

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Corporate Plan Reference:	Theme 2: Liveability
Endorsed by Council:	23 January 2025
Policy Author:	Community Connection Manager

POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to guide the administration of Council's Community Grants to ensure grant programs assist Council to achieve its strategic goals and identified initiatives. It is aligned with the intent of the *Local Government Act 2009* and the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with any supporting guidelines for specific funding programs which are published on Council's website.

POLICY OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this policy include:

- Providing financial support to community projects that meet identified human social community needs
- Building community connection, skills and resilience
- Providing opportunities for community projects to leverage Council's funding assistance to obtain funding from other sources e.g. co-funding
- Supporting the community to deliver on Council's strategic goals and identified key initiatives

SCOPE

This Policy applies to Councillors, all Council employees, and volunteers who conduct activities and functions on behalf of Council and are involved in the administration and management of community grants programs (collectively referred to as 'employees').

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed once per Council term (every four years) or as required from time to time.

WHO CAN APPLY

Applicants must meet the specified eligibility criteria outlined in the relevant community grant guidelines and this Policy. At a minimum, applicants must:

- Be an incorporated not-for-profit community organisation, or have an auspice arrangement with an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation
- Be applying for a project or event which benefits the residents of Noosa Shire
- Have no debt to Council, (unless an agreed payment arrangement with Council is satisfactorily being met)
- Have appropriate insurances
- Have successfully acquitted any previous Council Grants

Individuals are eligible to apply through identified programs as outlined in the relevant guidelines.

WHO CANNOT APPLY

Ineligible applicants are listed in the relevant program's guidelines and include but are not limited to:

- Local, State or Federal Government agencies/departments
- Commercial businesses and enterprises (with the exception of RADF applications)
- Foreign entities, such as charity formed or incorporated outside of Australia, even if it is registered to carry on business in Australia
- Political organisations

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS, EVENTS OR PROGRAMS

Applications for community grants must:

- Demonstrate a purpose that is in the public interest
- Address the purpose and/or priorities of the grant category identified in the relevant guidelines
- Align with Council's priorities as described in current Council strategies and plans
- Adhere to the terms and conditions set out in the supporting guidelines for the specific funding program

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Applications that request funding for:

- Religious or faith-based activities
- Political or lobbying activities
- Primary health or medical care
- Core education or curricula activities
- Payment of debt
- Projects intended to make a commercial profit
- Projects which intend to gift, sponsor or grant the money to another person or entity
- Items or services purchased or any project activities delivered prior to notification of the grant outcome

Other eligibility restrictions may apply for specific funding programs. Projects that are ineligible for funding are detailed in the relevant guidelines for each program.

FUNDING PROGRAMS

The below list outlines Council's various grant funding programs:

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION
Community Project Grants	Funding for projects, programs, events, equipment purchases and building/ground works. This may include the option for a quick response grant for emergent or time-sensitive matters.
Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF)	Supports local arts and cultural development opportunities by providing project-based financial assistance to groups, individuals and businesses. This may include the option for a quick response grant for time-sensitive items.
Individual Sport Development Grants	Support Noosa residents who are performing, competing or coaching at recognised national or international competitions and events.
Signature Community Events Grants	Supports established not-for-profit organisations to deliver community events that provide significant benefit to the broader community.
Community Alliance Agreements	Supports not-for-profit community organisations whose services provide significant benefit to the Noosa community beyond their membership base.
Maintenance Agreements	Support for not-for-profit community organisations that maintain a Council hall or centre, or sports field that is open to the public
Water Rebates	Support for not-for-profit community organisations
Building Insurance Cover	Supports not-for-profit community organisations that are based on Council land.
Community Disaster Response and Recovery Grants	Supports not-for-profit community groups in their efforts to respond and recover from natural disasters.
Other (as required)	Support to address significant identified community need that is outside the standard grant funding rounds.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Specific instructions on how to apply for each program are available in the relevant program guidelines. Applications must be submitted by the advertised closing date and time. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted unless approved by the Community Connection Manager because of exceptional circumstances.

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding deed of agreement with Council. Any special conditions or requirements will be outlined in this agreement.

Applicants are required to publicly acknowledge Council's contribution to their project and must meet the acknowledgement requirements outlined in the program's guidelines.

Successful applicants are required to acquit their projects within the timeframes specified in the program's guidelines. Acquittal requirements for each grant type are outlined in the relevant guidelines.

