

Title:	Grants and Contributions Policy
Type:	Council
Adopted:	26 June 2019
Document No:	19/37026
Attachments:	Nil

1. Purpose

The purpose of Grants and Contributions Policy (Policy) is to enable the delivery of Council's grants and contributions program.

2. Rationale

The objectives of the Policy are to provide support to:

- improve opportunities for people to participate in the community
- grow the skills and capacity of businesses, not for profit community groups and organisations
- support businesses, not for profit community groups and organisations to deliver activities which benefit a diverse community
- start and grow businesses
- support the development and growth of sustainable events for our community and visitors.

Grant Framework Principles

The Grants and Contributions Program operates on the following principles:

- alignment with the Council Plan, 2030 Vision and other strategic plans - we have aligned grant and contribution streams with the Murrindindi Shire Council Plan strategic objectives as outlined below and other key strategic plans including the 2030 Vision and Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan
- partnerships - we are committed to working collaboratively in the best interests of our community based on mutual respect and transparency.

We value the resources and skills that applicants bring to the partnership with Council. Applicants that contribute resources to the proposed activity are considered favourably. Resources can be in the form of cash, volunteer time, donated materials, other grant sources, and funds raised through crowd funding platforms

- good governance - we commit to equitable and transparent decision making, and effective and efficient grant and contribution management processes. Application and reporting requirements are proportionate to the size of the funds awarded and the expected outcome.

We support applicants to evaluate their activity in a way that that helps them to continuously improve.

We evaluate the delivery of our grants and their impact in order to ensure relevance of and continuously improve the Program

- diversity and access - we encourage applications from all communities, not for profit community groups and organisations, social enterprises, businesses and individuals located in Murrindindi Shire.

Grants and Contributions

Information on Council's Community Grant and Contributions program is made available through Council libraries and customer service centres, as well as on our website and social media pages. Support and guidance for applicants who may require assistance to access application forms is available through the Community Wellbeing Department of Council.

- value for money - we seek to obtain the best mix of grants to meet the needs of the community and that maximise outcomes for the local government area. We support projects that represent good value for the amount of cash or in-kind support requested.

We will, through effective and efficient management processes, minimise administration costs of this program.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all funding and support requests through the Grants and Contributions Program for:

- community projects
- sponsorships (including eligible individuals)
- community events
- small or new tourism events
- events of state significance
- business growth or establishment
- industry and economy growth
- governance, skills and capacity building
- fee reductions (and waivers by exception)
- quick response grants and loans

Specific eligibility criteria for grants and contributions apply to each funding stream.

Timing and Funding

Funds	Grant / Contribution	Eligible Applicants	Timing
No defined limit	Fee Reductions	Businesses, not-for-profit community groups and organisations	Applications received all year around
Up to \$1000	Quick Response Grants	Not-for-profit community groups and organisations	Applications received all year around
	Sponsorships	Businesses, not for profit community groups or individuals auspiced by an incorporated organisation	Applications received all year around
Up to \$2000	Governance, Skills and Capacity Building	Businesses, not-for-profit community groups and organisations	Three rounds per year
Up to \$5000	Sponsorships	Not-for-profit community groups and organisations	Three rounds per year
	Community Projects and events	Not-for-profit community groups and organisations	Three rounds per year
	Small and New Tourism Events	Businesses and not for profit community groups and organisations	Three rounds per year
Up to \$20,000	Events of State Significance	Business and Not for profit community groups and organisations	Two rounds per year
	Business Growth or Establishment	Business and Not for profit community groups and organisations	Two rounds per year
Up to \$50,000	Industry or Economy Growth	Business and Not for profit community groups and organisations	Two rounds per year

Limit may be varied in extraordinary circumstances as assessed by Council.

General Eligibility

The Grants and Contributions program is available to businesses, not for profit community groups and organisations which:

- demonstrate the grant will be used for a purpose in accordance with this Policy
- are based within the Murrindindi Shire and/or are able to demonstrate the proposed activity will benefit the communities of the Murrindindi Shire
- meet the grant program eligibility criteria stated in this Policy and in the Grants and Contributions Guidelines
- have acquitted previous Murrindindi Shire Council grants
- have no outstanding debts of any kind to Council

Responsible Officer: Director Community Engagement

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- be compliant with all Council and Statutory laws and regulations
- are able to contribute cash, in-kind or both to the activity, as specified in the Grants and Contributions Guidelines.

