



Council Policy

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Corporate Plan Reference:	Working in Partnership with Our Community
Endorsed by Council:	21 May 2020
Policy Author:	Community Development Manager

POLICY BACKGROUND

This Policy is to guide the administration of Council's Community Grants Program so that the grants:

- Assist Council to achieve its strategic goals and identified key initiatives; and
- Align with the intent of the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, which state that (community) grants will be used for a purpose that is in the public interest.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with any supporting guidelines for specific funding programs. This Policy *does not* apply to sponsorship, donations, advertising, naming rights and service level agreements.

POLICY OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this policy include:

- Providing financial support to meet identified community needs;
- Building community skills and resilience;
- Developing and maintaining sustainable community infrastructure;
- Providing opportunities to leverage Council's financial assistance to obtain funding from other sources; and
- Providing opportunities to deliver on Council's strategic goals and identified key initiatives to equitably and transparently selected grant recipients that best represent value to the public.

WHO CAN APPLY

Not for profit community organisations can apply for a Community Grant provided they meet the following criteria:

- The project or event for which they are applying, benefits the residents of the Noosa Shire community;
- The application meets the specific eligibility criteria of the funding programs as set out in this Policy and the supporting Grant Guidelines;
- The applicant:
 - Is a legal not for profit entity;
 - Complies with all governance and financial requirements of the State and Commonwealth as at the closing date for the grant program;
 - Be registered by an Act of Parliament
 - Has an active ABN;
 - Has a bank account in the name of the legal entity;

If an organisation is not eligible as per the above criteria and wishes to apply for a grant, the organisation is able to do so provided that the application is auspiced and administered by an eligible organisation that is willing and able to accept legal and financial responsibility for the grant and the project or event being delivered. All applicants (including the auspice, if required) must have:

- Appropriate insurances and adhere to sound Workplace Health and Safety practices;
- No debt to Council, or has entered into scheduled payment arrangements with Council that is being adhered to; and
- Met acquittal conditions for any previous Council grants.

Service Clubs are eligible for water rebates and building insurance cover and may apply for Community Project Grant, Three-Year Signature Community Events and Festive Season Grants only.

Chambers of Commerce may apply for Community Project, Three-Year Signature Community Events and Festive Season Grants only.

Not for profit community organisations with a liquor-licensed supporters/associated club that commercially trade seven days a week may apply for Festive Season Grants only.

WHO CANNOT APPLY

- Businesses and individuals (except RADF*)
- Business Trusts
- Government agencies or Departments of local, state or federal government
- Educational institutions
- Parents and Friends Associations, or Parents & Citizens Associations
- Medical organisations or Primary Health Care Providers
- Political organisations
- Kindergartens, Pre-school and day care centres
- Religious organisations where the application is for a project that relate specifically to the organisation's core business

*Individuals (with an ABN), and businesses can apply for Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) grants only.

An organisation found to be ineligible after approval will be required to return the grant payment.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS, EVENTS OR PROGRAMS

To be eligible to apply for funding, community grant applications must adhere to the terms and conditions set out in this Policy as well as the supporting Grant Guidelines for that specific funding program.

COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAMS

Council's Community Grants will encompass the following nine funding programs.

1. Community Project Grants

Applications for Community Project Grants will be accepted twice yearly and successful applications will be decided in a competitive assessment process based on:

- Demonstrated need for the project;
- Demonstrated need for funding;
- Contributions, financially or in kind, toward the project;
- Benefit to the community;
- Alignment with Council's strategic goals and identified key initiatives;
- Capability of the organisation to deliver the project; and
- The amount of funding allocated in Council's annual budget for Community Grants.

Council may determine priority funding areas on a year-to-year basis and these priorities will be identified in the Community Project Grant Guidelines.

Community Projects may include, but are not restricted to:

- *Community based festivals or events* that bring residents together, including cultural, sports or community festivals. (Such events may require a Temporary Event Permit from Noosa Council);
- *Projects or programs that respond to a specific opportunity or need within the community.* These programs may enhance the skills of participants or be pilot projects with a community focus. Ongoing projects or programs may be funded for a maximum of three times;
- *Building works or infrastructure projects* that include new or replacement infrastructure, or the maintenance of existing infrastructure. This may include lighting, shade sails, storage facilities, fit-outs etc. (Works may require approvals such as building approval and property owner's consent).

