

COMMUNITY GRANTS FUND POLICY

Responsible Department:	Corporate and Community Services
Responsible Section:	Tourism and Community Development
Responsible Officer:	Manager Tourism and Community Development

Objective

- To provide guidelines, conditions and information on Council's provision of financial assistance under section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- To provide clear and transparent guidance on eligibility, criteria and accountability by which Community Grants applications will be assessed and determined, provided and acquitted;
- To address strategic objectives identified within the Narrabri Shire Strategic Plans;
- To provide funding to encourage and enable broad community participation in cultural, sporting, educational, environmental and community service activities;
- Assist with building community and/or organisational capacity and resilience.

Introduction

Section 356 (1) of the *Local Government Act, 1993* states that "A council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions".

The Council Community Grants Fund will provide an amount annually, as determined by Council for community focussed projects, events and programs that directly benefit the Narrabri Shire community and address the key themes identified within Council's Strategic Plans.

Policy

1. Assessment of Applications

- 1.1. An assessment panel will be formed to review and determine funding allocations based on the assessment criteria. The assessment panel will be made up of Council staff members. Following their assessment of the eligibility of the applicants and weighting of the projects, recommended allocations will be made to MANEX for review prior to determination by Council. Council determination will be undertaken at the July Council meeting unless exceptional circumstances prevent assessment and determination. In this case, Council will determine an alternate assessment and determination date.

Applicants may not receive the full amount of funding requested and may be offered an alternate amount.

2. Eligibility Requirements

2.1. Applicants must be classed as one of the following:

- Not-for-profit organisations;
- Incorporated community group;
- Registered sporting club;
- School P and C Committee;
- Not-For Profit Childcare Facility;
- Registered Charity.

2.2. Applications must be lodged in full by the publicised cut-off date. No late applications will be accepted;

2.3. Applicants may be from outside the Shire however all grant funding must be used for events/programs/projects within Narrabri Shire Local Government Area

2.4. Only one (1) application may be lodged per organisation, per grant round;

2.5. Grant expenditure must occur within the applied for financial year period unless otherwise determined by Council;

2.6. Applications must be completed in full using the forms provided by Council;

2.7. Applications for infrastructure works or the purchase of equipment must be supported with written quotations;

2.8. A budget must be included with all applications received;

2.9. Proposed projects must provide a direct benefit to Narrabri Shire residents;

2.10. Proposed projects must address at least one of the key themes identified within Narrabri Shire Council's Strategic Plans;

2.11. All Projects must occur within the Narrabri Shire Local Government Area;

2.12. Applicants must match the requested grant funding on a dollar for dollar (50/50) basis. Applicants must contribute in cash or in-kind;

2.13. Applicants must provide a valid Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance with the application and must maintain this insurance cover for the entirety of the project;

2.14. Council can, at their discretion, approve use of Council Plant outside the grant application timeframe, utilising funds remaining in the Community Grants Fund after the initial application related funding allocation.

3. Projects and Events Not Eligible for Funding

- 3.1. Applications from individuals, profit making entities, Government departments and agencies are not eligible for funding, with the exception of school P and C committee's and not-for-profit childcare facilities;
- 3.2. Projects and events that are retrospective;
- 3.3. Projects and events that have been funded in the previous financial year;
- 3.4. Where the organisation has previously received funding and not provided acquittal documentation within the required timeframes – See Acquittal Process Obligations within this policy;
- 3.5. Where applicants are able to self-fund the project, unless an explanation is provided at the time of application, with the final decision made at Council discretion;
- 3.6. Applications requesting funding for general running costs.

4. Criteria for Assessment

4.1. Organisation Type

4.1.1. Applicants must provide proof of organisation type. Acceptable documentation includes any one of the following:

- Certificate of Incorporation;
- AGM minutes signed by the current president;
- Documentation from a governing organisation detailing the sub-organisations details;
- An annual report.

