Research to better understand barriers to participation in lay ministry training

Request for Pricing

Summary

The Church of England's Ministry Development Team is seeking to undertake research into barriers for UK Minority Ethnic (UKME) / Global Majority Heritage (GMH) people to becoming Readers / Licensed Lay Ministers (LLMs). The most recently published ministry statistics (2020) indicate that only 4.2% of Readers / LLMs and 7.4% of those in training identify as UKME.[1]

As we move towards being a church where our leaders fully represent the communities they serve, we want to understand more about barriers to participation in lay ministry for potential candidates of Global Majority Heritage and how those barriers might be dismantled, as well as identifying examples of good practice in supporting potential GMH candidates.

Research aims, objectives and deliverables

This research being commissioned aims to understand better how to dismantle barriers to participation in lay ministry for potential UKME / GMH candidates by:

- Understanding how experiences of discernment, selection and formation among UKME / GMH candidates differ from those of white candidates;
- Identifying specific barriers to UKME / GMH candidates;
- Identifying examples of good practice in dismantling such barriers.

The primary output will be a written report including an overview of findings and recommendations. The successful bidder will be required to present the report in person on no more than two occasions.

Wider strategic context

The vision and strategy for the Church of England in the 2020s includes as a priority being a church that is younger and more diverse. This will include being a church which fully represents the communities it serves.[2] However, while the 2011 Census of England and Wales recorded 86% of the population as White British, the Church of England's annual Ministry Statistics indicate that only around 4.2% of our Readers / LLM (Readers) identify as UKME and a slightly higher proportion (7.4%) of those in training.

In *From Lament to Action* (2021), the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce called for urgent culture change to ensure the Church of England enables the gifts of all its people to flourish fully.[3] *Ghost Ship* (2020) by A. D. A France-Williams highlighted institutional racism within the Church of England and there has recently been research within this area in relation to clergy, notably the Living Ministry report *'If it Wasn't for God': A Report on the Wellbeing of Global Majority Heritage Clergy in the Church of England* (October 2022).[4] That

[1] ministry-statistics-2020-report-final.pdf (churchofengland.org)
[2] Vision and Strategy | The Church of England
[3] FromLamentToAction-report.pdf (churchofengland.org)
[4] focussed-study-3-gmh-clergy-wellbeing.pdf (churchofengland.org)

report explored the wellbeing experiences of GMH clergy in order to explore what enables and might better enable their flourishing. We are not seeking to replicate this study for lay ministry however there may be some similarities to some of the challenges and barriers explored.

Method

The detailed methods to be employed will be determined by the researcher, in consultation with the Head of Lay Ministries and an advisory group for this work. We envisage the main method to be qualitative individual or group interviews with UKME / GMH Readers / LLMs. The Church of England does not hold data on Readers / LLMs nationally however, we may be able to suggest approaches to identify and recruit participants.

A final research proposal will be subject to ethical review by the National Church Institutions' Research Ethics Committee before work is undertaken.

Contractor

We welcome applications from individuals and teams. As well as possessing expertise in qualitative research methods, the researcher(s) should:

- Include UKME/GMH members;
- Be respected and trusted by Readers / LLMs of Global Majority Heritage who may be reluctant to share their experiences;
- Be sympathetic to the Christian faith;
- Be familiar with the structures and processes of the Church of England;
- Be aware of any potential impact of the research on their own wellbeing and have in place appropriate professional support (please include this in your research budget if necessary).

Contract management & support

We expect the research to begin in June 2024 and be completed by 30 November 2024. Flexibility with dates may be considered.

This research is being commission by the Church of England Ministry Development Team, which is part of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England. The research will be overseen by the Head of Lay Ministries, who will require regular updates on the progress of the work.

Administrative support beyond the provision of the information above would be extremely limited so it would be preferable for the bid to include administrative support.

Data management

All data associated with this research is the property of the National Church Institutions (NCIs) of the Church of England, acting through the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, Church House, Great Smith Street, SW1P 3AZ. All data must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the data protection policy of the NCIs, which is available on request.

How to apply

Your fixed price quotation to undertake this research work, to write the report, undertake all necessary research, and to present the report should be submitted by e-mail to Carrie Myers, Head of Lay Ministries, (carrie.myers@churchofengland.org) no later than 5pm on Monday 13 May.

Bids must include

- your fixed pricing (including VAT where applicable);
- proposed approach, methodology and timescale;
- a resource plan (including named staff and their relevant experience);
- details of how personal information and confidential data will be handled;
- a breakdown of costs.

Notification of a decision will be made by Friday 24 May.

Confidentiality

This document and any associated material is supplied solely for the purposes of enabling the submission of a competitively costed and fixed price proposal to complete this work. None of which may be shared or used for any other purpose other than presenting your findings. All research findings and intellectual property shall be exclusively owned by the commissioning authority of this report.

Additional Information

Should additional information be required to compile a bid, please get in touch with Carrie Myers, Head of Lay Ministries via e-mail at carrie.myers@churchofengland.org. Carrie will be out of the office from 1 - 10 May.