General Exclusions and Ineligibility

Murrindindi Shire Council will not provide grants or contributions for:

- applications from Councillors or their immediate family
- applications from Council Executive or Managers or their immediate family, or other officers directly involved in the evaluation of applications
- projects that have started (that is, no retrospective funding)
- activities that duplicate existing services or programs
- the payment of bonds
- programs or activities considered the responsibility of State and Federal Government
- activities that do not align with the strategic objectives of the Council Plan or other key strategic plans
- projects that directly contravene Council policy
- general donations to charities (however, Council may provide grants to specific projects run by charities where they meet the criteria)
- activities that could be perceived as benefiting a political party or party political campaign
- overtly religious activities that could be perceived as divisive within the community
- activities that inhibit basic human rights, discriminate or encourage discriminatory behaviour
- projects that are harmful to our residents or communities
- projects that unnecessarily destroy or waste non-recurring natural resources, pollute land, air or water
- market, promote or advertise products or services in a misleading or deceitful manner
- statutory fees and other statutory charges collected on behalf of state government or other authorities including development applications, health inspection fees, health approvals, street closures and other approvals.

4. Definitions

Reference Term	Definition
Grant	A sum of money given by a government or other organisation for a particular purpose. Includes non-recurrent and recurrent grants
Sponsorships	The purchase of rights or benefits delivered through association with the sponsored organisation's name, products, services or activities
Waivers	A fee payable to Council is waived, resulting in no payment to Council
Reductions	A fee payable to Council is reduced, resulting in a payment of lesser value than the full fee

Reference Term	Definition
Financial hardship	An inability to pay debts or an unexpected need for cash arising from an unforeseeable occurrence which is not covered by insurance
Not-for-profit community group and organisations	Not-for-profit community groups and organisations operate to benefit the community. They may be a charitable fund, charitable institution, public benevolent institution or a health promotion charity (as shown on the Australian Business Register) and any profit made from their activities goes to support further work of the organisation / group

5. Policy

5.1 Fee Reductions

Fee reductions provide financial relief to not-for-profit community groups and organisations which can demonstrate financial hardship as the result of undertaking activities for community benefit.

Where a community group is seeking a fee reduction and a Community Projects and Events Grant, the fee reduction will be considered as part of the grant application and the combined value cannot exceed the maximum grant allowable for community projects and events.

Total fee waivers may be considered where significant hardship or need can be demonstrated.

Priorities

Council provides fee waivers or reductions for the following:

- planning and building fees
- waste services
- community bus hire
- venue hire.

Expected Outcomes

- support not-for-profit community groups, business and organisations undertaking activities for community benefit.
- Support businesses or business groups undertaking activities for broad economic benefit (increase employment, increase economy, increase visitation).

5.2 Quick Response Grants

Quick response grants provide essential urgent support to not-for-profit community groups and organisations who can demonstrate financial hardship as the result of unforeseen situations.

Priorities

Council will consider activities that are not covered by insurance to:

- replace essential equipment
- undertake essential and urgent repairs
- address other urgent, unforeseen financial impacts.

Expected Outcomes

- reduce financial impact of emergency and unforeseen events
- enable not-for-profit community groups and organisations to continue to operate or quickly return to normal operations.

5.3 Community and Business Governance, Skills and Capacity Building

The Governance, Skills and Capacity Building category supports businesses and not-for-profit community groups and organisations, and Committees of Management to meet their governance requirements, develop new skills and build their capacity. This includes activities that improve the ability to operate effectively, undertake future planning and support the sustainability of the group or business.

Priorities

Council will consider activities that:

- improve knowledge, skills and resources required to operate effectively
- training and education programs
- mentoring programs
- networking opportunities
- best practice resources and guides
- technology and systems
- develop governance strategies and plans
- strategic, business and financial planning activities (e.g., business plans, program development, marketing, fundraising, membership)
- policies (e.g., Working with Children, volunteers, OH&S)
- develop funding or award applications.

Expected Outcomes

- improved resilience and sustainability of businesses, not-for-profit community groups and organisations and Committees of Management
- communities confident to plan, take action, solve problems and lead in the community
- not for profit community groups and organisations are sustainable
- increased proportion of new businesses trading and viable after three years
- reduced ongoing reliance on Council resources by not-for-profit community groups and organisations.

