

# Grants Policy

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<b>Related legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 2020 Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Gender Equality Act 2020 A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999		
<b>Related strategic documents, policies, or procedures:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Plan 2021-2025</li> <li>• Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025</li> <li>• Community Grants Program Guidelines – DOC/22/1864</li> <li>• Community Grants Program Operational Procedures Manual – DOC/21/9456</li> <li>• Quick Response Youth Grants Guidelines – DOC/18/35869</li> <li>• Events Grants Program Guidelines – DOC/22/27292</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct – DOC/21/46941</li> </ul>		

Date	Version Number	Details of Version	Modified by
29/09/2022	1	Updated Grants Policy to reflect current grants programs.	Manager Community Partnerships

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to document Council's commitment to consistent, transparent and equitable processes in the assessment of grant applications.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all current and future Council grants programs.

A grant is defined as a payment by Council to an individual or organisation for a stated purpose, awarded through a competitive and transparent process.

The policy does not apply to:

- Ongoing funding through a Memorandum of Understanding or other agreement.
- Non-financial support such as the provision of buildings, land or facilities, and in-kind support from Council staff.
- Payments for sponsorship by Council.
- Payments to organisations for delivery of services on behalf of Council.

## 3. Policy

Council acknowledges and values the significant contribution that community groups, organisations, committees and public events provide in improving the liveability and the health and wellbeing of the community.

Council is committed to providing an annual financial allocation for various grants programs to be made available by application to support community groups, organisations, committees and events that fit the following criteria:

- Applications include activities that align to the strategic objectives in the Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and other Council plans and strategies.
- Applications demonstrate how the project will benefit the Mount Alexander Shire community and/or meet a need in the local community.
- Projects and events will be based in the Mount Alexander Shire.
- Applicants demonstrate an ability to plan and deliver the project.

## 4. Key Components of Council Grants Programs

### 4.1. Annual financial allocations

Financial allocations for grants programs will be considered by Council during the annual budget process.

### 4.2. Guidelines for each program

Guidelines will be documented for each grants program that outline items such as eligible and ineligible applicants, projects that will and will not be considered for funding, the process and timing for applications, the assessment criteria and the reporting requirements. Program guidelines will be reviewed annually.

The assessment criteria are the scoring mechanism that will ensure a consistent, equitable, accountable and transparent approach for assessing all applications.

The level of detail required in applications across the various grants programs is determined in proportion to the funding amount available.

### 4.3. Communications and Promotion

To provide the whole Mount Alexander Shire community with an opportunity to apply for funding, broad communication will be undertaken to promote grant opportunities and staff will be available to support applicants.

### 4.4. Minimum requirements

In fairness to all applicants, requests for funding that do not meet the funding application criteria or timeframe of funding programs will not be considered. Council's decisions are final and there is no review or appeals process.

### 4.5. Accountability and Transparency

Any Conflicts of Interest will be managed according to the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Conflict of Interest procedures. To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process anyone with a conflict of interest will not participate in any discussions or decisions relating to the specific application. All conflicts of interest declarations should be recorded in Council's grants management system and conflict of interest register.

### 4.6. Assessment and decision making

The objectives of each grants program are determined by the strategic directives established by Council. To ensure there is clear separation between Councillors and grants decision making, the assessment and approval of grant applications against each program's respective guidelines are operational matters led by Council officers. Those

involved in these assessment and decision making processes are required to complete training related to conflict of interest, fraud and risk.

All assessment comments and scoring should be recorded in Council's grants management system and records management system.

## 4.7. Funding Agreements

To support clarity and transparency, grants will be administered through the use of funding agreements. Recipients of funding are to abide by the terms of the signed Funding Agreement including the completion of acquittal obligations.

## 5. Grants Programs

### 5.1. Community Grants

The Community Grants Program has two funding rounds each financial year and two funding streams, which are:

1. Small grants
2. Partnership grants

Assessment of applications and their eligibility are subject to the Community Grants Guidelines and assessed by Council Officers.

Final approval and distribution of funds is delegated to the Manager Community Partnerships. Decisions are then provided to Council for information.

The program parameters are managed in accordance with the Community Grants Program Guidelines.

### 5.2. Quick Response Youth Grants

The Quick Response Youth Grants Program provides support to local young people between 12 and 25 years of age to run their own youth focused activities and projects. Applications for grants are open for the whole financial year; however, once the program is fully subscribed, no further applications will be assessed until the next financial year.

Assessment of requests and their eligibility are subject to the Quick Response Youth Grants Guidelines.

Applications are assessed by Council's Youth Advisory Group overseen by a Council Officer, and approved by the Inclusive Communities Coordinator or Manager Community Partnerships.

## 5.3. Events Grants

The Events Grants Program consists of two funding rounds each financial year. Each round is designated for a 6 month period for events to occur in. This is to help disperse the number of applications in each round, as listed below:

Round 1 – Events held in January to June

Round 2 – Events held in July to December

A panel of Council Officers assesses each application against agreed and consistent criteria.

Requests are assessed by Council Officers under the Events Grants Program Guidelines. Decisions are then provided to Council for information.

## 5.4. Quick Response Events Grants

In addition to the main Events Grants, applications for Quick Response Events Grants are open for the whole financial year; however, once the program is fully subscribed, no further applications will be assessed until the next financial year. This round of grants was designed to accommodate unforeseen events that occur on occasion within the Shire. Grants available through this program are for a lesser amount than those available through the main Events Grants program.

The Venues and Events Officer or Coordinator assesses applications as required. The assessment is made in line with the Events Grants Program assessment criteria current at the time. The applicant will receive verbal and written notification within five working days of the application being submitted. Successful applicants are required to sign a funding agreement with Mount Alexander Shire Council and complete a short acquittal and evaluation at the completion of their event.

## 5.5. Other Grants Programs or funding streams

Any future Council Grants programs will adhere to the principles outlined in this policy and include the components set out in Section 4. This could include one-off funding opportunities open to the public or short term grant programs funded by other Government bodies and administered by Council.

## 6. Risk and acquittals

Each program will ensure through its annual acquittals process that Council money has been spent on the stated purpose. Unspent funds will be recouped.

## 7. Human Rights Statement

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006).

## 8. Gender Equity Statement

It is considered that this policy goes towards promoting gender equity principles as outlined in the Gender Equality Act 2020 and does not contribute in the promotion of inequalities.

## 9. Child Safe Statement

Mount Alexander Shire Council is committed to being a child safe organisation and has zero tolerance for child abuse. We recognise our legal and moral responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe from harm and promoting their best interests. All children who come in contact with Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers from the organisation have a right to be and feel safe. We have specific policies, procedures and training in place to support employees, volunteers and contractors to achieve these commitments. We create environments where all children have a voice and are listened to, their views are respected and they contribute to how we plan for, design and develop our services and activities.