

Community Grant Program Policy 2021-2025

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Responsible Service Unit	- Economic and Community Wellbeing
Authorised by	- Council
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This policy is part of a suite of policies adopted by Council or the Executive Management Team (EMT).

New or replacement policies can be created and developed within Service Units but can only be added to Council's Policy Register by Governance Services following the approval of the policy by Council or the EMT.

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PURPOSE

The Community Grant Program Policy 2021-2025 (the Policy) provides a framework for the effective management of the Manningham Community Grant Program. The Policy aligns the Grant Program with Council's strategic objectives, key plans and policies. It sets out the overarching funding and governance principles, as well as processes and practices that inform the Grant Program, which provides funding to support a broad range of community initiatives, programs and projects.

SCOPE OF POLICY

The Community Grant Program provides financial support for not-for-profit community organisations to develop activities, programs and services that benefit and respond to current and emerging needs and interests of the Manningham community.

The Community Grant Program enables the development of key partnerships between Council and community organisations. It promotes a collaborative and strategic approach to community development and service delivery outcomes across the community. The program is divided into five grant categories: Community Partnership Grants, Community Development Grants, Arts Grants, Festivals and Events Grants and Small Grants.

POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy is consistent with the key action areas contained in the Manningham Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Council Plan.

The Policy is based on the following principles:

- Community Grants are available to organisations to deliver programs and projects that benefit the Manningham Community.
- Council funds organisations on the basis that they are sustainable and self-sufficient, and that Council grants add to their existing programs and projects and is not relied upon for operational viability. Funding is not guaranteed from one funded period to the next
- Community grants should also provide opportunities for new or emerging organisations to be funded through annual grants and small grants
- The grant application process reflects the value of the funding allocation and is easy to understand
- Applicants are aware of the assessment criteria, and the assessment process is consistent, transparent and supported by good governance

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- Community grants are offered in a way that encourages applications from our non-English speaking community.

Governance Principles

The management of the Policy will be based upon the following good governance principles:

Transparency of the processes and practices supporting the program by providing clear and accessible information, and ensuring well defined and well documented practices applied consistently across Council and the community.

Equity, whereby all applicants will be offered the same level of information, advice, guidance and support, and will undergo consistent assessment and evaluation processes. There will be a rigorous process to ensure there are no conflicts of interest at any point throughout the grants management process.

Efficiency of the program will be prioritised through streamlined application processes, effective and timely assessment, as well as sound program administration and management systems to streamline the administrative tasks associated with grants management through an online grants management system.

Sustainable Practices will reduce the reliance on paper-based practices, and will embrace more sustainable practices such as online and digital systems.

Community Grant Program Objectives:

Community grants are an opportunity for Council to partner with community organisations and empower them to deliver key actions contained in Council's *Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Council Plan*.

The Community Grant Program is underpinned by the principles of community and cultural development, which are reflected in the grant objectives below. Applicants are required to address these grant objectives in their applications.

Partnerships	Foster and develop partnerships between Council, groups and not-for-profit organisations for the delivery of shared outcomes.
Services and Activities	Provide a range of services and activities that respond to the needs of communities that align with Council's plans and strategies.
Participation	Foster community involvement and participation with a focus on groups and individuals that experience barriers to participating in community life.
Skills Development	Build community capacity and empower communities to further develop or gain new skills to enhance their quality of life.
Innovation	Pilot activities that provide an innovative response to local priorities and ensure ongoing environmental, economic and social sustainability.

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Value	Provide a measureable, cost-effective and efficient means to deliver community outcomes in a transparent and accountable manner.
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Funding Framework:

The Community Grant Program is divided into five categories.

Grant Category	Purpose	Funding Allocation*	Timing
Community Partnership Grants	Community Partnership Grant funding is available to not-for-profit or community organisations operating in Manningham to achieve longer term community development outcomes.	Allocations of up to \$50,000 per year with a maximum of \$200,000 over 4 years	More than 12 months and up to four-years.
Community Development	Achieve community development outcomes that respond to the needs of Manningham's diverse community.	\$3,001 - \$20,000	Annual
Festivals and Events	Support community led festivals and events that attract visitors to Manningham and activate key locations.	\$3,001 - \$20,000	Annual
Arts	Support activities that provide opportunities to participate in arts, culture and heritage.	\$3,001 - \$20,000	Annual
Small Grants	Support community strengthening initiatives and equipment purchase to enhance the quality of life of Manningham residents.	Up to \$3,000. Equipment Purchase 50% contribution of the total cost up to \$1,500	Applications open anytime and assessed up to three times a year

* Funding allocations are subject to adoption of Council's annual budget

In addition:

- Applicants may apply for a grant in more than one grant category each year, however a separate application form for each grant category must be completed.
- Organisations may not apply for funding across multiple categories for different elements of the same activity or initiative.

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- Applicants may also contribute additional in-kind resources and support for their activity and are encouraged to seek additional funding from other agencies, however this is not a condition of funding.
- Community organisations may form partnerships or consortia and submit a single application to Council.
- Funding allocations are final and non-negotiable.

Community Partnerships Grants

- Multi-year funding through this program shall not be interpreted as operational funding for a community organisation and should rather, add to an organisation's existing programs and projects.
- Grant applications in this category must be aligned with Council's priority outcomes derived from the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy action areas and programs or initiatives that address new or emerging issues within the community are encouraged.

