Grant Writing Workshop

2026

Sunshine Coast
COUNCIL

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the traditional Country of the Kabi Kabi Peoples and the Jinibara Peoples of the coastal plains and the hinterlands of the Sunshine Coast and recognize that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Agenda

What will we cover today?

- Understanding grants
- Project Planning
- Sunshine Coast Council Major and Minor Grants Program
- What's included in an application form
- The assessment process
- Questions

Understanding Grants

Use grants to fund YOUR priority projects

Purpose of Grants:
- Deliver on Funder's priorities
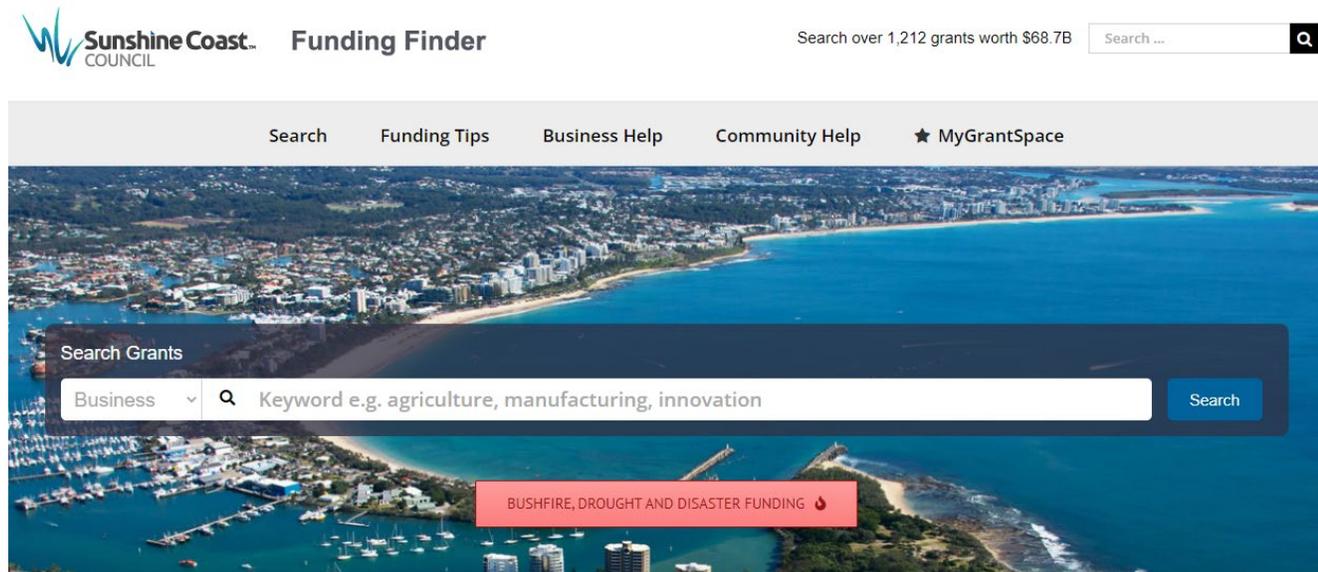- Meet an identified community need

Get to know your Funder:
- GUIDELINES, GUIDELINES, GUIDELINES!
- Criteria and Eligibility
- Application Form
- Timing
- Talk to them

1 Project Planning

2 Find aligned funding opportunities

3 The Application

4 Assessment / Notification

If unsuccessful, seek feedback

5 Project delivery

6 Financial acquittal & report outcomes

Finding Funding Sources

Grant Guru (Funding Finder):

Local Funders:

- Gambling Community Benefit Fund, Community Banks such as Bendigo & Heritage, Unity Water.

Other forms of Funding:

- Sponsorship, Donations, Crowdfunding, Membership Fees, Special Events, Merchandising, Fundraising.

Project Planning

Project planning is important as it demonstrates clear goals, timelines, and resource allocation, ensuring the project is feasible and funders can trust its successful delivery.

- **What:** Define the project and the need and benefits it will deliver.
- **When:** Establish a clear and realistic timeline.
- **Where:** Identify a suitable location.
- **Who:** Identify the community members, volunteers and other organisations that are involved.
- **How:** Explain how will you carry out the project ensuring inclusive participation.

Things you might need to consider..

