



Mayor's Community Benefit Fund Program (Final Round)

GUIDELINES 2024/25

Overview

Intent / Purpose

Objectives of the Mayor's Community Benefit Fund

The objectives of the program are to:-

1. Respond to needs beneficial to the community:-
 - a. Directly or indirectly providing for the relief of poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, disability or helplessness to people in the community;
 - b. Directly or indirectly providing relief to people in necessitous circumstances; and
 - c. Planning for and assisting underprivileged or neglected children and families, people who are unemployed, single parents, people with a disability, the sick, the infirm, the aged and others in need of assistance.
2. Assist community organisations and groups in order to pursue charitable purposes and/or other activities beneficial to the community;
3. Emergency support situations, including essential food items, emergency accommodation and/or repairs for life threatening situations; and
4. Do anything incidental or helpful to either of the above.

Grants available

Eligible organisations can apply for funding of up to \$5,000 cash. Maximum 1 application per group will be funded, unless there is surplus funds available. Should this occur organisations will be invited to submit additional applications for consideration.

Total Pool of Funding Program (Final Round)	Grant Available (Max 1 Grant per Organisation)
\$66,001.48	\$5,000

If an applicant does not have access to a computer, Council libraries can provide access to a computer and the internet and some initial guidance to enable access to the application form.

An unsuccessful application does not mean that the project or activity is not worthy of support.

Logistics

Proposed grant round dates.

Applications open at 12:01am on the opening date and close at 3:00pm on the closing date.

Timing	Eligible Project Start and End Dates	Estimated Advice of Outcome
Opens 1 October 2024 Closes 31 October 2024	Start 1 December 2024 30 April 2025	30 November 2024

Projects and activities are to be completed before the 30 April, 2025 (unless a variation has been sought from and approved by Council).

'Should a variation be required, please contact Council's Grants Team who will add a Request for Variation form to be added against the application in the SmartyGrants application site.

Assistance, Assessment and Approval Responsibilities

Council's Grants team is available to provide general advice and guidance to local groups when developing funding applications. It should be noted however that there is no capacity for Council Officers to write and submit applications on behalf of local groups.

Applications will be assessed for applicant and project eligibility by Council's Grants Team. Initial assessment of project suitability and organisational capacity to deliver will be undertaken by Council's Grants Coordinator. Council's Community Development and Engagement Team will be consulted during the assessment process for input on project relevance to adopted Community Plans and existing work within individual communities or groups of communities across the region. Feedback from other Council Departments will be sought as appropriate.

Applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel appointed for the program, which in this instance will be the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

The panel will assess applications shortly after the grant round closes and make recommendations. The approval process for applications recommended by the Assessment Panel will be decided by Council. Successful applicants will be notified as soon as practical after the finalisation of the assessment and decision processes.

The Mayor's Community Benefit Fund has been discontinued by Council resolution in April, 2023, at this stage there will be no future funding rounds available.

Eligibility

Who can apply?

Incorporated not-for-profit community organisations are eligible to apply for this Grant program provided they meet the following criteria:

- The organisation:
 - Is based within the Fraser Coast local government area or is delivering a project within the Fraser Coast local government area;
 - Is a legal not-for-profit entity, complying with all incorporation requirements of the State and Commonwealth as at the closing date for the grant program;
 - Has appropriate insurances;
 - Has met all reporting and acquittal conditions for any previous Council grants;
 - Has no debt to Council outside standard trading terms or has entered into scheduled payment arrangements with Council that is being adhered to.

If a community group is not incorporated and wants to apply for a Grant, the group is able to do so provided that the application is auspiced and administered by an eligible incorporated not-for-profit community organisation that is willing and able to accept legal and financial responsibility for the grant.

Please contact Council's Grants Team for advice or assistance in identifying a suitable auspice organisation.

Who cannot apply?

- Government agencies or departments of local, state or federal government; or
- Commercial businesses and enterprises; or
- Individuals; or
- Not for profit community organisations with a liquor-licensed supporters / associated club, gaming licence or that commercially trades seven days a; or
- Organisations who have not provided requested reporting or Outcome Reports as required by any Council-provided grant or sponsorship.

Council will not consider applications that:

- Are incomplete or applications that do not include all the required supporting documentation
- Are for retrospective funding for events or projects
- Do not comply with any applicable legislative requirements;
- Are for projects or activities that provide any ongoing financial or in-kind commitment for Fraser Coast Regional Council, unless agreed to by Council. (e.g. **ongoing and regular** maintenance of equipment, grounds works or structures located on Council Property)
- Are for fundraising activities where the profits are directed to one or more other local organisations
- Do not utilise local (Fraser Coast) businesses or services. Approval to use out-of-region suppliers must be sought before the time of application. Evidence to support this request must be provided.

