
Community Grants Policy

CONTROL:

Policy Type:	Community
Authorised by:	Council
Head of Power:	Local Government Regulation 2012 - Section 195
Responsible Officer:	Tourism and Events Manager
Adopted / Approved:	March 2019
Last Reviewed:	February 2019
Review:	February 2021
Version:	4

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE:

This policy demonstrates and outlines Council's role in supporting the community. Community grants extend the community's capability to conduct activities, create opportunities for community capacity building, develop and maintain sustainable community infrastructure and build strong partnerships for community benefit.

This policy also assists Councillors and Council employees to achieve consistency in corporate processes and procedures when developing, assessing, monitoring, acquitting and evaluating grants.

This policy meets Council's statutory requirement to provide a clear process for allocating Council support (cash and in-kind) under the Community Grants Program.

1.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES:

To provide a merit based framework for applicants and assessors that enables council to allocate support to community projects.

1.3 COMMENCEMENT OF POLICY:

This Policy will commence on adoption. It replaces all other specific community grant policies of Council (whether written or not) including *Donations & Grants to Community Organisations*.

1.4 SCOPE:

This Policy relates to all expenditure by Council to eligible applicants, in the form of cash or in-kind support, through the Community Grants Program.

2. POLICY

2.1 CONTEXT:

Council is required under Section 195 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* to adopt a Community Grants Policy. Community grants provide a mechanism by which Council can allocate funding to eligible applicants for projects and purposes which are in the public interest and provide local community benefit within Diamantina Shire.

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Community Grants may include funds managed by Council on behalf of another organisation or agency. Council support through this program will have clear and accountable criteria, monetary value, and reporting requirements.

2.2 POLICY STATEMENT:

Council will provide support to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria stated, for projects which are in the public interest, and provide local community benefit within Diamantina Shire.

3. STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 FUNDING CATEGORIES

Funding through Councils Community Grants program is divided into the following categories;

3.1.1 Cash Grants

- Competitive funding available for a specific project that will have a significant positive impact to the Diamantina Shire. The amount of funding available in this category is partly determined by the external funding partners and Council's Budget allocation.

3.1.2 In-kind support

- An offer of support for a specific project, calculated based on Council's fees and charges and plant hire charges. The amount of funding available in this category is determined in Councils budget.

3.2 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

An eligible applicant must operate within the Diamantina Shire or be able to demonstrate that the project is in the public interest, and provide local community benefit within Diamantina Shire. Applicants may be individuals, businesses or not for profit organisations.

An individual, business or unincorporated not for profit organisation can only apply for a grant provided that the application is auspiced and administered by an incorporated not for profit community organisation. An incorporated not for profit organisation may auspice one or more individuals or community groups which are not incorporated. The auspicing organisation can also lodge applications on its own behalf.

All applicants must:

- Demonstrate that the grant will be used for a purpose in the public interest,
- Have met all acquittal conditions of previous Council grants,
- Have no debt to Council, and
- Be financially viable.

3.3 PROJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for funding a project must:

- Not include retrospective funding or cost already incurred at the time of application,
- Have the approval of the landholder,

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- Have necessary insurances, approvals and licences,
- Not bring the Council into disrepute,
- Include cofounding contributions or other external funding,
- Be in the public interest,
- Not have solely a religious or political purpose, and
- Not be primarily for commercial benefit.

3.4 INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated Council will not approve funding for:

- Prize money,
- Trophies,
- Any costs for which a receipt cannot be provided,
- General operating costs,
- Interstate or international travel costs,
- Vehicles and related costs,
- Alcohol,
- Any goods for resale (such as merchandise), and
- Any clothing that will be will become the property individuals.

3.5 FUNDING ROUNDS

- 3.5.1** The opportunity to apply for grants will be available once a year, and will be promoted through Social Media, Community Newsletter and Community email groups. Funding will be advertised in February, applicants will be advised of the outcome by the end of April.
- 3.5.2** Consideration will also be given to grants outside of the advertised grant round. This will be on a case by case basis and there is no guarantee that there will be funds available. Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply during the advertised grant period.

3.6 APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

The Community Grants program is a competitive application process. The process for awarding grants will be assessed on a merit basis against eligibility and assessment criteria. Assessment criteria may change to meet the needs of the program. Assessment Criteria will be based on an examination of:

- Evaluation of previous years grants program effectiveness,
- Current partnership funding agreements,
- Council's corporate objectives and strategies,
- Arising trends and issues in the community,
- Gaps in existing service provision within the community, and
- The amount of funding available for disbursement.

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The Diamantina Shire receives more funding applications than it can support. Therefore, successful applications are those that best respond to the assessment criteria.

4. Grant applications

The Community Grants Application must be completed fully with copies of required certificates and documents as stated in the Application Form. Only applications received on the current Community Grants Application Form will be accepted.

Applications will be registered in Council's Records Management System and an acknowledgement will be sent to the applicant on receipt.

5. Grant allocations

Council will annually apportion for that financial year the amount for Community Grants available. Community Grants will be provided in an open and equitable manner. No applicant can be guaranteed funding nor can any applicant be guaranteed to receive the full amount requested.

Applicants will be advised of the application outcome as soon as practicable following approval. Grant allocations will be fully paid on receipt of a signed funding agreement.

The grant recipient must obtain all appropriate insurance covers, permits/approvals etc. relating to the project or service.

6. Grant Acquittal

Recipients of community grants are required to provide an acquittal report. An acquittal form will be issued with Councils payment and will request the applicant to return the form within 30 days of the completion date. The acquittal form will require proof of payment, copies of invoices or other documentary evidence.

No further funding can be applied for until the money is fully acquitted or remaining funds returned to Council. If any project runs over budget, Council is not responsible in any way for meeting the shortfall.

7. REFERENCE AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

7.1 DEFINITIONS:

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions shall apply:

Word / Term	Definition
Council	means Diamantina Shire Council.
the Program	means Community Grants Program.

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A grants	is a payment provided to a recipient for a specific purpose or project, generally as part of an approved Council program, with the understanding that there will be a defined outcome that directly or indirectly benefits the public, but with no expectation of commercial return to Council. Grants are subject to conditions (particularly reporting and accountability and a requirement for the funds to be expended for the direct purpose they were granted). Council requires some form of recognition for grant funding, as detailed in funding agreements.
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7.2 RELATED POLICIES, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS:

Links to supporting documentation
DSC Info - Community Grants Program Guidelines
DSC Form - Community Grants Program Application Form
DSC Form – Community Grants Program In-kind Support Request
DSC Form – Community Grant Funding Agreement
DSC Form – Community Grants Acquittal Report
Local Government Regulation 2012, section 195

7.3 VERSION CONTROL:

Previous Version Number	Adopted/Approved Date
Version 1 - Original	Minute No. 2015.07.20-OM-7
Version 2	March 14 2016, Minute No. Minute No. 2016.03.14-OM-4
Version 3	November 20 2017; Minute No. 2017.11.20-OM-7
Version 4	March 18 2019