



Arts and Culture Grants Program

Guidelines



1. Introduction

Moira Shire Council is proud to support a thriving, creative and culturally rich community through the Arts and Culture Grants Program.

The program provides funding to eligible community organisations to develop and deliver initiatives that:

- Strengthen arts and cultural activities, programs and infrastructure across the Shire
- Increase participation in arts, cultural and creative activities
- Celebrate and promote Moira's rich cultural diversity and multicultural communities
- Raise the profile of arts and culture as a contributor to community wellbeing, identity and economic vitality
- Support inclusive, connected and vibrant communities across Cobram, Yarrawonga, Numurkah, Nathalia and surrounding townships

Place-Based Arts and Culture

Moira Shire's towns and communities each have their own distinct identity, history and creative character. This Program is designed to support arts and cultural activity that is locally informed, community-led and embedded in the life of individual townships — not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Council encourages applicants to develop programs and projects that respond to the specific needs, interests and opportunities of their community, and to build lasting creative capacity at a local level.

2. Strategic Alignment

The Arts and Culture Grants Program is designed to complement and align with Council's key strategic documents. Applications will be assessed for their alignment with the following:

Moira2045 Community Vision

By 2045, Moira Shire will be a thriving, connected regional community. This Program directly supports the following Vision themes:

- Community — welcoming, connected, informed and engaged communities with a strong and proud connection to place, culture and history
- Liveability — community facilities and assets that enable community activity, the arts and recreation
- Prosperity — sustainable year-round visitor experiences that embrace Moira's diversity and assets.

Council Plan 2025–2029

This Program supports Council's strategic objectives under:

- Pillar One: Community — healthy, safe, well-serviced and connected communities; community-led development; and inclusive participation
- Pillar Three: Liveability — vibrant arts and cultural precincts and experiences; Council-supported community art installations and events
- Pillar Four: Prosperity — attracting visitors year-round and celebrating Moira's cultural identity as a tourism asset

Moira Shire Council's Arts and Culture Strategy

This Program is a key delivery mechanism for the Council's Arts and Culture Strategy, supporting its three strategic objectives:

1. Strengthen arts and cultural infrastructure and capability
2. Grow audiences and markets for local arts and culture
3. Build knowledge and understanding of Moira's culturally diverse identity

3. Program Aims

Below is a list of the Program Aims. All funded activities are expected to contribute to at least four or more of these:

1. Develop inclusive programs and activities that value the culture of First Nations Peoples and support First Nations artists through engagement
2. Enable affordable exhibition, studio, performance or event opportunities to artists, creative practitioners and cultural groups
3. Provide professional development opportunities to build local creative expertise and strengthen community engagement
4. Build knowledge and understanding of the culturally diverse Moira identity, including through multicultural events and intercultural exchange
5. Support youth-focused arts, cultural and diversity programs
6. Provide opportunities that support local creative economies and creative industries
7. Engage with communities by actively listening to their changing needs and expectations
8. Develop sustainable community arts organisations by strengthening their operational capacity and long term resilience

4. Eligibility

Who Can Apply

Applicant Type	Eligible
Not-for-profit incorporated associations or co-operatives	Yes
Registered charitable organisations (Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission)	Yes
Unincorporated bodies applying with an eligible auspice organisation	Yes
Government agencies or organisations wholly funded by the Australian or Victorian Governments	No
Organisations receiving direct income from electronic gaming machines	No
Applicants with outstanding grant acquittals or debts to Council	No
Political or religious groups seeking to promote core beliefs	No

Further Eligibility Requirements

In addition to the above, to be eligible, applicants must:

- Be based within the Moira Shire local government area.
- Hold current public liability insurance to a minimum value of \$20 million (a current copy must be provided with the application).
- Have satisfactorily acquitted all previous Council grants or demonstrate the capacity to fully acquit.
- Have received Council approval for any projects or events to take place on Council-owned or managed land or facilities, via a completed Land Owner Consent application (this must be completed prior to the funding agreement being executed).
- Comply with relevant Local, Federal and State Laws and Legislation.
- Meet any additional eligibility requirements depending on which stream funding is being sought through.

5. Funding Streams

Moira Shire Council's primary commitment is to support established community arts organisations through multi-year triennial funding (stream 1), providing the stability needed to deliver ongoing, place-based programs. Where funding remains available following triennial commitments, an project-based stream (stream 2) provides equitable access for a broader range of community groups, projects and activities.

