



# Community Strengthening Grants Guidelines

# 1. Governance and Structure

## 1.1 Introduction

This document has been prepared to assist community groups in preparing an application for the Moira Shire Council's Community Strengthening Grants Program.

Council is a major provider of funding for community groups. In addition, it supports community organisations indirectly through a variety of other methods including the provision of buildings, maintenance and planning advice. Assistance and staff input is provided through various committee structures, the total cost of this is significant. It is recognised that the grants program is an important component of Council's support for the community.

Please note this information is specifically provided for the Community Strengthening Grants Program.

## 1.2 Program Owner

Moira Shire Council Community Strengthening Program is funded by Council, and managed by the Community Development Department.

## 1.3 Target Groups

The program is of particular interest to community organisations who are seeking funding for projects and/or events.

## 1.4 Overall Purpose

The overall purpose of the grants program is to provide a funding scheme that strengthens the involvement of community organisations in the development of services, management of facilities, events, arts and culture, tourism, promotion of health, supply of equipment, promotion of environmental sustainability and infrastructure in the community. Council recognises the economic, socio-cultural and health benefits projects and events can bring to Moira Shire and its communities.

## 1.5 Grant Categories

Funding will be allocated under the following categories. Council retains the right to vary the amounts granted.

### Quick Response Grants

Up to \$1,000 open round

These grants aim to provide community organisations a responsive opportunity to apply for funding for small projects or events that will occur within 3 months of the application.

### Minor Grants

Up to \$5,000 - Two rounds per annum

These grants aim to provide community organisations an opportunity to apply for funding through the following streams:

- Arts and Culture
- Community Events
- Equipment
- Health Promotion
- Environmental Sustainability

### Major Grants

Up to \$10,000 - One round per annum

These grants aim to provide community organisations an opportunity to apply for funding through the following streams:

- Infrastructure
- Tourism (must attract visitors from outside of the Shire)
- Environmental Sustainability

## 1.6 Grant Aims

Through the different grant categories, the program seeks to:

- Support strategic goals identified in the Council Plan.
- Support community organisations that provide diverse and effective local services, facilities and activities.
- Support community action plans resulting from the community planning process.
- Support the goals and directions outlined in Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Council's Business and Innovation Strategy.
- Maximise the benefit of Council's investment by encouraging and matching contributions and seeking of other external funding to support major projects and events.

## 1.7 Responsible Officers

The following people will perform identified roles in the management and coordination of the Community Strengthening Grants Program:

Job Title	Role in Program
Manager Community Development	Manager of program
Team Leader Business Support	Leader of program
Administration Support Officer	Administrator of program
Community Development and Economic Development Officers	Manager of program Leader of program Administrator of program

## 1.9 Eligibility

For Community Organisations to be eligible for a Community Strengthening Grant they must:

- Be committed to providing direct benefits to residents in Moira Shire. Please note, Council may consider funding events held outside of Moira Shire, particularly in the two cross-border communities of Cobram-Barooga and Yarrowonga-Mulwala, where economic benefit to Moira Shire can be demonstrated.
- Be an incorporated 'not for profit' community organisation with open membership to residents in Moira Shire or a Moira Shire Council Section 86 Committee of Management.
- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or have a community organisation who is willing to auspice the application and accept responsibility for the administration of the grant.
- Hold adequate public liability insurance to cover the project or event as applicable.
- Not have their own grant giving program or fundraising program that provides money to finance other organisation's community initiatives.
- Have satisfactorily accounted to Council for the expenditure of any previous Council grants.
- Comply with all relevant Local Laws, Australian and Victorian legislation, including but not limited to:
  - Accounting and auditing requirements;
  - Equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws;
  - Human rights laws;
  - Disability;
  - Occupational Health and Safety;
  - Privacy, confidentiality and freedom of information laws';
  - Registration or accreditation of professional employees;
  - Preparation and dissemination of annual reports.

- Have relevant management plans in place, including:
  - Risk
  - Project
  - Event
  - Financial

## 1.10 Funding Exclusions

The following will not be funded:

- Individuals and private profit-making organisations
- Requests that are considered by Council to be the funding responsibility of other levels of Government (state or Federal government agencies)
- Applications from Primary or Secondary Schools (Council encourages partnerships between Schools and community organisations, whereby the community organisation is the applicant)
- Community organisations that:
  - Are in debt to Council and are not meeting the agreed repayment arrangements
  - Receive direct income from electronic gaming machines
- Have been non-compliant with Local Laws and or state or federal legislation over the preceding year

- Projects or Events that:
  - Have demonstrated self-sufficiency by running at a profit that is not reinvested back into the community organisation or their next event
  - Have been, or are being, funded by other parts of Council
  - Have already started or have been completed (no retrospective funding)
  - Are run by (or involved with) political or religious groups seeking to promote core beliefs
  - Are a clear duplication of existing services
  - Are not open to the general public
  - Are for interstate or overseas travel
  - Are for operational expenses
  - Are for funding of prizes, sponsorships, donations or gifts
  - Will have a negative impact on the environment

All applicants must complete the online application form and supply requested supporting documentation.