5.4 Community Grants

Community Grants are provided for projects that support our communities to improve the liveability of our towns and places, build connections, create opportunities for participation in community and civic life, improve personal and community health and wellbeing, protect our natural environment and assist communities to plan for the future.

There are two categories of community grants – Grants for Community Projects and Events, and Sponsorships.

These grants are available to not-for-profit community groups and organisations located in the Shire of Murrindindi or delivering a project or event within the Shire.

5.4.1 Community Projects & Events

The Community Projects and Events Grant supports not-for-profit community groups and organisations to undertake activities that have a broad community benefit. This includes activities with a focus on health and wellbeing, building resilience and reducing social isolation, looking after our built and natural environments and providing arts and cultural opportunities.

Priorities

Council will support community projects and events that:

- improve community health and wellbeing:
 - promote active and healthy life choices
 - increase opportunities for formal and informal recreation
 - improve access to services
 - address existing and emerging issues
- connect people and encourage participation in community and civic life:
 - provide opportunities for people to connect and build social networks
 - reduce social isolation
 - build youth resilience through leadership development groups
- maintain and enhance our built and natural environment:
 - promote use of our built and natural assets
 - care for our built and natural environment
 - preserve our historically important buildings and natural environments.
- provide opportunities for arts and cultural activities:
 - deliver arts or cultural events or projects
 - celebrate the history, culture and character of our communities, towns and places
 - link young people to performing arts
 - support arts and cultural groups.

Expected Outcomes

- more activities that promote personal and community health and wellbeing (e.g. arts and culture, recreation, build social connections)
- more opportunities for people to come together, participate and celebrate in community and civic life
- enhanced and increased use of our built and natural environment
- built and natural environment is preserved.

5.4.2 Sponsorships

Sponsorship provides financial or in-kind support to eligible individuals, groups and organisations and promotes the role of Council. Sponsorship is a transaction in which Council provides a financial or non-financial contribution for an event, project, service or activity, in return for agreed promotional benefits.

Priorities

Council will consider activities that:

- enhance Council's public image through association with a sponsored activity that:
 - delivers a community benefit
 - provides a value for money promotion opportunity
 - aligns with the Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 Strategic Objectives
 - uses traditional and/or online media to promote Council's contribution
 - acknowledges Council's contribution at events and in speeches/interviews
 - invites Council to participate in the event in a meaningful way
 - includes Council materials in information packs or on static displays
 - offers Council naming rights for awards and prizes for the term of the sponsorship
- foster civic pride by highlighting the things Murrindindi Shire is known for:
 - showcase the character of our rural towns and communities
 - showcase our natural environment and landscapes
 - showcase our diverse range of community, recreation and visitor opportunities and experiences.

Expected Outcomes

- increased visibility of Council contributions to community
- greater community awareness of the role of Council
- increased opportunities for Council to distribute or gather information
- raised awareness of activities that align with Council values and strategic objectives
- increased awareness and civic pride of rural towns, communities and the things Murrindindi Shire is known for.

5.5 Events Support

Events Support is provided to foster growth in the tourism sector by supporting the development of sustainable events that increase visitor numbers, encourage repeat visitation, promote our rural towns and beautiful natural assets.

5.5.1 Small and New Tourism Events

This category supports small community and tourism events to establish and grow. It can be accessed to help to start new events.

Priorities

Council will consider supporting events that:

Grants and Contributions

- generate visitation
- are sustainable, or are working to become more sustainable
- align with Council's key product/experience or marketing strengths.

Expected Outcomes

- increased visitation to Murrindindi Shire
- increased visitor yield for Murrindindi businesses
- increased opportunities for Council to distribute or gather information
- raised awareness of activities that align with Council values and strategic objectives
- increased awareness of rural towns and the things Murrindindi Shire is known for.

5.5.2 Events of State Significance

This category supports the delivery of large events that are significant in terms of visitation, length of stay and yield.

Priorities

Council will consider supporting events that:

- generate visitation from across the state
- have projected attendance of 1000 persons or more
- will generate additional overnight stays
- will maximise repeat visitation
- align with Council's key product/experience or marketing strengths.

Expected Outcomes

- increased visitation to Murrindindi Shire
- increased visitor yield for Murrindindi businesses
- increased opportunities for Council to distribute or gather information
- raised awareness of activities that align with Council values and strategic objectives
- increased awareness and civic pride of rural towns, communities and the things Murrindindi Shire is known for.