Stream	Description
Stream 1: Creative Arts Triennial Funding	Three-year funding for established organisations delivering sustained, place-based creative arts programs and initiatives
Stream 2: Arts and Culture Grant Funding	Project-based arts and culture funding to deliver projects, events and activities

A total of **\$120,000 per annum** is anticipated to be available subject to annual budget considerations across both streams, with a commitment to where possible achieving an equitable distribution of funding across the Shire including:

- Cobram and District
- Nathalia and District
- Numurkah and District
- Yarrawonga and District

	Stream 1	Stream 2
Year 1 Funding Pool: \$120,000 across both streams	OPEN: July 2026 PERIOD: 4 to 6 weeks FUNDING RELEASED: October / November 2026	OPEN: November 2026 PERIOD: Open until funds are expended FUNDING RELEASED: As approved
Year 2 & 3 Funding Pool: Dependent on Year 1 allocation	CLOSED	OPEN: July 2027 / 2028 PERIOD: Open until funds are expended FUNDING RELEASED: As approved

Important Note - Funding amounts available for Stream 2 in Years 2 and 3 will be determined by the triennial allocations awarded under Stream 1, with residual funds forming the Stream 2 funding pool. Council is committed to supporting activity across the breadth of the Shire.

Stream 1: Creative Arts Triennial Funding

Triennial Funding supports established organisations to deliver sustained arts and cultural programs across Cobram, Yarrawonga, Numurkah, Nathalia and surrounding districts over a three-year funding period.

Stream 1 is triennial (three-year) funding precisely because it is funding a program, not a single event. The program should be a sustained, ongoing body of arts and cultural activity delivered by an established organisation over an extended period. It is not a single event or output, but rather a structured framework of interconnected activities, services and initiatives that collectively advance a strategic purpose.

Triennial Funding is intended to provide a stable base for the organisation to:

- Develop and deliver an agreed Local Action Plan that progresses the directions of the Council's Arts and Culture Strategy at a local level
- Provide professional development and economic opportunities for arts groups, emerging artists and established practitioners
- Encourage broader community and regional visitors' access to the arts in each local setting
- Contribute to the Moira Creative Arts Network Group

Funding can be used for:

- Operational expenses, including:
 - Up to 25% of annual funding for staffing costs where the staff are directly supporting program delivery
 - Up to 25% of annual funding for rental/venue costs where the venue is used as a space to host community events, workshops, exhibitions etc
 - Up to 10% of annual funding for digital expenses (excluding hardware and equipment) such as memberships subscriptions or software to improve digital capability.
 - (Note: combined operational costs not to exceed 60% of annual funding)

- Business plan development and governance training
- Programs and activities that deliver on Council's Arts and Culture Strategy

Stream 1 Additional Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible for Stream 1: Triennial Funding, applicants as an organisation must be able to demonstrate all the following in addition to the core eligibility requirements:

- It has a current membership with Regional Arts Victoria (RAV)
- It is a well-established arts organisation with a clear arts and culture focus
- It's organisational objectives or constitutional purpose that aligns with and actively support arts and cultural outcomes
- It has the capacity to deliver initiatives identified in Council's Arts and Culture Strategy and Council Plan
- It has a demonstrated track record in delivering arts and cultural programs within the community
- It has active and established partnerships with other community organisations or groups
- Has clear audited financial statements demonstrating solvency.

Important Note - Only detailed and demonstrated programs or projects will receive triennial funding.

Applications which seek to encourage, develop or enhance collaboration and creative opportunities across communities are strongly encouraged.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Triennial Funding Agreement with Council. Each year successful applicants will be required to acquit the previous year's funding and provide an action plan to receive the next years funding. This will take place in October / November each year.

Triennial funding guidelines will be reviewed at the conclusion of the three-year funding cycle.

Stream 2: Arts and Culture Grant Funding

Arts and Culture Grants support applicants to deliver arts and cultural projects and events — including those that celebrate and promote Moira's rich multicultural, culturally diverse and First Nations communities. This stream supports initiatives with a defined scope, budget, start date and completion date. Projects are self-contained and deliver a specific set of outputs or outcomes within a single funding round.

Important Note — Stream 2 grants open following the commitment of Stream 1 funding. The available funding for Stream 2 will be determined by the remaining funds after Stream 1 allocations have been committed. Council will publicly advertise the opening of Stream 2 grant and the funding amount available.

Funding is available for a range of activities. Applications may cover a single event or activity, or a defined series of related events, programs or workshops delivered within the funding period provided they have a clear scope, budget and completion date.

Stream 2 Additional Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible for Stream 2: Arts and Culture Grant Funding, applicants must be able to demonstrate all of the following:

- The capacity to deliver the project, program or activity for which funding is being sought.