Council reserves the right to conduct random audits of grant acquittals to ensure the grant was used by the recipient according to the funding agreement. All grant recipients must maintain accurate financial records for their funded projects and make these records available to the Council as part of their acquittal. Additional financial information may be requested by Council if selected for an audit.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Councillors

Councillors will consider and adopt Council's Community Grants Policy.

Councillors will consider and adopt an appropriate budget allocation to support the Community Grant program

When making decisions related to grant allocations, Councillors will comply with relevant legislation, Council's Community Grants Policy and associated guidelines.

Councillors will identify and declare any conflicts of interest in relation to grant decision making in alignment with their legislative obligations.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Executive Team

The CEO and Executive Team will endorse Council's Community Grants Policy for Council adoption and provide leadership and commitment in its implementation, as well as complying with other relevant legislation and documents.

Council Employees

When managing and assessing grant applications, Council employees will comply with the Community Grants Policy, program guidelines and associated legislative requirement.

Council employees will identify and declare any conflicts of interest when providing advice to applicants and assessing grant applications. Council employees will immediately notify their

Supervisor / Manager / Director if they suspect any non-compliance issues or breaches of the Community Grants Policy.

Community Services Department

The Department will periodically review Council's Community Grants Policy, educate employees on the application of the Policy and provide advice to Council employees on community grants related matters.

For grants under \$2,500, the Department will provide grant recommendations to Council's delegated officer for consideration and approval. For grants over \$2,500, Council officers will provide grant recommendations to Council for consideration and approval by resolution.

Grant Applicants

All grant applicants are entitled to a prompt response to their application in accordance with Council's Community Grants Policy and to be kept informed of the progress and outcome of the application.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In developing the Community Grants Policy, the subject matter has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019. It is considered that the subject matter does not conflict with any human rights, including the right to take part in public life, and supports a human rights approach to decision making by Council. Council representatives will endeavour to act and make decisions under this policy in a manner that is compatible with human rights. In particular, representatives will endeavour to:

- Identify relevant human rights which may be affected by the action or decision;
- Give proper consideration to the impact of its actions and decisions on human rights; and
- Ensure that any conduct or decision by Council which limits an individual's human rights is reasonable and justifiable. The Community Engagement Policy should be read in conjunction with Council's Human Rights Policy

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Noosa Council Corporate Plan 2023-2028
- Noosa Council Annual Operational Plans
- Approved budget and revenue statement for the financial year
- Associated grant guidelines and application forms

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Regulation 2012*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982*
- *Integrity Act 2009*
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*
- *Public Records Act 2023*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*

DEFINITIONS

Acquittal	The process by which a recipient provides written proof that grant funds were used according to the funding agreement, ensuring efficient and effective use or demonstrating community value.
Auspice	An organisation that takes responsibility for ensuring grant funds are used as specified, including signing the funding agreement, managing funds, overseeing the project, and ensuring timely acquittal.
Business	An entity engaged in commercial, industrial, or professional activities for profit, including sole traders, companies, or partnerships.
Community	A group of people residing within the Noosa Shire local government area.
Community Purpose	A purpose that serves the public interest of Noosa Shire residents.
Funding Agreement	A legal agreement entered into by the successful applicant and Council noting the obligations of both parties.
Grant	Funds awarded through a formal program for a specific purpose aligned with Council policy, based on merit and subject to a written agreement outlining accountability.
Guidelines	Instructions outlining the purpose, key dates, assessment criteria, application process, and acquittal requirements for a grant.
Individuals	A single person engaged in activities that benefit the community.
Not-for-profit community organisation	An incorporated organisation focused on providing community services, operating without direct or indirect profit for its members, both during operations and upon winding up.
Organisations	Incorporated Associations (under state legislation, often with 'Association,' 'Incorporated,' or 'Inc.' in their name); Incorporated Cooperatives (under state legislation, typically with 'Cooperative' in their name); Companies (under the <i>Corporations Act 2001</i> , either proprietary or public); and Aboriginal Corporations (under the <i>Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006</i>).
Public Interest	The welfare of the general public, as opposed to the interests of an individual or group.
Transparency	The openness in administering funds and fulfilling obligations between entities.

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	Noosa Council	21 February 2019
7.0	Amendment to Policy	Y	Noosa Council	21 May 2020
8.0	Amendment to Policy	Y	Noosa Council	23 January 2025