Community Partnership Grants Program Guidelines

Southern Grampians Shire Council's Community Grant Partnership Program is designed to help build our region by giving community groups a funding source to undertake new or growing initiatives, projects, or events that benefit the Southern Grampians Shire.

The Community Partnership Grant provides an opportunity for not-for-profit organisations, groups and committees to develop projects that complement areas identified as priorities in Southern Grampians Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025.

Applicants may apply for to $15,000 per financial year, applications for more than $3,000 must demonstrate matching cash contribution.

What you need to know – Key information

Biannual Grants (by category)
➢ Community Strengthening Grants
➢ Community Infrastructure Grants
➢ Arts and Culture Development Grants
➢ Environmental Sustainability Grants
➢ Heritage Grants
➢ Tourism and Events Grants

Round one: opens first quarter financial year
Round Two: opens third quarter financial year

Community Partnership Grants Objectives

The objectives of this program are aligned with the themes in the Council Plan 2021 - 2025 that has been shaped by the voice of the community:

1. Support our community – An empowered community that is healthy, inclusive and connected.

2. Grow our Regional Economy – A growing and diverse local and regional economy that supports our local businesses.

3. Maintain and Renew our Infrastructure - Provide access to a high-quality built environment and infrastructure that meets community needs.

4. Protect our Natural Environment - Act as community leaders to promote and enhance a clean, green and sustainable environment.

5. Provide Strong Governance and Leadership - Strong leadership, good governance and effective service delivery.

   ➢ Read the Council Plan 2021-2025 [here](#)

Eligibility Criteria

Who Can Apply

The grants program is a competitive process and limited by the amount of funds available. Applicants are not guaranteed funding, nor the full amount requested. Projects funded previously cannot be guaranteed funding in future years. This needs to be considered when developing an application.

Applicants must meet the following **eligibility requirements**.

Ineligible applications will not be assessed.

- Applicants are required to be either based within Southern Grampians Shire or provide services, projects, events or programs within the boundaries of the municipality that directly benefit the Southern Grampians Shire.
- Applicants must be not-for-profit incorporated organisations, community groups or clubs.
- Individuals will only be considered for the Art and Culture and Heritage Categories.
- If an applicant is not an eligible organisation as defined above but meets all other eligibility criteria, they may be auspiced by an eligible organisation to apply on their behalf.
- Applicants must hold an adequate public liability insurance policy to cover the staff, members and the general public, as appropriate.
- Applicants must provide evidence of advice obtained regarding relevant permits, approvals, permissions and licenses from the relevant authorities prior to application.
- Community organisations that manage Council assets may apply for fixed assets, works or improvements to Council owned facilities. Applicants can include Formal User Groups, and Friends Groups. Grants for works on Council owned facilities or property require the permission of Council. **Community organisations are required to consult with Council Officers regarding their project requirements prior to applying.**

What we won't Fund

- Organisations, activities or programs which are the responsibility of another level of government, eg. Education and Health.
- Political parties or associated lobby groups.
- Projects, activities or items directly related to gambling.
- The purchase of alcohol, tobacco and vaping goods.
- Fundraising activities.
- Inflatables on Council-owned land or facilities.
- Activities that have already started and/or need retrospective funding.
- Projects that don't meet the aims of the Community Partnership Grants Program or align with the Council Plan, Fair Access and Inclusion Policy or other Council strategies and plans.
- Items that are part of an organisation's core business or normal operating expenses e.g. salaries, insurances, utilities, rates or rental of business premises.
- Applications that do not provide all required supporting documentation on closure of the grants round.
- Groups that have outstanding acquittals from a previous successful Community Partnership Grant application.
- Privately-owned, for-profit businesses.
- Applications where the applicant's organisation/s promote and/or benefit directly from electronic gaming machines or activities at a business where these machines operate.

How many grants can I apply for?

In any financial year applicants can make one or more submissions for different projects. The maximum amount that could be allocated per applicant per financial year is $15,000.

Please consider applying for a grant 6-12 months before your project, works or event start date.

Applications for more than $3,000 must demonstrate matching cash contribution (dollar-for-dollar), in-kind contributions cannot make up cash component. Applicants must provide evidence of cash held, or other approved funding sources by submitting bank statements or grant approval notification.

Application Process

How do I apply?