Eligible activities in Stream 2 include, but not limited to:

Creative Arts activities:

- Workshops, classes, masterclasses or demonstrations across arts disciplines (visual art, music, dance, theatre, film, writing, and more)
- Festivals, exhibitions, public art and performing arts events
- Youth-focused arts and cultural projects
- Projects that build knowledge of First Nations' art, culture and identity
- Activities that support arts practitioners and strengthen local creative economies

- Projects that promote the health, wellbeing and social benefits of creative engagement
- Creative recovery projects for communities affected by emergencies or disasters
- Licensing fees associated with creative content

Celebrating Culture activities:

- Cultural festivals, events and celebrations that reflect Moira's multicultural identity
- Workshops or demonstrations showcasing diverse cultural practices, food, music, dance and storytelling
- Projects that facilitate intercultural exchange, dialogue and understanding
- Initiatives that amplify the voices and experiences of diverse communities, including First Nations Peoples, new migrants and multicultural groups
- Activities that address barriers to participation and promote social inclusion
- Welcome events that support new arrivals to engage with community life

6. Funding Exclusions

An application for a project, event or activity may be declined where:

- It is considered the responsibility of other levels of government.
- It is the core responsibility of a Community Asset Committee.
- It is already being funded by other parts of Council.
- It has already commenced, been advertised or completed prior to funding approval.
- It is not consistent with Council's principles of neutrality, impartiality, and community cohesion
- It is not considered an inclusive community event open to the general public.
- It supports direct income from electronic gaming machines, promotes gambling or involves events held in licensed gaming facilities.

The funds are not to be used for:

- Operational expenses (except as permitted under Stream 1)
- Interstate or overseas travel
- Prizes, sponsorships, donations or gifts
- Activities that will have a negative impact on the environment
- Any building construction works
- Projects on Council land or property that are deemed high risk without sufficient risk management and/or projects that do not comply with Council's Event's Framework
- Projects that duplicate existing services
- Fundraising activities where proceeds benefit another organisation
- Activities that are only of benefit to an organisation's own members

7. General Application Conditions

- Funding must be used for the approved purposes only.
- Applicants must:
 - Have relevant management plans in place, including risk, project, event, financial and (where applicable) traffic management plans.
 - Declare all other sources of funding and provide financial statements if requested.
 - Accept the Terms and Conditions to receive funding and submit a Completion Report with receipts and supporting documentation.
 - All funding must be used directly for their own project delivery and action plan outcomes. It cannot be redirected, shared, or passed on to other organisations as sub-grants.
- Projects should demonstrate a financial or in-kind contribution from the organisation or community.
- Any unspent funds must be returned to Council or, with prior approval, may be reallocated to a related activity.
- Applicants successful in receiving triennial funding will be required to complete annual acquittals. Council retains the right to withdraw or discontinue ongoing funding where an applicant fails to meet funding requirements, reporting obligations, or agreed outcomes.

8. Application Process

Applications must be submitted via SmartyGrants. Support and guidance including translation assistance is available for applicants by contacting Council on 5871 9222. Computer and internet access is available through local libraries and community houses.

9. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria. The Assessment Panel will consider how each application meets the Program Aims and the priorities of Council's strategic documents.

Assessment Criteria	Considerations
Strategic Alignment	Alignment with the Program Aims; contribution to Council's Arts and Culture Strategy, Council Plan, Community Vision and Community Strengthening Grant objectives.
Community Benefit and Need	Demonstrated community need; anticipated impact and reach; access and inclusivity; benefit to Moira Shire residents and visitors.
Community Engagement and Participation	Evidence of community support; strategies to increase participation; engagement of diverse groups including First Nations Peoples, multicultural communities, youth and people with disability.
Organisational Capacity	Track record in delivering similar projects; governance and financial management; relevant management plans in place; sustainability of the proposed activity.
Value for Money	Appropriate and realistic budget; evidence of co-contributions (cash or in-kind); maximisation of Council's investment through other funding, donations or partnerships.
Innovation and Creativity	Uniqueness of the proposed activities; potential to inspire and engage the community; capacity for future growth.

Stream 1 applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel comprising of Council Officers and a minimum of one independent assessor with arts and culture expertise.

Stream 2 applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel comprising of Council Officers from a cross-sector of departments.

Panel members are required to declare any conflicts of interest prior to assessment. Conflicting panel members will be replaced as required.

10. Managing the Grant

Successful applicants will be required to sign a Funding Contract and Terms and Conditions.

Funds are paid electronically once all documentation is received.

If GST applies, organisations must provide their ABN and confirm GST registration, and they must comply with ATO requirements.

Successful applicants must:

- Use funds only for the approved activity;
- Complete the project by the agreed date;
- Acknowledge Council's support;
- Notify Council of any delays, changes or termination;
- Maintain necessary insurance and permits;
- Engage qualified contractors where relevant;
- Allow Council access to records and project sites; and
- Return funds if conditions are breached.

Council may publicise project outcomes.

11. Acquittal

At the conclusion of the funded activity, grantees must submit a Completion Report via SmartyGrants, including a financial acquittal with receipts and supporting documents.

Timelines for all reporting will be set out in Funding Agreements.

12. Contact Information

Manager Community Wellbeing

Moirā Shire Council

PO Box 578, Cobram VIC 3644

Email: arts@moira.vic.gov.au

Phone: 03 5871 9222