Projects that are ineligible for funding are detailed in the Community Project Guidelines.

Applications may be part funded to assist distribution of funds to more community groups. If applications are part funded, the organisation will need to fund the balance of the grant.

2. Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF).

RADF grants support local artists and communities to participate in locally determined arts and cultural priorities, activities and opportunities. The Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) is a partnership between the Queensland Government and Noosa Council to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.

Applications for RADF will be decided through a competitive assessment process. Council may determine priority funding areas on a year-to-year basis and these priorities will be identified in the RADF Guidelines.

To receive RADF funding, applications will need to demonstrate they are eligible and that they have met the RADF criteria as outlined in the RADF guidelines.

3. Festive Season Event Grants

Festive Season Event Grants will provide financial assistance for up to Three-Years to eligible not for profit community organisations for events that are free to the public and occur between late November and January each year. Events that can be funded through this program include Christmas Carols, Concerts, Parades, New Year's celebrations, and Australia Day activities within the Noosa Council area.

Council Festive Season Event Grants will contribute to costs associated with:

- Expenses related to hire of equipment, temporary structures, professional services and promotion and advertising of the event; and / or
- Traffic management plans including traffic control services.

Funding will be capped and Council will require a contribution to the event from the event organiser or a third party.

If Council decides to continue with the program, renewal of agreements will be negotiated three months prior to their expiry, and if funds allow, invite expressions of interest from eligible not for profit community organisations.

Recipients of Three-Year Festive Season Event grants are ineligible for Three-Year Community Alliance Agreements and Three-Year Maintenance Agreements.

4. Three-Year Signature Community Events Grants

This funding will provide financial support for up to Three-Years to eligible not for profit community organisations who have an established track record of hosting a signature event that provides significant benefit to the Noosa community; demonstrates value for money; and closely aligns with Council's strategic goals and identified key initiatives.

Recipients will be required to provide an annual acquittal (including audited financial statements) demonstrating delivery of agreed outcomes.

Council's Signature Community Events Grant will contribute to costs associated with:

- Expenses related to hire of equipment, temporary structures, professional services and promotion and advertising of the event; and / or
- Traffic management plans including traffic control services.

Successful applicants will need to:

- Provide an achievable operational or strategic plan for the event.

Funding will be capped and Council will require a contribution to the event from the event organiser or a third party.

If Council decides to continue with the program, renewal of agreements will be negotiated three months prior to their expiry. As part of its annual budget process Council will consider whether or not to invite additional organisations to be considered for funding under this program.

Recipients of Three-Year Signature Community Event grants are ineligible for Three-Year Community Alliance Agreements and Three-Year Maintenance Agreements.

5. Three-Year Community Alliance Agreement

This funding will provide financial support for up to Three-Years to eligible not for profit community organisations whose services provide significant benefit to the Noosa community (beyond their membership); demonstrate value for money; and closely align with Council's strategic goals and identified key initiatives.

Council will initially call for expressions of interest for this grants program from organisations who offer services in one of the following areas:

- Arts and cultural development
- Community development
- Community safety
- Heritage

Successful applicants will need to:

- Provide an achievable operational or strategic plan for the duration of the agreement

Council will establish funding amounts for the individual Three-Year Community Alliance Agreements as part of its annual budget process. Recipients will be required to provide an annual acquittal (including audited financial statements) and a progress report demonstrating delivery of agreed outcomes. If Council decides to continue with the program, renewal of agreements will be negotiated three months prior to their expiry, and if funds allow, invite expressions of interest from eligible not for profit community organisations.

Recipients of Three-Year Community Alliance Agreements are ineligible for Three-Year Maintenance Agreements and Three-Year Signature Community Event Grants.

6. Three-Year Maintenance Agreements

This funding will provide financial support up to Three-Years to eligible not for profit community organisations that maintain Council and community infrastructure. There are two categories:

- *Maintenance and management of community halls or centres.* Eligible community organisations may receive part funding for on-going operational and/or maintenance purposes of Council infrastructure only where that infrastructure is publicly accessible.
- *Sports field maintenance.* Eligible sporting organisations may receive part funding for on-going maintenance of sporting fields. The organisations must have primary responsibility for fields that are open to the public when not being used by those organisations.