## 1.11 Promotion

The program will be promoted via the following methods:

- Moira Shire Council website  
[www.moira.vic.gov.au](http://www.moira.vic.gov.au)
- Moira Shire Council Facebook page
- Media releases and advertisements in local papers

## 1.12 Smarty Grants

Smarty Grants is an online grant administration system. It provides an easy way for grant applicants to complete their application form online. Some of the features of Smarty Grants are:

- You can save your progress and return to complete your application at a later time or date;
- Your application is stored online, therefore there is nothing for you to save to your own computer and; you can be certain that the grant maker has received your application when you submit.

## 2. Application Process

### 2.1 Application Process

Eligible community organisations can apply for a grant by completing an online application form via Smarty Grants. The website is <https://manage.smartygrants.com.au>. If you are a first time user of Smarty Grants you will need to register.

We suggest you use an organisational email address to register to ensure all your grant applications are in one place and can be accessed over time by relevant committee members.

### 2.2 Application Support

It is important to Moira Shire Council that applicants are able to submit a well thought through and well developed application that answers all compliance questions, addresses all criteria and provides the evidence and support documentation required.

If you are after some further guidance on how to complete an application form, Council offer one on one sessions to assist. Please contact the Community Development Department on (03) 5871 9222 to book an appointment.

Librarians at the Cobram, Yarrawonga, Numurkah and Nathalia libraries are able to provide access to a computer and internet for grant applicants to work on their applications. The librarians can also provide applicant assistance if required. Please contact the library if you are interested in this service.

Library details are as below:  
Tel: 1300 374 765

#### **Cobram Library**

14 Punt Road, Cobram

#### **Yarrawonga Library**

26-30 Belmore Street, Yarrawonga

#### **Nathalia Library**

75 Blake Street, Nathalia

#### **Numurkah Library**

Cnr Quinn & McCaskill Street, Numurkah

### 2.3 Application General Conditions

The following information is designed to guide applicants in preparing and submitting their applications. Adhering to these conditions is compulsory. Please read carefully, as failure to comply with these conditions may have a negative impact on the assessment of the application.

- a. Applications must be made via Smarty Grants.
- b. Funded projects and/or events must be for a specific project and/or event and have a defined operating period. Funding cannot be used for any other purpose without prior consultation and agreement by Council.
- c. Applicants must indicate all other sources of funding they have sought and/or received in relation to the project and/or event in their application.
- d. Each Community Organisation must provide copies of the previous years Financial Statements.
- e. Applicants are to contribute an amount which Council believes adequate based on the type of project, their financial position and their ability to secure alternative funding. Subject to this the degree of contribution will be considered in the assessment process.
- f. Groups that receive a grant must sign the Terms and Conditions of Grant before they are eligible to receive the allocated funds.
- g. A Completion Report (including all receipts for money expended) must be submitted at the completion of the project and/or event. A Progress Report is to be submitted for Major grant applications.
- h. Applications for portable objects must have a minimum cash contribution of 50 per cent of the total cost of the project and/or event. For the purpose of this application, mobile objects are considered to be items that can be easily taken, driven, lost or stolen and that do not have a permanent fixed position.

- i. The Community Strengthening Grants are made on the basis of a one off payment and no ongoing commitment by Council is implied.
- j. Grant monies must be accounted for separately within the organisations records and any unspent funds must be returned to Council.
- k. If the project and/or event is discontinued within 12 months from receipt of the grant, all unspent funds must be returned to Council and/or approval to reuse the funds must be negotiated with the Manager Community Development.
- l. Council will look favourably at applications which show consideration for availability of water, shade and healthy food and drink choices at events along with smoke and alcohol free zones.

## 2.4 Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria is directly based on that outlined in the Community Strengthening Grants Policy.

The Assessment Panel is made up of relevant Officers and independent Council Officers.

The Assessment Panel will conduct the initial assessment of the grant applications, with endorsement from Council. Allocation of grant funding is not guaranteed and will depend upon how well applications meet the assessment criteria, the number and quality of applications received, funds held by the community organisations, and the amount available in Council's budget.

## 3. Awarding Grants

### 3.1 Assessment

Applications will initially be assessed by relevant Council Officers, with a report and recommendation submitted to the Ordinary Council meeting. The assessment will be carried out as outlined below:

**1. Applications will be first assessed to ensure they meet eligibility criteria.**

**2. Applications will then be assessed by the Assessment Panel against the programs assessment criteria. Applicants may be requested to provide additional supporting information considered appropriate.**

**3. A Council report will be prepared for consideration and determination.**

**4. Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the decision immediately after the Council Meeting.**

As stated above, the Assessment Panel will conduct the initial assessment of the grant applications with the final decision being made by Council.

Council reserves the right to offer less funding than requested, if it believes that the project or event can still proceed with a greater contribution from the applicant. Bank balance, equity and other funding opportunities are also taken into consideration during the assessment of applications.