- **Equipment Projects:** Plan for storage, maintenance, and insurance.
- **Infrastructure Projects:** Check permits, approvals, and cost estimates.
- **Community Events:** Address permits, logistics, insurance and safety requirements. Event date must be AFTER notification period.

Sunshine Coast Council Funding Programs

Councillor Discretionary Funding

Arts Funding

Community Partnership Funding

Heritage Levy

Sports Field Maintenance Funding

Environment Levy Grants and Partnerships

Community Grants Program

Major and Minor Grants

- Support community organisations to deliver **projects, activities and events** that respond to community need, and benefit the region.

- Applications for Major and Minor grants can be submitted under one of the following six categories:
    • Community Development
    • Community Facilities
    • Creative Development
    • Cultural Heritage
    • Economic Development
    • Sport and Recreation

- Project must align with the selected category's priorities.

- Applicants can submit only one grant application per round.

Key dates:
    • Two Major Grant Rounds per year: January and August
    • One Minor Grant Round per year: June 2026

Minor Grant
Funding up to
$3000

Major Grant
Funding up to
$15,000 for projects,
activities and events
**$30,000** for infrastructure
projects

Eligibility

Who can apply:

- Not-for-profit community organisations that are a legal entity with not-for-profit status **or** are registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC).

Who <u>cannot</u> apply:

- Government entities
- Businesses
- Individuals
- School Parent and Citizens' (P&C) associations
- Educational, religious or medical organisations, when applying for their core business activities

Talk to us about **auspicing** if you are a community group without an official not for-profit (NFP) status.
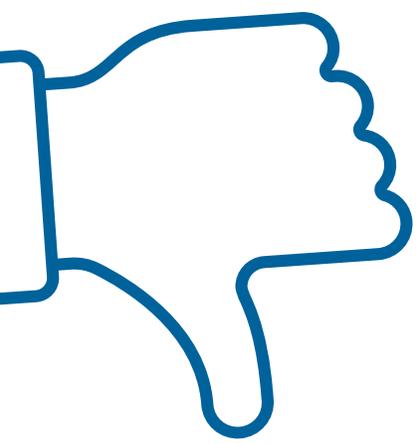
Projects Not Eligible for Funding

- Ongoing operational or recurrent costs including salaries, rent, fuel
- Activities that have already started before your grant application is submitted
- The core business of educational, religious or medical organisations
- Donations, prize money, prizes or trophies
- Development of privately-owned facilities
- Debt repayment
- Political activities

- Projects run solely for commercial profit
- Items that are already included in another Council grant application
- Projects run solely for fundraising purposes, without broader community benefit
- School and church fetes
- Celebration or competition events where attendance is limited to individual organisations or their members
- Judging or adjudication fees, or uniforms for events
- Catering, hospitality, food and beverages for events

Categories

Community Development

Community Facilities

Creative Development

Cultural Heritage

Economic Development

Sport and Recreation

Community Development

This category supports community-led projects, activities and events that contribute to an inclusive community

What is typically funded in this category?

- Community event costs such as staging, audio visual, performers or marketing
- Website development for community websites
- First Aid training for volunteers
- Volunteer resources i.e. laptop or equipment for an identified project
- Consultant fees for strategic planning

Community Facilities

This category supports projects that develop, maintain or improve buildings or land, ensuring safe, accessible and inclusive community facilities.

Choose this category if your project involves planning or undertaking work on buildings or land

What is typically funded in this category?

- Facility improvements (such as extensions, renovations, accessibility ramps, amenities)
- Facility repairs and maintenance (such as painting, guttering, window replacement)
- Permanent installations (such as solar panels, air conditioning, signage)
- New infrastructure (such as sheds, shade, fences)
- Land improvements (such as drainage, irrigation, landscaping)
- Costs associated with planning of projects for permanent works.

Creative Development

This category supports **projects, activities and events** that contribute to **Council's Creative Arts Plan vision**.

Think bold, authentic, sustainable, inclusive and connected.

What is typically funded in this category?

- Programs or events to activate a creative space
- Creative experiences that engage the broader community
- Free or low-cost arts festivals, music concerts or theatre performances
- Consultant fees for strategic plan for a creative group

Cultural Heritage

This category supports projects, activities and events that document, conserve, promote and make accessible the region's heritage and social history in alignment with Council's Heritage Plan outcomes of knowledge, conservation, support, communication, and advocacy.

What is typically funded in this category?

