

Councillor Discretionary Funding Program Operational Guidelines

Updated September 2023

The Councillor Discretionary Funding Program allows for funds to be allocated at the councillor's discretion to not-for-profit community organisations for community purposes in a way that is consistent with Council's Community Grants policy.

These operational guidelines should be read in conjunction with council's [Community Grants Policy](#) which guide eligibility criteria and administration of the program.

Program Details

The program is open all year, dependent on funding availability. Applications can be lodged at any time.

- Applications of a localised nature (local community benefit) can be submitted to the divisional Councillor/s where the community organisation is located or where there will be most benefit.
- Applications which have broader regional community benefits (within the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area) may be submitted to the Mayor.

Applicants must liaise with the Councillor's Support Officer or Mayoral Support Officer prior to lodging an application. Contact details are provided on council's [website](#).

Who can apply?

Community organisations are eligible if they meet all the following criteria:

- are a legal entity with not-for-profit status or are registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (**ACNC**)*
- operate within the Sunshine Coast local government area or can demonstrate the project or program will benefit residents of the Sunshine Coast local government area

- have appropriate insurance and adhere to sound workplace health and safety practices
- are able to demonstrate financial viability
- have met acquittal conditions for previous council grants, and
- have no debt to council, or have entered into scheduled payment arrangements with council which are being met.

*If a community organisation is not a legal entity, or registered with the ACNC, the application must be auspiced and administered by such a group, with a like purpose.

Who cannot apply?

- Government agencies or departments of local, state or federal government*
- Educational, religious or medical organisations, where the application is for the organisation's core business
- Businesses
- Individuals

* Note: Queensland state school Parent and Citizens' (P&C) associations are statutory bodies and therefore not eligible

Eligible Projects / Programs

Applications must:

- demonstrate a community purpose
- align with council's Corporate Plan, policies and priorities
- adhere to the specific terms and conditions of this funding program.

Projects not eligible for funding

- the development of privately owned facilities
- projects run solely for commercial profit
- activities that have begun prior to a grant application being submitted
- payment of debt
- political activities
- ongoing operational or recurrent costs including salaries, rent, fuel
- donations, prize money, gifts or prizes
- items included in another council grant application

Availability Notice

A detailed availability notice will be made public within 20 business days of Council adopting the budget for a financial year.

Application

Applicants must liaise with the Councillor's Support Officer or Mayoral Support Officer prior to lodging an online application.

You can look up your division [here](#).

Where the project benefits more than one division, and more than one councillor has agreed to fund a project, a separate application form must be submitted to each councillor.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining all appropriate permits, approvals, insurance etc.

The delivery of the Councillor Discretionary Funding Program is subject to annual budget allocations and funding availability.

Evidence

Quotes are required with applications for all items over \$500 and must be included with the application.

Where projects involve works on land or buildings, evidence of owner's consent is required.

Assessment

Application outcome will be determined by the mayor and/or councillor/s.

Part funding may be offered.

Notification

Applicants will be notified of the application outcome via email, as soon as practicable.

Councillors will give a detailed notice to council's CEO within 7 business days of making an allocation of discretionary funds.

Outcomes will be published on council's website within 7 business days of the CEO receiving a notice from the councillor.

Information published on the website will include:

- organisation name
- amount allocated
- date allocated
- purpose
- the way in which the amount was allocated

Annual Report

Council's annual report will contain details relating to the budgeting and allocation of discretionary funds (as required by legislation).

Requirements of Successful Applicants

Acknowledgment

Applicants are required to publicly acknowledge council's support. The level of acknowledgement may range from media statements and speeches to displaying signage, and is determined by the amount funded – this is outlined in the [Acknowledgement Guidelines](#).

Delivering your project

The project or event is to be conducted as specified in the application and funds must be spent on the approved items unless a variation has been granted. In the unlikely event that applicants require a change to their project due to unforeseen circumstances, a written request for a variation should be emailed to grants@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au seeking approval. This approval must be obtained prior to activities being undertaken.

Acquittal

Once the project has been completed, applicants are required to complete an online acquittal form detailing the outcome of their project and how they have expended the funds

Copies of invoices or receipts are to be included with the acquittal as evidence of expenditure and should match the approved items. Acquittals are due within eight weeks of project completion.

A refund of grant funds may be requested when expenditure falls short of the funding amount, or if funds are spent on items not listed on the application budget.

Payment

Payment is made via electronic funds transfer to the bank account provided in the application and is claimed by completing and submitting the online Funding Agreement form. A link to this form will be provided in the notification email. In some instances, there may be additional funding conditions that need to be met before payment can be made.

Funds must be claimed within three months of notification, except where an extension has been granted.

Applicant Support

Councillor Support Officers and Council's Grants Officers can help community organisations develop their project and online application. For more information, contact your local Councillor's Support Officer, or council's grants team on 5420 8616 or grants@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au.

Note: Office hours are 8.30 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

If you do not have your own computer, you can access a computer at any of council's libraries at no cost.

If you have difficulty speaking English, contact council's Customer Service Centre on (07) 5475 7272 to organise an interpreter to assist you.