Three-Year Maintenance Agreements operate by invitation-only rather than through a competitive process. Recipients will be required to provide an annual acquittal and demonstrating delivery of agreed outcomes. If Council decides to continue with the program, renewal of agreements will be negotiated three months prior to their expiry. Council will establish funding amounts for the individual Three-Year Maintenance Agreements as part of its annual budget process.

Recipients of Three-Year Maintenance Agreements are ineligible for Three-Year Community Alliance Agreements and Three-Year Signature Community Event Grants.

7. Water Rebates

Council will fund Unitywater fixed water and sewerage access charges for eligible not for profit organisations as defined in this Policy. The maximum annual funding for each organisation will be limited to the minimum water and sewerage access charges (based up to and including 25mm meters) for each land parcel unless there is a legal requirement or hydrology report that requires the organisation to have a larger water meter or additional meters.

In addition Council will fund the annual water consumption charges of all eligible not for profit organisations up to a maximum of \$1,000 per annum, however, organisations with consumption charges over \$250 per annum will be required to have a Council approved water management plan in place.

The cost of the water rebate will be identified and funded through the Community Grants Program as it forms part of Council's support to community organisations.

8. Building Insurance Cover

Council will cover the cost of building insurance for eligible not for profit community organisations (as defined in this policy) with facilities built on Council owned or controlled land. The insurance provided by Council will be incorporated into Council's Local Government Mutual (LGM) Asset Scheme Industrial Special Risks coverage. The cover will only be provided on the terms offered by the LGM to Noosa Council and is not negotiable for individual groups.

The cost of this insurance will be identified and funded through the Community Grants Program as it forms part of Council's support to community organisations. Council may require community groups covered by this scheme to meet excess charges in the event of any claim.

9. Community Disaster Response and Recovery Grants

In response to natural disasters, including global pandemics declared by the World Health Organisation, Council will provide grants to support community organisations in their endeavours to respond and recover from the impacts.

Council will determine the total allocation of funds given to the Community Disaster Response and Recovery Grants Program through budgetary processes. Council may determine priority funding areas based on relevant disaster and these priorities will be identified in the relevant Grant Guidelines.

Projects that are ineligible for funding are detailed in the Community Disaster Response and Recovery Grant Guidelines.

The number of grants approved by Council will depend on the demand for funding, the available budget and Council priorities. Applications may be part funded to assist distribution of funds to more community groups. If applications are part funded, the organisation will need to fund the balance of the grant.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All community grant applications must be submitted by the advertised closing date and time. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be accepted.

Applications for Community Project, Festive Season Event and RADF grants must be submitted online on a current Grant Application Form made available by Noosa Council. Applicants must have spoken with a Council Officer prior to submitting the grant.

Three-Year Maintenance Agreements operate by invitation-only rather than through a competitive process.

Water Rebates and Building Insurance Cover will be arranged for eligible recipients and these organisations will not be required to complete an application form.

OUT OF ROUND FUNDING

In exceptional circumstances, or cases of significant hardship, Council may consider special one-off funding outside the scheduled grant timeframe.

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

All successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding deed of agreement with Council and acquit funds within the allocated timeframes. The timeframes and acquittal requirements are outlined in the supporting Grant Guidelines for the specific funding program. Successful applicants will be required to actively and publicly acknowledge Council's support.

COUNCIL'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council will publicise the availability of its grants programs widely and in such a way as to promote public confidence in the process. In assessing the grants, Council will:

- Ensure public monies are allocated in a fair and equitable way;
- Ensure best possible value for money;
- Check each application against eligibility criteria and assessment criteria, as set out in the appropriate Grant Guidelines; and
- Seek recommendations from an expert panel that can comprise Council officers, Councillors and/or community representatives.

Council will determine the total allocation of funds to the community grants program through its annual budgetary processes. The number and types of grants approved by Council will depend on the demand for funding, the available program budget and Council priorities. In some instances, part funding may be offered. Funding priorities for individual grant programs will be regularly reviewed to ensure their relevance and they continue to meet Council objectives.

Council officers are available to provide advice to applicants. They will also assist applicants to identify additional and alternative sources of funding relevant to their project or event. Council officers and Councillors are responsible for recognising and declaring any actual or potential conflicts of interest. This may include, but is not limited to, personal connections with the applicant. Anyone having a determined conflict of interest should not debate or be involved in any discussions on any matter relating to that application.

