meeting with the Chair of the Grants Committee and the Director of Church Engagement which will likely be held online at a mutually convenient date. The successful candidate will be expected to attend in person our first Committee meeting of 2024, being held in Belfast at the end of February 2024.**

**Closing date: Monday 15 January (9am)**

