

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS PROGRAM

Application Writing Tool Kit



INTRODUCTION

The City of Greater Dandenong provides Community Support Grants Program of up to \$20,000 to support the activities of local community groups and organisations. Funding is available to develop programs, projects and events that will benefit the community.

This tool kit is intended to provide advice and information for those wanting to complete the Community Support Grant Application. Further support and details about eligibility and selection criteria is available by contacting:

Community Funding Officer

Phone 8571 1432

Email commgrants@cgd.vic.gov.au

THE GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Writing your grant application

- **Project Title**

Ensure that you provide a title for your project. This will help the grant assessor to identify what you are doing and also to remember your application. If you don't provide a name it is more difficult to remember the purpose of your application.

- **Amount of Funding Requested**

Be sure to correctly fill this in as it will help the grant assessor to understand what your needs are. This amount should match the requested amount in your Project Budget.

- **Postal address for correspondence**

Ensure that you provide the correct mailing address in your application. Do not use the address of a community hall or facility unless there is a reliable person who can pass on any correspondence to your group.

- **Contact person**

This is normally the person who will be responsible for managing the project and/or ensuring that all paperwork related to the grant is completed.

- **Is your group/organisation incorporated?**

An incorporated association is a club or community group, whose members have decided to give their organisation a formal legal structure. You can recognize an incorporated association by the word 'Incorporated' or the abbreviation 'Inc.' after its name. When a club or community group incorporates, it becomes a 'legal entity' –that is, a legal entity that stays the same even if its members change. It can enter into contracts in its own name; for example, to borrow money or buy equipment. This protects the individual members of the association from legal liabilities.

There are several ways in which a group can be incorporated. The most common is as an Incorporated Association (administered by Consumer Affairs Victoria). Some larger organisations may be incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee (administered by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission), or even through a specific Act of Parliament.

You will be required to attach proof of your current incorporation status in the grant application.

If your group is not incorporated, to apply for a grant it will need to have an auspicing agency. This means that another group that is incorporated will act like a parent organisation. They will be financially responsible, will need to sign the forms for you, and will usually be the banker for your organisation. You will need to include them on your grant paperwork, and you will have to show that they are incorporated, have an ABN and show their GST status. **For more information and advice about this please contact the Community Funding Officer.**

- **Is your organisation 'Not for Profit'?**

A Not for Profit organisation is one in which financial surpluses or assets cannot be distributed to members. For an incorporated group this should be stated in the group's constitution or set of rules. A group that is incorporated as an Incorporated Association or a Company Limited by Guarantee will normally have those rules in place already.

- **Does your group have an ABN? (ABN = Australian Business Number)**

If you don't have an ABN, whenever you issue an invoice you will need to provide a "Statement by Supplier" form, declaring your reason for not quoting an ABN. This form is available from the Australian Taxation Office (www.ato.gov.au) or copies are available by contacting the Community Funding Officer.

- **Is your group/organisation registered for GST (goods and service tax)?**

Does your organisation collect GST on behalf of the Australian Tax Office. If you are unsure, ask your treasurer.

- **What is your group's statement of purpose, or what is the role of your group?**

Who are your members? What activities and services do you provide?

- **State briefly the main activities, events, programs, or projects your group conducts or has conducted in the past.**

Project Details

This section is about the project you want to get funded. In addition to having a good project idea you will also need to provide specific details about the project and how it will be implemented. The following points outline the type of information that grant assessors need.

Project Concept

Refer back to 'Knowing what you want to do'. Try to say the most important things about your project. Keep your writing succinct, point form can be easier to read. It is not necessary to provide lengthy descriptions using complicated language. Good ideas can be lost if the description is too long and unclear.

What is your project?

The assessor needs to know specific details about your project. *For example*

The Noble Park Youth Association will hold a free disco for young people under 16. The fun night will include local bands a DJ, food and music. The event will allow young people to dance, meet new people and have fun in a safe and supervised environment. A shuttle bus will be provided to ensure that people get home safely.

Where will the project take place?

Again it is important to be specific. *For example*

The Noble Park Youth Association Disco will take place at 'The Castle' Princes Hwy, Dandenong.

Who will the project benefit?

It is important to be as specific as you can.



For example

The Disco will benefit teenagers from 13 to 16 who attend local high schools within the City of Greater Dandenong.

If your project aims to benefit different groups within the community that is fine. There could be a few different individuals or groups that stand to benefit from the project, be sure to clearly list who these people/groups are in your application.