4.2. Budget

4.2.1. Budgets must be INCLUDING GST.

4.2.2. Budgets must be completed in full and take in to account the requested grant contribution;

4.2.3. Quotes must be dated within 30 days of the application submission to be considered current;

4.2.4. Quotes must detail if GST has been included or excluded.

4.3. Applicants must demonstrate the following

- 4.3.1. That the project/event/program will address at least one of the themes in the Narrabri Shire Council's Strategic Plans. These themes are outlined in the Community Grants Fund application form, with further information available in Council's Community Strategic Plan;
- 4.3.2. That the project/event/program benefits a significant number of Narrabri Shire residents.

4.4. Higher priority will be given to projects that demonstrate the following

- 4.4.1. Projects/events/programs that demonstrate a partnership between community groups and/or organisations;
- 4.4.2. Projects/events/programs that have a high level of community support;
- 4.4.3. Projects/events/programs that show a benefit to a broad cross section of the Narrabri Shire community;
- 4.4.4. Projects and programs that prove to be sustainable after the period of funding has ended.

5. Obligations of Successful Applicants

- 5.1. Provide written evidence of project partner contributions (in-kind or cash) on letterhead or witnessed by a Justice of Peace;
- 5.2. Obtain a letter of authority from the land owner if your project is on land not owned or managed by the applicant;
- 5.3. Participate in a meeting with Council's Grants Officer to review and sign a grant agreement that sets out the terms and conditions associated with the grant;
- 5.4. Provide documentation as required by Council upon request, for example a bank statement to confirm an organisation's bank details;
- 5.5. Update Council immediately with change of contact details;
- 5.6. Acknowledge Council's contribution in any advertising for the project/event/program. Infrastructure projects will be required, at Council discretion, to have a sign on display for a minimum of 12 months from the date of approved project acquittal. The sign will be supplied by Narrabri Shire Council;
- 5.7. Invite a representative of Narrabri Shire Council to attend any opening and/or presentation relating to the project/program/event;
- 5.8. Comply with all conditions outlined within the grant agreement;

- 5.9. Provide evidence of appropriate Public Liability Insurance coverage if the Certificate of Currency provided with the application is now out of date;
- 5.10. Provide acquittal documentation as outlined in the grant agreement;
- 5.11. Seek approval prior to 30 April of the respective financial year, to alter proposed project, objectives, timeframes, or budgets;
- 5.12. Complete all documentation and meet all timeframes required by Council;
- 5.13. Council reserves the right to withdraw funding from applicants or representatives of applicants who can be deemed to have acted in a manner which may be considered illegal, unethical or may bring Council in to disrepute;

6. Acquittal Process Obligations

- 6.1. Successful applicants must lodge a project acquittal on approved Council acquittal documentation and including all supporting documentation, prior to 30 June in the relevant financial year, as outlined in the grant agreement. Failure to lodge an acquittal within the time frame, except in cases where an extension has been granted by Council in writing, will result in the following actions:
 - 6.1.1. Allocated grant funding will be forfeited and any monies already paid will become a debt owed to Council by the applicant;
 - 6.1.2. Future applications will be deemed ineligible until an acquittal is lodged. No monies will be paid upon late lodgement however the applicant will be eligible to apply for funding in the next grant round with the understanding that Council will take in to account the failure to follow guidelines when assessing any new applications. This may result in an unfavourable decision for the applicant in respect to future applications;
 - 6.1.3. Failure to lodge an acquittal, including a late acquittal will result in the applicant being ineligible to apply for new funding for five (3) financial years from 30 June of the year the acquittal was originally due.
- 6.2. Funding is paid after the project is complete and a successful acquittal has been lodged. Exceptional circumstances may apply which allows applicants to access funding prior to project completion however requests must be lodged in writing, with Council discretion dictating the result.

Related Documentation

- Narrabri Shire Council Community Strategic Plan;
- Narrabri Shire Council Community Grand Fund Policy Application, Agreement and Acquittal documents.

References

- Local Government Act (NSW) 1993.

History:

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change
114/2016	April 5, 2016	Adopted
164/2017	August 15, 2017	Reviewed
	August 27, 2019	Reviewed
275/2019	November 26, 2019	Adopted
	December 24, 2019	Rebranded