Selection Criteria to be addressed by applicants

- Demonstrated commitment aligning with the program objectives - relief of poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, disability or helplessness to people in the community from the planned activity or project
- Clear explanation of the Project need including how this need was identified
- Explanation of how the grant funds are to be spent and proportion that is local expenditure
- Contribution of the applicant organisation to the proposed Project or Event (including in-kind contributions)

Application Requirements

All applications will require the following information:

- Incorporation Number; and
- ABN Number; and
- Latest Audited Financial Statement or Balance Sheet that is provided to Office of Fair Trading that shows organisational solvency; and
- Bank account verification (e.g. bank statement identifying bank account name and number); and

- Information on the project to be undertaken. Outline of project need and the community benefit from the project. How the need was identified and expected outcomes of the project and how these will be measured; and
- Completion of a Budget Table; and
- In order to demonstrate value for money 2 quotes from different suppliers will be required for funding requested amounts of \$1,000 or more. 1 Quote required for funded requested amounts of under \$1,000. **Note:** If local suppliers are not used, a request to use non-local suppliers must be approved prior to application lodgement. Evidence of attempts to secure local suppliers must be included; and
- Land Owners Consent if applicable (includes leased properties); and
- Evidence of approval from Management Committee to lodge the Grant Application in the form of a letter from organisation signed by 2 members of Committee or a copy of minutes of management committee meeting approving grant application or flying minute of executive approving application; and
- Details of how you will acknowledge Council support.
- For all successful projects, the applicant/organisation must enter into a Funding Agreement with Council for the approved project and provide an invoice to Council for the approved grant amount.

Application Process

Council will publicise availability of its grants programs on Council's website and social media sites and by direct email to individuals/organisations listed on the Grants Distribution list.

Council will undertake ongoing engagement and capacity building with the community, assisting applicants to identify and develop projects.

Council's grant programs are based on-line and applications must be submitted through the SmartyGrants portal.

The application form can be previewed prior to commencement of the application, and a pdf file can be printed from the final (review) page once an application has been commenced.

The online form is the only method for submitting an application.

If an applicant does not have access to a computer, Council libraries can provide access to a computer and the internet and some initial guidance to enable access to the application form. If this process presents challenges for your Organisation please contact Council's Grants Team for advice.

Once an application is started, any number of people within the organisation can work on the application using the same login and password (only one person can be logged in at a time).

Council officers are available to provide advice to community organisations. They can assist organisations to identify additional and/or alternative sources of funding relevant to their project or activity.

For help with the questions within the application form, assistance can be provided by Council's Grants Team and Community Development and Engagement Team. Contact information is contained within the application form.

Quotes or qualified estimates for project costs must be submitted with the application.

When an application is submitted, the applicant will receive an email confirming lodgement and a copy of the submitted application for the organisation's records. If this email is not received, it means that the application was not successfully lodged. Please contact the Grants Team for advice.

Approval Process and Payments

Applications will initially be assessed by the Grants Officer to confirm organisational and project eligibility.

If the grant round has not yet closed, and errors are identified, the Grants Officer will endeavour to work with the applicant to correct the application. Any amendments must be undertaken within the open application status of the Grant Application Round.

After the Grant Round closes, the Assessment Panel will undertake assessment of applications.

The Assessment Panel makes recommendations for project grant funding.

In assessing the grants, the panel will:

- Ensure public monies are allocated in a fair and equitable way
- Ensure the best possible value for money

Panel recommendations will be approved utilising a process to be determined by Council.

Following the finalisation of the assessment approvals process, successful applicants will be notified by email and provided with a funding agreement for signing.

The agreement must be returned within 90 days of the 'advice of funding' to Council with a valid invoice from the applicant Organisation for the grant amount.

Failure to return within this time could result in cancellation of the offer of funding.

In some instances there may be specific Conditions of Funding that need to be met before payment can be made.

Where the application is auspiced, the invoice will need to be from the auspice organisation.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and will be provided an opportunity to seek feedback from Council's Grants Team on how they can strengthen future applications.

Grant Acquittal Requirements and Conditions

All successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Council and acquit funds within the allocated timeframes.

Project Outcome reports (Acquittal) will be available to successful applicants online through the SmartyGrants portal.

All questions must be completed on the acquittal form and evidence supplied including:

- receipts;
- photographs of activities;
- proof of Council acknowledgement (logo placement on flyers, advertisements, social media etc.)

Successful applicants will be required to actively and publicly acknowledge Council's support. The level of acknowledgement will be determined by the amount funded and will be outlined in the funding agreement.

All projects must be completed within timeframe specified within this Guideline document.

Unspent grant funds must be returned to Council within 60 days of the project completion.

Changes must not be made to the approved project or activity without the prior agreement of Council. Council will endeavour to approve changes where the level of community benefit is maintained as per the application.

Any purchases associated with the project must be transacted with a Fraser Coast business where possible. Approval must be sought for the use of out of region contractors indicating reasons.

Examples of eligible projects and activities

- Food hampers for those experiencing poverty or financial distress
- Sanitary items for homeless
- Clothing and school items for underprivileged or neglected children and families
- Community meal event targeted to those experiencing homelessness and/or poverty
- Accommodation for those experiencing homelessness
- Other projects/initiatives that can be demonstrated to align with the objectives of the funding program.

Examples of in-eligible expenditure

- Core operational funding costs
- Repairs or maintenance to buildings or assets that form part of an Organisation's responsibilities in a lease agreement with Council
- Activities undertaken or committed to purchase before the organisation is notified in writing their application is successful
- Repayment of debts and loans
- Overseas travel costs
- Funding for a staff or member social event
- Purchase of Alcohol.
- Projects or activities that provide an ongoing financial or in-kind commitment for Fraser Coast Regional Council unless agreed to by Council. (e.g. **ongoing and regular** maintenance of equipment, grounds works or structures located on Council Property)
- Gifts or prizes in the form of cash, gift card or goods and services
- Donations to and sponsorship of other groups
- Grant writer fees and associated costs are ineligible for funding. Associated costs include project management fees (including payment for managing the construction of facility improvements and/or the purchase of funded items)