- Archiving projects or artefacts significant to the region
- Photo exhibitions to celebrate a club's centenary
- Restoration of items with heritage significance
- Free or low-cost cultural heritage celebrations with local relevance.

Economic Development

This category supports projects, activities and events that improve the economic performance and prosperity of the Sunshine Coast or a local community. Recipients must be not-for-profit community organisations.

What is typically funded in this category?

- Buy local campaigns
- Networking opportunities that promote shared learning and strengthen connections between businesses
- Industry sector development activities
- Projects that will build business capability
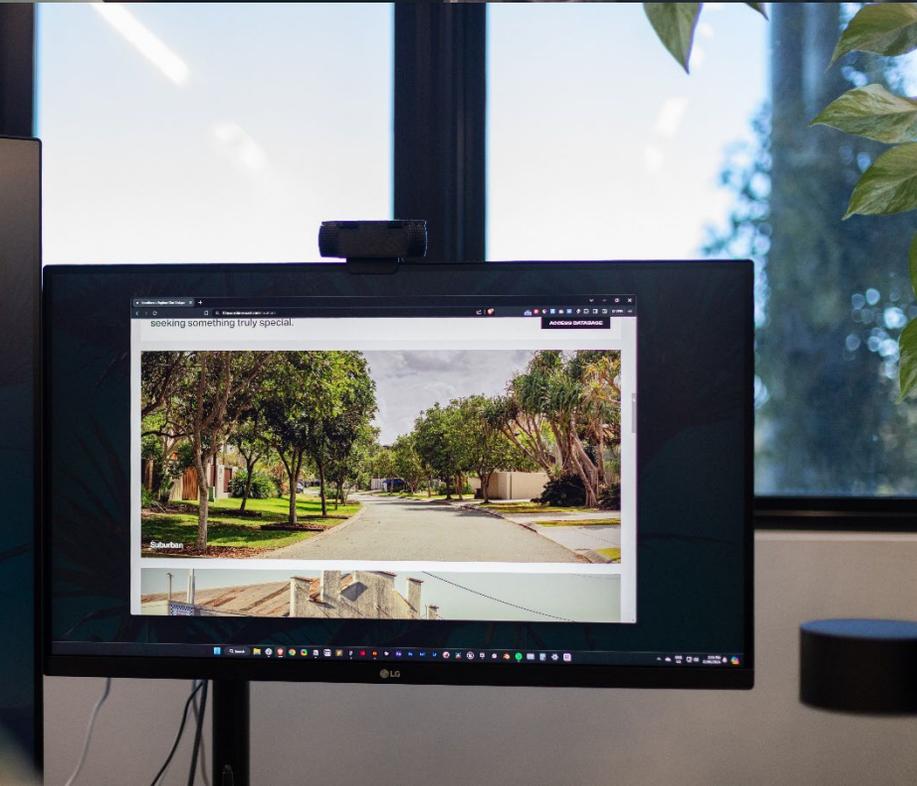
Sport and Recreation

This category supports projects, activities and events that promote participation in sport and recreational pursuits across the Sunshine Coast.

What is typically funded in this category?

- New equipment to meet growing demand within a club
- "Come and Try" events that encourage community involvement and new participation
- Equipment purchases or projects that provide access for all abilities

Activity 1: Which Category?

Community Development

Community Facilities

Creative Development

Cultural Heritage

Economic Development

Sport and Recreation

Application Form

1. Project Description:

Describe your project or event - what are you going to do?

- What, When, Where, who, How
- Be concise - use language that is clear and easy to understand
- Try and keep to 250 words or less
- Don't leave the panel with questions

2. Need and Benefit:

- Why do you think this project, activity or event is worthwhile?
- Why is this needed and who will benefit?

3. Supporting Documentation:

- Provide evidence – show the need and benefit
- Include any approvals, permits or permissions
- Add letters of support from other organisations or community members that are involved or who will directly benefit from the project

4. Budget:

- Include a complete and balanced project budget *(income vs expenditure)*
- Keep it realistic
- Make sure costs are eligible
- Include any co-funding that may be required
- Quotes for single items over $500

Project Description

Example 1:

The project involves refurbishing the existing change rooms at ABC Football Club on Caloundra Road.

The current facilities are worn and outdated, creating several health and safety concerns that must be addressed.