5.6 Business and Innovation Grants

Business and Innovation Grants are provided to foster growth in the local economy by supporting projects that create new and grow existing businesses, build capacity of business operators, grow and diversify the employment base within Murrindindi Shire and attract business investment.

5.6.1 Business Growth and Establishment

This category provides support to create new businesses and grow existing businesses for projects or activities that will enable a business to start or grow.

Priorities

Council will consider supporting projects that:

Grants and Contributions

- require a grant of no more than \$20,000 and no more than 50% of the total cost of project or activity
- may include Governance, Skills and Capacity Building activities as a component of a larger project or activity
- are supported by a comprehensive business plan that forecasts jobs growth or new local investment as a result of the project or activity.

Expected Outcomes

- diversify employment opportunities within the Shire
- expand the employment base of the Shire
- enhance business capacity to plan, operate and grow
- increase business investment within the Shire.

5.6.2 Industry and Economy Growth

This category provides support for projects or activities which will enable a business, group of businesses or industry sector to grow in either value or numbers of employment.

Priorities

Council will consider supporting projects that:

- require a grant of no more than \$50,000 and 50% of total cost of the project or activity
- are supported by a comprehensive business plan that forecasts jobs growth or new local investment as a result of the project
- can demonstrate how the project or activity will grow an industry sector
- can demonstrate how the project or activity will contribute to growth of the local economy
- leverage and develop new industry partnerships.

Expected Outcomes

- diversify employment opportunities within the Shire
- expand the employment base of the Shire
- growth of the industry sector in terms of value or employment
- increased value of the local economy.

5.7 Grant Management Process

Applications

All grant and contribution applications are accepted electronically. Council does not accept submissions after any applicable cut-off time and date.

Assessments

All applications are assessed against the eligibility criteria outlined in the Grants and Contributions Guidelines. Assessments vary between funding streams and assessment methods reflect the financial value of the grant or contribution.

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Funding Agreements

All successful applicants are required to provide written confirmation of their commitment to the activity before funds are released. This confirmation takes the form of funding agreements (e.g. grants, subsidies) or applications that outline terms and conditions of the funding (e.g. sponsorships, fee reductions).

Funding agreement, reporting and acquittal requirements vary between funding streams and are detailed in the Grants and Contributions Guidelines. Where required, reporting and acquittal requirements are documented in the funding agreements. Requirements reflect the financial value of the grant or contribution.

Evaluation and Learning

Evaluating the impact of Council's Grants and Contributions Program allows Council to measure the effectiveness of each funding stream as well as the overall program.

The aim of evaluation is to:

- provide information to drive continuous improvement
- measure the degree to which stated outcomes of activities are being achieved
- identify impact of the Grants and Contributions Program
- inform and shape the future of the Grants and Contributions Program.

Council collects information from a range of sources including acquittal reports and discussions with applicants.

6. Related Policies, Strategies and Legislation

Business Tourism and Innovation Grants

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021

7. Council Plan

The following Strategies in the Council Plan 2017-2021 support this Policy:

- Our People – together we will celebrate and encourage diverse, caring and connected communities:
 - encourage activities and events that celebrate our vibrant, diverse and creative people and communities
 - work with our community and groups to connect, collaborate and plan for our future
 - work with our partner agencies to ensure people of all ages can access the health and community services they need
 - create a positive environment that supports our young people to grow, participate and be happy
 - promote opportunities for people of all ages to connect with and be involved in their community
- Our Places – we will maintain and enhance places to be attractive and liveable, in balance with our natural environment:
 - support recreation opportunities for our residents and visitors that encourage participation and community connections

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- strengthen the environmental sustainability of our communities, protect our natural environment and reduce resource consumption
- recognise and embrace the history, culture and identity of our towns and communities
- Our Promise – we will all work in collaboration with our communities to deliver the best possible outcomes in all that we do:
 - ensure our culture, systems and technologies encourage and enable innovation in our business practices and service delivery
 - commit to developing a stronger customer-focused culture that makes us easier to deal with
 - maintain Council's financial sustainability through sound financial and asset management.

8. Management and Review

Administration of the Grants and Contributions Program rests with the Director Community Engagement.

This Policy will be reviewed on a four yearly basis within 12 months of the election of a new Council, or as required.

9. Consultation

Formal consultation was not required in the development of this policy.

10. Human Rights Charter

This Policy has been developed with consideration of the requirements under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.