Annual grants

- Funding in this category is for one-off projects and activities, however requests for funding for a second year of a project or activity may be accepted.
- To meet the criteria for second-year funding, applicants will need to demonstrate how the second year builds on the initial project and to demonstrate the need for additional funding.

RESPONSIBILITY

Manager, Economic and Community Wellbeing

RELATED POLICIES

The Policy is strategically aligned with Council's planning framework and policies including the Council Plan, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Community Plan, and other key strategic Council documents.

SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

Grant Assessments

Council is committed to a process that is:

- Transparent;
- Consistent; and

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- Free from conflict of interest.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Informing the community of Council's priorities prior to commencing the process;
- Ensuring that applicants will be aware of the assessment criteria prior to submitting an application;
- Making applicants aware of the decision making process; and
- Publicly reporting on outcomes of the assessment process - including unsuccessful grant applications.

Assessment Criteria:

Applications for community grants will be assessed against the principles contained in the **Funding Framework** and the **Program Objectives** outlined in this Policy.

More specifically, the assessment of Community Grant applications will have regards to:

- the alignment of the application with Council's priorities;
- the proposed community benefit derived from the program or initiative;
- an organisation's ability to successfully deliver the community outcome over time; and
- value for money.

The priority outcomes for **small grants** and **annual grants**, shall align with the key action areas contained in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Council Plan.

For **Community Partnership Grants**, Council shall, at its discretion, prioritise selected key action areas contained in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Council Plan and may target more specific outcomes where they align with key action areas. These priority outcomes as determined by Council shall be subject to endorsement prior to advertising the Community Grant Program Guidelines.

While grant applications will be assessed against the proposed community benefit of the program or initiative, the evaluation process will also consider the accuracy and relevance of the information contained in the application.

With that in mind, grant applications will be evaluated against the published criteria and the level of detail required in an application shall reflect the level of funding sought.

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Assessment process:

Composition of the assessment panels for respective grants categories and the accompanying and decision making process are referenced in the Community Grants Program Assessment Panel Terms of Reference.

The assessment process shall be aligned to the grants program as follows:

Action	Heritage Grants [^]	Small Grants	Annual Grants	Community Partnership Grants
Application assessed by Council officers for conformity with the eligibility criteria	✓	✓	✓	✓
Referred to a subject matter expert within Council to provide feedback on the application and the stated outcomes		✓	✓	
Application evaluated by officers against the selection criteria		✓	✓	
Officers evaluation referred to the assessment panel for further consideration		✓	✓	
Applications evaluated by panel members in full	✓			✓
Panel recommendations presented to the Director City Planning and Community for approval under delegation	✓	✓		
Panel recommendations referred to Council for consideration and endorsement			✓	✓

[^] Subject to evaluation criteria and funding guidelines not covered by this Policy

Eligibility: Who Can Apply for a Grant?

In order to be eligible to apply for funding through the Community Grant Program all applicants must:

- Be a not-for-profit constituted body such as an Incorporated Association or a Company Limited by Guarantee, or be an entity auspiced by an incorporated not-for-profit organisation that accepts legal and financial responsibility for the funded activity.
- Be a school or kindergarten whose program or activity is not solely curriculum based and offers a benefit to the wider community. Schools and kindergartens are encouraged to partner with community groups to achieve this outcome.

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Who is not eligible to apply:

- Individuals
- Community organisations that are not incorporated unless they have an incorporated auspice
- Organisations with outstanding debts to Council
- For profit, commercial organisations.

What will not be funded?

Applications will not receive funding for activities that:

- Are inconsistent with Council Plan or Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities or Community Grant Program objectives
- Are the responsibility of other tiers of government (e.g. State, Federal)
- Have already commenced or where the organisation has committed expenditure prior to the grant notification date (activities will not be funded retrospectively)
- Have a religious or political purpose which seeks to promote core beliefs
- Duplicate existing services/activities unless it can be demonstrated that it meets an unmet community need
- Would normally be part of a reasonable operating budget for the organisation, i.e. staff salaries or administration except for Community Partnership Grants
- Are funded through other Council programs or activities, including grants and sponsorship programs
- Are Council owned and run
- Offer social outings and gatherings, unless it can be demonstrated it is a core part of the project delivery
- Seek conference sponsorship e.g. financial or technical support
- Seek debt payment support
- Are solely curriculum based (kindergarten, primary or secondary school). Only applications that demonstrate a broader community partnership approach will be considered
- Are for fixed / permanent equipment, building maintenance or capital improvements (such as heating or cooling systems, shade sails, solar panels)
- Are for building amenity improvements
- Are listed as a sports club responsibility as set out in Council's Outdoor Sports Infrastructure Guidelines www.manningham.vic.gov.au/find-a-sporting-venue

GUIDELINES

The Community Grant Program Guidelines will be updated annually and will clearly communicate Council's priority outcomes for the next round of funding.

The Guidelines shall clearly detail the methodology, the weighting for each evaluation criteria and shall identify include key dates and decision making points in the process.

Where the round of funding includes advertising applications for Community Partnership Grant funding, the guidelines shall specify Council's priority outcomes and be subject to endorsement by Council.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Policy Title:	Community Grants Program Policy 2021
Responsible Officer:	Ben Harnwell
Resp. Officer Position:	Coordinator Business, Events and Grants
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To be included on website?	Yes

Last Updated	Meeting type? - Council or EMT	Meeting Date	Item N°
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