The refurbishment will include:

- Waterproofing and re-tiling with anti-mould protection
- Upgrading showers and toilets with new fixtures and privacy screens
- Repairing and repainting walls with moisture-resistant finishes

All works will be completed by a licensed contractor. Approvals have been secured, and construction is scheduled to commence in May 2026.

Example 2:

ABC Football Club is a non-profit community organisation dedicated to promoting and encouraging active participation in football at all levels—players, coaches, and referees.

Founded in 1982 with just five players, we have grown to over 80 members. Our goal is to keep people of all ages fit and active by promoting a healthy lifestyle through sport and recreation.

This project is essential as it will help us attract new members and strengthen our long-term sustainability. We are a community-minded club that regularly donates proceeds from fundraising activities to worthwhile local causes.

Example 3:

Our project is to upgrade the change rooms at our club, which are old and ugly.

Need and Benefit

Why do you think this project, activity or event is worthwhile? Why is this needed and who will benefit?

NEED:

The changerooms haven't been updated since the early 1980s and are now old and worn. Visiting teams often complain about their condition.

There are holes in the walls, mould in some areas, and poor drainage. Tiles are coming off, the concrete floor is slippery, and the wet areas aren't properly waterproofed. Some taps are missing, and there are no shower screens for privacy.

With our growing membership and upcoming regional football carnivals, these issues need to be addressed.

BENEFIT:

Upgrading the changerooms will make them safer and more comfortable for players and visitors. Fixing plumbing and drainage will improve hygiene, and adding shower screens will give players with more comfort and privacy.

Better facilities will help grow our membership and attract more visiting teams, especially during training, game days, and regional carnivals.

Budget

Sample Project Details and Budget

Project: Facility Upgrade

Total program cost **$73,600**

Council grant request **$18,000**

Income (Sample only)	$	Expenditure (Sample only)	$
Council grant	18,000	Electrical services	6,000
State government Grant	36,000	Building contractor	35,000
Own funds	9,000	Plumbing	8,000
Sponsorship	5,000	Building materials	12,200
Donation	2,000	Carpentry labour	5,000
Discount from suppliers	1,200	Plastering	5,000
Volunteer labour (55.5 hrs @ $43.30 per hr)	2,400	In-kind Labour	2,400
Total	**$73,600**	**Total**	**$73,600**

Co-Funding

Council cannot be the sole funder of every project. Depending on the amount requested, funds from other sources may be required.

Funding Request	Minimum Co-Funding Requirement	Volunteer Hours
Up to $7500	Not required	N/A
$7501 - $15,000	50% of total project cost	Up to 50% of co-funding (excluding Community Facilities Category)
$15,001 to $30,000	75% of total project cost	Up to 20% of co-funding

Volunteer hours are valued at **$43.30ph**

Other funding sources can include applicants own funds, other grants, donations, sponsorship, in-kind support.

Assessment Criteria and Process

Assessment Criteria:

- Demonstrated need for the project/activity
- Benefit to the people of the Sunshine Coast Local Government area
- Evidence of consultation and community partnerships
- Strength of alignment with Council's priorities
- Capacity of applicant to successfully complete project
- Balanced, realistic and complete project budget
- Evidence of any permits or approvals required to undertake project.

Assessment Process:

1. **Pre-assessment –** *checking eligibility*

2. **Panel Assessment -** *Grants are assessed by panels, which include council staff experienced in each category.*

3. **CEO Endorsement**

After Notification

What you need to do:
- Accept and complete a Funding Agreement
- Ensure to meet any funding agreement conditions
- Acknowledge council's support
- Collect information and receipts to successfully acquit your grant

Acquittal includes:
- All receipts to accurately account for spending
- Your stories
- Outputs, outcomes, lessons learned

If you do not acquit?
- If you are successful in a future grant application, you will not receive the funding until you have met all your acquittals

Top 10 Grant Writing Tips

1. Develop a project plan – *why is this needed and how will you get there*

2. Research – *what's required, does it need consent? Find evidence to support the need and benefit.*

3. Identify potential funding sources – *grants, sponsorship, fundraising etc*

4. Know your funder – *read guidelines and understand their priorities*

5. Be clear and concise – *use clear language, be direct, and stay relevant, use AI*

6. Be a great communicator – *standout, show you can do it, and do not assume the panel know anything.*

7. Support your application – *attach evidence*

8. Prepare a detailed and accurate budget

9. Don't leave it to last minute!

10. If unsuccessful, get feedback.

Thank you

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