



Council Grants Policy

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY		
COUNCIL GRANTS POLICY	Policy No:	
	Adopted by Council:	19 April 2023
	Next review date:	April 2027
Responsible Executive:	Director Corporate and Community Services	
Responsible Officer:	Manager Community Development and Tourism	
Functional Area:	Corporate and Community Services	
Introduction & Background	<p>Each year, Council operates a number of grant programs which enables Council to work in partnership with the community by providing financial support to extend the capacity of groups, businesses, and organisations to implement and sustain a wide range of local recreational, cultural, social, community and business support initiatives that make a positive contribution to the West Wimmera community.</p>	
Purpose & Objectives	<p>To provide Council with an overarching framework for the various grant's programs administered by Council to ensure that they are accessible, appropriate, fair, and equitable across all groups in the municipality.</p> <p>To provide a common standard of grants administration. Each specific grant program has its own criteria depending on the specific purpose of the grant scheme.</p> <p>The key objective of this policy is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outline Council's commitment to providing the community with funding. 2. Provide the framework for a transparent, equitable and inclusive process that is understood by the community 3. Identify Council's commitment to accountability through acquittal and evaluation processes. 4. Align grants with Council's strategic objectives and establish clear expectations for both Council and the Community <p>This policy refers to the following Guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Strengthening Grant Guideline 2. Community Sponsorship and Contributions Grant Guideline 3. Community Quick Response Grant Guideline 4. Business Assistance Grant Guideline 5. Business Streetscape Grant Guideline 	



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<p>Response to the Overarching Governance Principles of the Local Government Act 2020</p>	<p>Section 9 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> states that a Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.</p> <p>This policy is in response to the following overarching governance principle/s of the Local Government Act 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the community engagement principles (section 56). (b) the public transparency principles (section 58).
<p>Policy Details</p>	
<p>1.</p>	<p>Definitions</p> <p>‘Grant’ is a payment (monetary and/or in-kind) to an organisation, which is directed at achieving goals and objectives consistent with Council policy. The payment is conditional upon the recipient using the funds/in-kind for specific purposes set out in the terms and conditions of the grant guidelines and application form.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Principles</p> <p>In administering the Council grant programs, Council undertakes to apply the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The administration and assessment of the grant program will be conducted in accordance with accepted standards of public accountability, probity and transparency of decision making. ▪ Council will apply the principles of democratic representation, social inclusion, and meaningful community engagement. ▪ The program will be administered on the basis of ethical and legal behaviour by West Wimmera Shire Council (WWSC) Councillors and employees. ▪ The grant programs will be regularly reviewed to ensure it remains responsive to emerging themes, issues, and trends in the community. ▪ Grant priorities will be set in accordance with Council’s strategic objectives, budgetary resources and identified community needs. ▪ Each Grant program will have a clear set of guidelines. ▪ All applications will be assessed in accordance with the grant guidelines and Council’s key strategic objectives as identified in the Council Plan, Strategies or Community Plans. ▪ Grant recipients will be required to publicly acknowledge Council’s contribution as detailed in the funding agreement. ▪ ‘Smartygrants’ grant management system will be used by Council to administer all applications.



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3.	<p>Funding Exclusions</p> <p>Council will not fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retrospective funding for projects commenced prior to the application opening date for the grant being applied for. ▪ Fundraising activities. ▪ Staff wages and salaries and ongoing operational, maintenance or administrative costs. ▪ Ongoing projects or a duplication of existing services. ▪ Projects that do not involve the WWSC Community Services or activities which are considered to be primarily the responsibility of the State or Federal Governments. ▪ Applicants that have failed to correctly acquit funding with Council in the past. ▪ Applicants who have received funding from Council within the last 12 months. ▪ Any other funding proposal that does not meet the specific funding guideline.
4.	<p>Eligibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council will consider grant applications from registered businesses and incorporated community groups that are legal entities based in West Wimmera Shire according to specific eligibility criteria and other conditions are outlined in the respective grants program guidelines. ▪ If the organisation is not a legal entity, an eligible organisation can apply on their behalf, through auspicing arrangements, provided the auspicing body has the necessary legal entity status to enter into a funding agreement with Council and agrees to administer funding on their behalf.
5.	<p>Application Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applications will only be accepted on the forms made available by Council ▪ Complete responses must be provided to all questions on the application form. ▪ Applications not received by the closing date (if applicable) will not be considered. ▪ Applications must include all supporting documentation, where required, as per the guidelines.
6.	<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For each grant program, the appropriate Grants Assessment Team, will individually score applications received, based on meeting the agreed selection criteria for the specific grant program. The Grants Assessment Team will be comprised of Council staff only. ▪ Applications will be ranked accordingly and submitted with a recommendation to Council for decision regarding the distribution of grants funding. Exception is the Quick Response Grant whereby The Chief Executive Officer has the authorisation to approve the application upon consultation with councillors. ▪ Decisions regarding the allocation or non-allocation of funding made by Council are considered final. ▪ Council reserves the right to part-fund an application.



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7.	<p>Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Successful applicants will be contacted in writing and a Grant Funding Agreement will be prepared by Council to outline the responsibilities, obligations and identified outcomes required of the organisation.▪ Funding must be expended within twelve months of when the funds were granted (unless otherwise stated and agreed to in the Agreement) or the funds must be refunded to Council. An extension may be sought before the 12 months has expired, by writing to the Council.▪ Monies received must only be spent on the project as approved by Council. Any unspent funds must be returned to Council. To vary the purpose for the allocated grant funds, written permission must be obtained in writing from Council prior to spending the funds.▪ Failure to abide by the grant conditions could jeopardise your organisation's chances of receiving further funds from Council.▪ At completion of the project, the grant recipient must submit a WWSC Grant Acquittal Report with all required accompanying documents.
8.	<p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Grant programs will be widely advertised as per Council's Community Engagement Policy.▪ Applicants will be able to see the status of their application through the Council's online grants portal (SmartyGrants).
9.	<p>Conflict of Interest</p> <p>Councillors and Council officers who participate in the grant application process must declare any conflict of interest in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, Sections 126 to 131, and the WWSC Councillor Code of Conduct and WWSC Employee Code of Conduct</p>
	<p>Statement of Compatibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As a public authority, Council has a duty to act compatibly with human rights and to give human rights proper consideration in decision making.• It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)• It is considered that this policy is written and meets the safe and strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy. <p>You may provide feedback about this document by emailing council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au</p>



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Policy Adopted:	Ordinary Meeting 25/11/99	Minute Book Page 6906	
Policy Reviewed:	Ordinary Meeting 25/07/02	Minute Book Page 10300	
	Ordinary Meeting 06/04/06	Minute Book Page 13682	
	Ordinary Meeting 11/03/10	Minute Book Page 17759	
	Ordinary Meeting 18/06/15	Minute Book Page 30619	RecFind 15/002328
	Ordinary Meeting 19/07/17	Minute Book Page 35794	RecFind 17/002783
	Ordinary Meeting 19/04/23		Policies and Procedures Team