What I need to do:	
1. Read these Community Grants Guidelines.	
2. Check eligibility against the Eligibility Criteria.	
3. It is encouraged to make contact with Council to discuss your application with a member of Council's Community Partnership Grants Team.	
4. Identify all costings needed for your proposal. Obtain quotes and seek landowner permissions if required.	
5. Seek appropriate advice around what permits might be required	
6. Connect with other groups and seek letters of support for your application	
7. View the application form online at Home Page - Southern Grampians Shire Council when the round opens	
8. Fill out the application form with all information requested	
9. Ensure you attach all supporting documentation electronically to your submission, including quotes, financial statements, plans, letters of support and insurance	
10. Submit your application online by the closing date. - You will receive an email instantly confirming the application has been submitted	

What Documentation do I need?

Upon application, the following supporting information will be required at a minimum:

- ✓ A Public Liability Certificate
- ✓ An ABN Number
- ✓ If auspiced, you must provide a letter of support from the auspicing organisation
- ✓ Quotes or pricing for ALL budget items
- ✓ Financial statements as evidence of matching funding held (for grants over $3,000)
- ✓ Other supporting documentation you wish to include

Public Liability Certificate

Southern Grampians Shire Council requires applicants to hold current Public Liability Insurance to the value of $10 Million **(this amount may be assessed on a case-by-case basis)** to protect themselves against legal liability for third party's injury, death and/or damage to property caused by an occurrence in connection with the applicant's activities.

This is proven by providing a valid Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance. **This insurance must be in the name of the applicant, group or organisation**. You may apply through an auspice organisation if your group does not wish to purchase insurance.

Incorporation

Applicants must be incorporated or hold another legal entity status. Incorporation is the most common way to provide a community group status as a legal entity.

If you are not incorporated and would like to become incorporated, you may contact the Office of Consumer Affairs Victoria on 1300 558 181 or visit the webpage for more information (https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/).

If your group is not incorporated and does not wish or is unable to become incorporated, you may apply through an auspice organisation.

Auspice organisation

An auspice is any organisation that is incorporated, holds current public and products liability insurance and agrees to take responsibility for your grant. Any legally constituted body may act as an auspice organisation to partner with and/or apply for or manage funding on behalf of another non-incorporated organisation or individual.

If the funding application is successful, the auspice organisation will receive and manage the funds for the applicant to deliver the funded project or activities. The auspice organisation is responsible for the effective acquittal of the grant. A letter confirming the auspice arrangement must be attached to your funding application.

Examples of an auspice include:

• Local neighbourhood houses

• A community organisation you have worked or partnered with

• A peak body or governing association of your field

• Organisations with a similar mission and purpose

Quotes

If your group is applying to purchase goods, services or materials you will also be required to provide any relevant quotes.

A quote should include:

- Business name and address / customers name and address.

- A unique quote number.

- The quote issue date / the quote expiry date.

- The description and prices of the products / service.

- The total amount of the sale.

Financial Statements

For grant applications over $3,000, you must provide bank statements from your organisation as evidence of matching funding held. This may be holdings from your organisation or other grant funding received. Council needs confirmation that you are able to meet the 1:1 funding requirement (dollar-for-dollar contribution) and have the financial capacity to complete the project before it can assess your application.

Assessment Process

How we assess grants

We assess eligible applications using the criteria listed below and funding is awarded based on merit and information submitted in the application.

% of Score	Criteria	
25%	**WHAT** is the project or event you are applying for and what will it achieve?	▪ Provide a clear and concise overview of your project. ▪ Describe what your project or activity will achieve. ▪ Describe how Council's contribution will be used. ▪ Describe how the project will increase community participation, wellbeing, community capacity and/or engagement. ▪ Outline how the project or event is accessible and inclusive of all members of the community.
25%	**WHY** is the proposed project or activity needed?	▪ Demonstrate that the activity or event responds to a community need and provide evidence of demand. ▪ Demonstrate how your project/event contributes to achieving the goals and objectives of the Council Plan, Fair Access and Inclusion Policy, Strategies or Community Plans. ▪ How will the project ensure that all genders have equal access to benefits and opportunities? ▪ Demonstrate community support for your proposal. ▪ Demonstrate that this activity cannot be funded elsewhere.
20%	**WHO** is involved in the project or event?	▪ Outline the stakeholders, community groups and communities you have consulted and collaborated with on this project. ▪ Describe how the project or activity creates links and develops partnerships with other organisations. ▪ Explain how those involved have the relevant skills to undertake the project, including evidence of voluntary labour or in-kind support. ▪ Provide a description of the groups and/or individuals in the community that will benefit from your project or event.