### 3.2 Notification Process

Notification of successful and unsuccessful applications will take place immediately following the Council Meeting.

Successful applicants will be notified by:

- Email notification via Smarty Grants.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by:

- Initial email via Smarty Grants including details of Contact Officer to discuss the application and provide feedback.



## 4. Managing Grants

### 4.1 Funding Contract

Successful applicants will be required to enter a Funding Contract with Council by completing Terms and Conditions and Appendices.

### 4.2 Payment Arrangements

The payment process for the Community Strengthening Grants program is as follows:

- Payments are made by Council on receipt of the completed Terms and Conditions and Appendices
- Payments will be made electronically or via cheque.

### 4.3 Application of GST to Funding

The imposition of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) applies to some funding submissions. In order for Council to comply, the following approach will be taken so that no applicant will be worse off:

- a. Successful applicants must have an Australian Business Number (ABN) to apply or be auspiced by a group / organisation that has an ABN.
- b. Applicants who are registered for GST must provide their GST details. Applicants that have applied for an ABN or for GST registration but have not yet received confirmation must state so on the form. Successful applicants will be required to provide completed details before funding can be paid.
- c. The Council will determine if the funding is considered a taxable supply for GST purposes and add GST to the funding if those conditions (set by the ATO) are met.
- d. If GST is added to the funding submission, applicants that are registered for GST will be required to report the funding on their BAS statement. Applicants that are not registered for GST will not be required to take any further action.

### 4.4 Terms and Conditions of Grant

If successful in this funding round, applicants will be subject to the following conditions:

1. The Grant must be used solely for the project and/or event as detailed in the Application Form.
2. The Grant will be paid in full when Council receives all of the required documentation.
3. A Progress Report on the status of the project and/or event is required by the date nominated in the Terms and Conditions signed by successful applicants. (Applicable to major grants only).
4. The Completion Report must be signed off by the Grantee's appointed Project Sponsor.
5. The Grantee shall satisfactorily complete the project and/or event by the date nominated in the Terms and Conditions signed by successful applicants.
6. The Grantee must ensure that Moira Shire's contribution to the project and/or event is acknowledged on promotional materials, media reports and/or by appropriate signage.
7. The Grant is made on the basis that the Grantee provides a financial contribution to the project and/or event. If the funded project and/or event is of a mobile nature, the contribution must be 50 per cent cash.
8. The Grant recipient must advise Council immediately if the project and/or event is terminated. If a termination occurs, Council will request the refund of whole or part of the Grant previously paid to the Grantee.
9. The Grantee shall advise Council if the project and/or event is completed for less than the project and/or event total cost as set out in the Application Form. In such cases the Grant may be reduced on a pro rata basis.

10. Upon reasonable notice, the Grantee shall permit a Council Officer access to accounting records relating to the project and/or event and where relevant, to inspect any project and/or event site, works and/or equipment.
11. Any variations to the conditions of the Grant (as detailed in the Application Form) must be in writing and signed by both parties. Variations are subject to approval by Council. Council reserves the right to deny any variations.
12. If any Grant conditions are breached, or if Council is of the reasonable opinion that the project and/or event is not proceeding satisfactorily, Council may withhold payment to be made under this Grant and/or require the repayment to Council of the amount determined.
13. Council reserves the right to publicise the benefits accruing as a result of the provision of this Grant.
14. Council has the right to issue a mutually agreed media release regarding the project and/or event.
15. Council must include the name of the Grantee and the amount of the Grant in its annual report.
16. The Grantee shall comply with all Acts and Legislation inclusive of but not restricted to:
  - *Equal Employment Opportunity Act 2010*;
  - *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (C'wealth)*;
  - *Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004*.
17. The Grantee shall engage where and when required, suitably qualified trades persons to complete works requiring certification.
18. The Grantee shall ensure that their funded project and/or event and all contractors / employees have appropriate insurance coverage.
19. The Grantee must obtain any necessary permits (for example – building, planning) and thereafter comply with the requirements of such permits.
20. Should the Grantee not commence the project and/or event by the nominated date in the returned Terms and Conditions document, the Grant may be terminated at the discretion of Council and the funds requested to be returned to Council.
21. The Grantee will sign and return the Terms and Conditions document by the date nominated.

## 5. Review and Evaluation

### 5.1 Reporting and Monitoring

The reporting arrangements for this program vary between grants. Reports are to be submitted as per the time frames identified in the successful applicant's administration package.

Grant	Reporting Requirements
Quick Response Grants	Completion Report
Community Minor Grants	Completion Report
Community Major Grants	Progress Report Completion Report

All reports will need to be signed off by the Project Applicant and Council.

### 5.2 Feedback

In order to continually improve the manner of grant allocation, feedback from the community regarding the criteria, timing and targeting of these grants is encouraged.

Any comments regarding these matters should be directed to:

Manager Community Development  
Moira Shire Council  
PO Box 578, Cobram VIC 3644

or via email [grants@moira.vic.gov.au](mailto:grants@moira.vic.gov.au)