How many people will attend?

If possible list the closest number possible or a rough estimate of how many people you expect will be involved. *For example*

It is anticipated that 300 teenagers will attend the disco on the night.

Matching your project aims to the goals of the funding agency

In addition to providing specific details about your project, you are also required to explain why it is important. In order to do this successfully you will need to make sure your project meets the goals of the grants program.

All funding agencies have a clear set of goals in mind when they establish a funding program. The City of Greater Dandenong 'Community Support Grant' goals are the following:

- Increase social participation and create connected communities
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Support leadership
- Promote harmony and respect
- Improve environmental sustainability

Look at the wording of these goals, and incorporate them into your application. The following question and answer is an example of how you can explain the benefits of your project and match them to the goals of the funding program.

Why is your project important?

This question identifies the benefit of the project to the community. *For example:*

The Noble Park Youth Association Disco will provide opportunities for young residents in the City of Greater Dandenong. The free event will ensure that economic disadvantage is not a barrier to participating in social and leisure activities. Instead the free event will provide an exciting opportunity for young people to meet new people and enjoy themselves in a safe environment

Note: The goals of council's grants may change over time and if you are planning on applying for other grants they will have a different set of goals and priorities. Be sure to read the goals and priorities of all grant applications carefully. In many cases you may be able to align your project with a variety of different goals. In other circumstances you may find that what you are planning to do is not suitable, if it seems very different from the goals of the funding program.

For further information or advice please contact the Community Funding Officer.

How did you identify the need for this project?

In justifying the importance of the project Council requires information on how this was determined.

Consider how your group members identified the project and if the need was identified from an issue in your community. Ways in which to identify this include:

- Discussion with group members
- Surveys
- Feedback
- Statistics
- Research

Measures of Success

Measures of success is about recording your project to show the impact/benefit of the work that has been undertaken. This can be done by recording numbers attending or monitoring the benefit of the project and recording this. Examples of how this can be done are:

- Attendance sheets
- Feedback forms
- Notes taken by the organisers
- Benefits observed by the organisers

In the application form, consider how you will measure the impact of the project in addressing needs identified as to why your project is important. *For example*

Measures of success for our project include:

2. Number of participants
 - % of participants reporting improved community pride/sense of belonging
 - % of participants reporting improved safety

We intend to verify the above by recording the number of attendees on the night, requesting signed parent slips for attendance that will allow us to ask for feedback during the event addressing the measures of success. Event organisers will also develop some notes in relation to the above based on observations on the night. This information will be used and referenced by the Noble Park Youth Association through ongoing work.

Considering assessment criteria

An assessment process is undertaken to consider and make recommendations to Council. How well an application addresses the selection criteria will determine the amount recommended for funding.

If you would like to discuss these with the Community Funding Team, please contact 8571 1432 or see the Grants Resources page on Council's website for tools to develop your project.

Consider the criteria carefully. It is suggested once you have drafted your application, to read through with the criteria in mind and where you may be able to strengthen the project.

For Community Support Grants, the assessment criteria is found on page 5 of the Community Support Grants Program Guidelines.

The Budget

You will be required to provide a detailed budget. Project budgets should include all projected income including grant income that you have applied for, and all costs and expenses related to your project.

Income

This includes donations, sponsorship, membership, grants, entry fees etc. Under the income line, list existing reserves of funds held by your organisation that will be dedicated to the project. Financial contributions from the group or other sources will help strengthen your application.

Expenditure

This requires you to list all potential expenses that your organisation would incur if it ran the project. Include items such as administration, office supplies, utilities, promotional costs, project management, hall hire, equipment etc. Some of these items should be listed separately; others can be combined into a general title, such as office supplies.

It is important to remember that expenses should only be those necessary for the project and costs should be realistic.

Your total income should equal your total expenditure.

The amount granted to your application may be reduced by the funding agency during the assessment process. Consider the impact on

the project if you did not receive the full level of funding requested. Could you still run the project? What changes would you have to make to your plans to scale down the project or break it into smaller parts?

In-Kind Support

In-Kind Support includes donated or volunteer resources that you do not need to purchase as part of your project budget. This section allows Council to understand the full project worth and unpaid contribution made by the applicant group and their partners.

When developing project amounts, use quotes or online references for rough cost estimates. For volunteers, use the below information as a guide:

We suggest that general volunteer labour is valued at \$25 per hour. Project management and volunteer supervision can be valued at \$35 per hour. Donated professional services may be valued at the prevailing market rate.