30%	**HOW** will your organisation manage the funded project or activity over the funding period?	▪ Provide evidence that your organisation has the resources, expertise and capacity to successfully manage, deliver and evaluate the project or activity.
		▪ Demonstrate that you have addressed any issues around safety and risk management.
		▪ Provide evidence of a program plan where appropriate.
		▪ Provide a comprehensive, realistic budget that accurately reflects the activity proposed and demonstrates value for money.
		▪ Outline how you will generate positive media exposure for your project or event, use marketing strategies, and improve the reputation of the region.
		▪ Explain how you will acknowledge the support from Council.

In addition to the grant program criteria outlined, to support an equitable and transparent distribution of funds, Council may also consider the following assessment criteria and factors, in determining whether to support grant applications:

- Number of grant applications received, and funds sought
- Amount of grant funding available within the Community Partnership Grants annual budget
- Distribution and spread of funded activities across the municipality
- Degree of involvement of other stakeholders
- Integration of Council's Fair Access and Inclusion Policy, principles, targeting and supporting all people regardless of age, gender, race, ability, or socio-economic status.
- Previous grants received.
- Potential to develop and maintain project/event sustainability following Council support.

The Community Partnership Grants team conducts eligibility checks based on the Community Partnership Grants Policy and Guidelines. Applications that meet the eligibility criteria continue to the next assessment stage. (Eligibility checks relate to the information in the **Who can apply** and **What we won't fund** sections.)

Approval of Applications

Council will establish an appropriate grant assessment team for each grant round to assess the applications received.

To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process:
- Applications for grant funding under $3,000 will be assessed by two or more Council officers.
- Applications for grant funding above $3,000 up to $15,000 will be assessed by three or more Council officers.
- Assessment outcomes are presented to the Executive Leadership Team.
- CEO presents approved applications to Councillors for noting at Council meeting.

The assessment process (including assessor names, decision comments for each grant and reasons why funding decisions may not align with assessments) will be recorded within SmartyGrants.

All applicants will be informed of their application outcomes, and the successful applications may be announced publicly. Unsuccessful applicants will be offered the opportunity to discuss the application process.

Conflict of Interest

To ensure probity and fairness, all Council officers involved in grant assessment processes are required to declare their interests prior to assessing any applications. All declarations are recorded in SmartyGrants.

In the event of a conflict of interest, the relevant person must decline to participate in any discussion about the application and have this declaration noted as per Council's conflict of interest process. This process ensures that any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is promptly identified and managed appropriately.

To ensure impartiality, Council officers who have assisted with an application, will not be part of the Grants Assessment Team. Councillors are not involved in assessing grants and will only note grants awarded for each funding round.

My application is successful.

Your responsibilities

If you receive a grant from Council, you'll be expected to adhere to the following funding conditions:

- ✓ Spend the money for the purpose outlined in your application and Funding Agreement.

- ✓ Obtain all relevant project and event related permits, approvals, permissions and licenses from the relevant authorities prior to commencement

- ✓ If your plans change (timing / budget / project), you need to submit a variation request to Council, and have it approved, before you make any changes to your project.

- ✓ If you spend the grant differently than your application / Funding Agreement without approval, Council will ask for all grant monies to be returned.

- ✓ Submit an Acquittal that shows how the grant money was used, after completion of funded activity.

- ✓ Return the full amount of the grant to Council if the funded activity is no longer viable and/or cancelled

- ✓ Publicly acknowledge Council's support in any advertisements, flyers or other activities used to promote the project and include Council logo (available to download here - https://www.sthgrampians.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_Id=2869&nc=3)

- ✓ Tell people about the funded activity or project. Please note, evidence of promotion will be required in your acquittal.

Acquittal

It is a condition of accepting a grant that successful applicants submit an online acquittal within sixty days of completion date of each funded project.

Recipients who have an outstanding funding acquittal for a grant, and do not have an approved variation in place, may be ineligible for funding in future grant rounds until the outstanding acquittal is completed.

In general, acquittal reports may request (but are not limited to):

- A summary of the activity undertaken

- How the project achieved its objectives

- An evaluation including attendance figures, community impacts and outcomes

- Participant feedback received

- What challenges were encountered and how they were overcome

- Were there any unanticipated benefits

- Any future plans related or as a result

- Financial documentation showing actual expenditure

- Supporting documentation, including publicity and promotional materials, items produced with Council's logo, reviews, photos etc.