Council officers are required to adhere to this policy when supporting, facilitating, or delivering grants-related activities. It is the responsibility of Council officers to ensure that grants and funding provided from public monies are:

- Administered transparently and accountably;
- Aligned with Council's objectives, goals and priorities;
- Effectively advertised and promoted to the community so that all potential applicants have equal opportunity to apply for funds; and
- Monitored for compliance against set performance measures.

Final decisions in the Community Grants Program are made by the Council, CEO or delegate.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Councils adopted strategic documents as can be found here:
<https://www.noosa.qld.gov.au/principles-plans-strategies>

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Queensland Government

- *Local Government Regulation (2012)*
- *Local Government Act (2009)*
- *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act (1982)*.

DEFINITIONS

Acquittal

This is the process by which a recipient demonstrates in writing to the funding body that it has expended the funds in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement on completion of the activity or project. The acquittal process, when conducted correctly, demonstrates that these monies were being used efficiently, effectively or that the community is getting value for money for services.

Auspice

Auspice means that an organisation takes responsibility for ensuring the funds are used as specified in the grant allocation. An auspicating organisation will be responsible for:

- Sign off on the funding agreement;
- The receipt, banking and administration of all monies;
- Project monitoring and completion;
- Ensuring the applicant acquits the funding on time; and
- Sign off on the acquittal form.

Business

For the purpose of this policy, business is defined as an organisation or enterprising entity engaged in commercial, industrial or professional activities for profit. This may be in the form of a sole trader, company or partnership. (Sole trader: an individual operating as the sole person legally responsible for all aspects of the business. Company: a legal entity separate from its shareholders. Partnership: an association of people or entities running a business together, but not as a company).

Community

For the purpose of this policy, community refers to a group of people living within the Noosa Shire local government boundaries.

Donations

Donations are defined as a voluntary gift of product, service or cash without expectation of return.

Funding Agreement

A legal agreement entered into by the successful applicant and Council noting the obligations of both parties.

Grant

Funds provided to a recipient through a formal program for a specified purpose, directed at achieving goals and objectives consistent with Council policy, where the recipient is selected on merit against a set of criteria. Funding is subject to entering a written agreement with Council that outlines accountability requirements.

Grant Guidelines

The grant guidelines will include:

- Purpose of the grant
- Key dates
- Assessment criteria
- How to apply
- How to acquit

Individuals

Individuals are classified as a singular person or a couple, as distinguished from a group, who carry on activities for a community purpose and benefit.

Organisations

For the purposes of this Policy the term Organisations means:

- Incorporated Associations (incorporated under state legislation, commonly have 'Association' or 'Incorporated' or 'Inc.' in their legal name);
- Incorporated Cooperatives (also incorporated under state legislation, commonly have 'Cooperative' in their legal name);
- Companies (incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 – may be proprietary company (limited by shares or by guarantee) or public companies); and
- Aboriginal Corporations (incorporated under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006)

Naming Rights

The right to name property, either tangible property or an event, usually granted in exchange for financial consideration.

Not for profit community organisation

A community organisation that operates as an incorporated organisation (as defined above) with a primary purpose of providing services to the community and is not carried on for the direct or indirect profit or gain of its members, both in its operations and winding up.

Public Interest

For the purpose of this policy, public interest refers to ‘the welfare of the general public in contrast to the interest of an individual or group’.

Service Level Agreements

Service Level Agreements are a formally negotiated agreement between Council and an organisation, individual or community group which details the nature, quality and scope of a service to be provided. The purpose of a service level agreement is to formalise the services of a provider and outline the responsibilities of both Council and the provider in the provision of a service.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is a contractual business arrangement under which a sponsor, for a specified term, provides a contribution in cash and/or in kind (“contra”) in return for specified commercial benefits.

Transparency

Transparency refers to the openness with which the administration of funds and obligations between entities are discharged.

Version control:

Version	Reason/ Trigger	Change (Y/N)	Endorsed/ Reviewed by	Date
1.0	New Policy	N	Noosa Council	3 April 2014
2.0	Policy review after 2 grant rounds	Y	Noosa Council	15 January 2015
3.0	Policy review after completion of 2015/16 grant rounds	Y	Noosa Council	11 February 2016
4.0	Amendment to Policy	Y	Noosa Council	16 June 2016
5.0	Amendment to Policy	Y	CEO	5 January 2017
6.0	Amendment to Policy	Y	Council	21 February 2019
7.0	Amendment to Policy	Y	Council	21 May 2020