Using these amounts allows assessors to measure in-kind contributions evenly across all applications to the grants program.

An example project budget

Income			Amount
Requested Grant			\$2,500.00
Ticket Sales			\$4,000.00
TOTAL INCOME			\$6,500.00
Expense Items	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
Stage Hire	\$1,600.00	1	\$1,600.00
Marquee Hire	\$200.00	8	\$1,600.00
Sound System & Technician	\$1,100.00	1	\$1,100.00
Entertainers Expenses	\$500.00	3	\$1,500.00
Promotion - Advertising & Flyers			\$520.00
Communications			\$80.00
Miscellaneous Administration			\$100.00
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$6,500.00

ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Additional project documentation is a section of the application form that allows groups to submit relevant documents that will support project outcomes.

Support documents may include (but not limited to):

- Detailed project plan
- Gantt chart
- Detailed project budget
- Letters of support from relevant organisations
- Risk assessment
- Photos
- Site maps
- Promotional material

If your organisation is seeking substantial funding or includes high risk activities, it is strongly advised to add additional project documentation to support your application.

Online Resources

Council's Community Grants Program Webpage has a number of resources available to the community:

1. **The Grants Program webpage** has a list of grants programs and their guidelines available. This page also includes links to apply for a program and a weblink for those who have already started their applications.

2. **The Grants Resources Webpage** has information to support your project development including access to the Grants Writing Tool Kit, Community Grants Fact Sheets, video tutorials, useful documents, Links to Non-Council grants funding and past grants recipients lists.

3. **The Community Stories webpage** includes a number of grants stories from funded organisations to share impact.

4. **Enews Sign Up webpage** allows organisations to sign up to the Community Grants Newsletter. This newsletter sends monthly updates about current grants round from Council and external funding bodies

Templates of additional attachment documentation can be found on our Community Funding Webpage.

For further information about the above, head to www.greaterdandenong.com and search Community Funding on the website. Additionally, contact the Community Funding Team for advise and assistance.



GENERAL INFORMATION

General grant application tips

- Read the application guidelines carefully.
- Develop standard organisational material that you can use again in other applications.
- Get letters of support from organisations and prominent people that are associated with your group.
- Learn what you can about council, the more you are able to tailor your grant to fit their organisational goals, the more likely it is your application will be considered.
- Talk to the contact person at council to clarify guidelines and to discuss your project.
- Build a relationship with council, find out who the contact person is and talk to them. They can help you write your application and ensure you meet the selection criteria.
- Make sure you include all additional attachments. These include:
 - Financial Statement
 - Certificate of Incorporation
 - Minutes from an Annual General Meeting

The above documents are eligibility requirements for Council's grants programs and must be supplied. It is strongly advised to keep up to date electronic copies for ease of application.

For incorporated groups:

- Certificate of Incorporation, Annual Statement by Public Officer or equivalent
- Minutes from the most recent AGM or Annual report
- Financial Statement

For unincorporated groups:

- Auspice organisation has agreed to and signed the relevant section of the form
- Certificate of Incorporation, Annual Statement by Public Officer or equivalent
- Financial Statement

Grant writing tips




- Follow the application instructions and answer all questions.
- Provide specific information that provides a clear picture of your project (who, what, where, why, etc)
- Be clear and concise. Don't use more words than necessary. Good writing means using words that your audience will understand. Keep it simple.
- Avoid the use of jargon and acronyms.
- Know what you want to say. Express yourself clearly and communicate your message in a simple way.
- Know your audience, consider what will interest them, your audience rarely knows as much about your subject as you do.
- Tell your story; it is important to grab the reader's attention. You should see the grant application as an opportunity to tell the story of who your organization is and the exciting project you want to get funded.
- Emphasise the aspects of your project that align with the goals of the funding program.
- Where possible type or word-process your application, it's easier to understand if it is easier to read.
- Edit your application; watch out for typing, spelling and grammatical errors.
- Get someone else to read over the application prior to submitting it.

Online applications

Most funding opportunities including Council's grants programs now require online applications.

- It is strongly advised to speak to the grants team for support with online applications if you are not confident with computers or are seeking clarification. Contact the Community Funding Team on 8571 1432.
- Keep a copy of your application by saving a pdf for your records. This can also help with ease of information transfer into the future.
- For additional support, contact SmartyGrants who are the online administrators for the City of Greater Dandenong Community Grants Program. Their website has a number of useful tools: <https://applicanthehelp.smartygrants.com.au/>



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