- Applicant's feedback on the grant program.

Variations

Any change to the funded projects or funding amounts will require a formal variation request by Council. This request will need to be submitted online via SmartyGrants and will be assessed and approved by the assessment panel. Applicants should not make changes to projects without receiving approval in writing from Council. Failure to comply with this process may render applicants ineligible for future funding.

Definitions & Abbreviations

TERM	MEANING
ABN	Australian Business Number
Acquittal	A reporting process to ensure that all funds have been fully expended for the purpose for which the funds were initially granted.
Auspice/Auspicing Body	An incorporated organisation that manages a grant on behalf of an unincorporated entity. An auspicing body is responsible for managing the funds and providing a financial report (acquittal) on the completion of a project.
Community Group/Organisation	A community group or organisation is defined for the purposes of the Community Grants Program as a not-for-profit group of people formed for a common purpose. It includes incorporated associations and similar legal entities. Specific eligibility requirements for applicants are included within grant guidelines.
Conflict of Interest	A conflict of interest occurs if a member of the grant assessment panel has something to personally gain from the grant application. It also extends to providing family and close friends with preference.
Incorporated Association	A not-for-profit organisation that is legally recognised to hold assets and be involved in legal action. This will generally be under the Associations Incorporations Reform Act 2012, as a company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act 2001 or as a non-distributing co-operative under the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013.
GST	Goods and Services Tax
Public Liability Insurance	A public liability insurance policy is necessary for an organisation to protect itself against claims of negligence made by third parties in relation to injury or property damage arising from the organisation's operations.

Grant Categories Explained

Arts and Culture Development Grants

Contact: Community Engagement Coordinator

Funding designed to assist groups or individuals realise creative projects. This could include supporting partnerships between creative practitioners and community groups and assist both to realise projects that:

• Enliven public places and spaces;
• Are innovative, creative and responsive to the needs of the community;
• Reflect the region's identity and tell our stories to residents and visitors; and
• Cultivate and support the creative sector to grow and thrive.

Community Infrastructure Grants

Contact: Coordinator Recreation Services

Funding designed to assist groups to enhance, improve, or renew physical assets.

This could include:

• Assisting in the provision of new facilities;
• The extension or modification of existing facilities;
• The purchase of equipment or major maintenance to existing facilities which is considered by Council to be of a capital nature.

Community Strengthening Grants

Contact: Community Engagement Coordinator

Funding designed to assist groups to enhance, improve or renew social assets. This could include:

• Meet a community need and make the community a better place to live;
• Provide benefits and opportunities for people in the community to build skills – take part on social, recreation and educational activities;
• Supporting initiatives that build or strengthen community connections, ensure social inclusion and increase participation in the community.
• Improve health and wellbeing and / or improve sense of community;
• Initiatives can be whole of community or only for a targeted group (eg. Youth, seniors).

Environmental Sustainability Grants

Contact: Sustainable Community Lead

Funding designed to assist groups to protect or enhance the natural environment.

This includes:

• Supporting the community to develop and promote projects which contribute toward environmental or sustainability objectives of the Council Plan, Sustainability Strategy 2010-20 or other relevant Council plans or strategies.

Heritage Grants

Contact: Planning Administration Officer

Funding designed to assist in maintaining, documenting or restoring items of historical significance with preference given to those in the public realm and in particular the commercial precincts of the Shire's townships.

This could include:

• Promote the care and conservation of our heritage places / objects by assisting with the maintenance, restoration and documenting of these places / objects which help to tell the stories of the Shire; and
• Restoration of commercial retail precincts to ensure compliance with the Heritage register and planning controls.

Tourism & Events Grants

Contact: Visitor Experience Officer

Funding designed to assist groups to develop, enhance, or promote a new or growing event or tourism product. Event funding is designed to provide seed funding for new projects, or to fund innovative elements of events that will have an economic benefit to the region.

Projects could include:

• Development of contemporary marketing collateral, websites, visual content or printed materials;
• Targeted advertising campaigns and strategic promotional activities;
• Items that contribute to professionalising the event e.g Venue hire, Equipment hire or signage; and
• Additional elements of an event which will engage new audiences.
• Funding cannot be used for operational or recurrent costs, donations, prize money or trophies.

For more information – contact our Communications and Engagement Team

Phone (03) 5573 0444

Visit our website at www.sthgrampians.vic.gov.au

Email communitygrants@sthgrampians.vic.gov.au