

Signature Community Events Grant Guidelines

Signature Community Events Grant 2025-2028 Guidelines



Key Dates

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| Expressions of Interest period opens: | 10 February 2025 |
| Expressions of Interest period closes: | 28 February 2025 |
| Full application period opens: | 19 March 2025 <i>(Extended due to impacts of Ex Tropical Cyclone Alfred)</i> |
| Full application period closes: | 17 April 2025 |
| Acquittal due: | Annually, within 30 days of each event |

Please note: *The former Signature Event Grants and Festive Season Event Grants programs have been combined into the Signature Community Events Grants Program*

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1. Introduction

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The Signature Community Events Grants program is governed by Noosa Council's [Community Grants Policy](#). You must read these guidelines thoroughly to confirm your not-for-profit organisation's eligibility and to understand the application requirements and funding stages. You are required to discuss your project with the Community Development team prior to applying for funding. Please call Council on 07 5329 6437 or email grants@noosa.qld.gov.au to arrange a time to speak with a member of the Community Development team.

2. Purpose

The Signature Community Events Grant provides financial support for up to three years to not-for-profit community organisations who have an established track record delivering community led events that:

- Support high profile events that celebrate significant community occasions
- Deliver significant benefits to the Noosa community
- Demonstrate value for money and contribute to Noosa's identity
- Align with Council's strategic goals and key initiatives, as outlined in [Noosa Council Corporate Plan 2023-2028](#) and [Noosa Social Strategy](#) and any other relevant Council plans and strategies
- Strengthen and complement Noosa's event offerings

3. Eligible Organisations

3.1. Who can apply

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

- Is a legal not-for-profit entity:
 - An incorporated association
 - A company limited by guarantee
 - A non-trading/non-distributing co-operative
 - An Indigenous corporation
- Have an active ABN
- Have a bank account in the name of the legal entity
- Complies with all governance and financial requirements of the State and Commonwealth as at the closing date for the grant program
- Have appropriate insurances
- Have no debt to Council, or have an active payment arrangement with Council
- Have successfully acquitted any previous Council grants
- The project to be funded benefits the residents of the Noosa Shire

3.2. Who cannot apply

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- Individuals
- Commercial businesses and enterprises
- Local, State or Federal Government agencies/departments
- Foreign entities, such as charity formed or incorporated outside of Australia, even if it is registered to carry on business in Australia
- Political organisations
- Organisations already receiving multi-year funding through Council's Maintenance Agreements or Community Alliance Agreements

Ineligible organisations cannot use an auspice arrangement to circumvent eligibility requirements.

4. Eligible Events

To be eligible for Signature Community Events Grants funding, an event must:

- Be a well-established, high-profile event that is widely recognised within the community
- Have an established track record of successful delivery
- Be free to attend
- Be inclusive and accessible
- Draw the local community together
- Align with Noosa Council's strategic goals including environmental sustainability, social inclusion and community development
- Prioritise local businesses and suppliers, including performers and event service providers
- Activate Noosa's public spaces and places
- Consider Noosa's environmental values
- Build community connection
- Celebrate Noosa's unique lifestyle
- Celebrate festive season events including Christmas, New Year and Australia Day
- Be held in the Noosa Shire
- Strengthen and compliment Noosa's event offerings and does not duplicate existing events.

Funding for other events is available through Council's Community Grants program. Check the program guidelines for eligibility criteria and further information.

5. Eligible Items

Eligible items for funding include:

- Hire of equipment and temporary structures
- Professional services e.g. waste removal, recycling services, entertainment, photographers etc.
- Event marketing and advertising

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- Lightshows for New Year's Eve events. Preference is given to lightshows that are environmentally friendly and do not cause atmospheric pollution
- Traffic management plans including traffic control services
- Indigenous recognition
- Sustainable event management (community, energy, water and waste management). See the [Visit Noosa](http://www.visitnoosa.com.au/images/50-Shades-Green.pdf) website (www.visitnoosa.com.au/images/50-Shades-Green.pdf) for more information.

6. Ineligible Items

The funding cannot be used for:

- Event costs funded by Tourism Noosa, Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation Ltd or another funding source
- Items or services or project activities occurring outside the project delivery period
- Events occurring outside the Noosa Local Government Area
- Consumables such as printing, fuel, vehicle/plant/equipment repair
- Consumable items including food, ingredients, beverages (including alcohol) or catering
- Administration expenses such as stationery, postage and office supplies
- Fireworks, other than for New Year's Eve events
- Installation and display of Christmas decorations in public places
- Balloons
- Prizes, prize money or trophies
- Domestic and overseas travel expenses
- Mobile phone costs
- Office equipment
- Wages or salaries
- Staff expenses including uniforms
- Grant writer fees or auspice fees
- Contingency costs
- Repayment of debts or loans
- Ongoing operational or recurrent costs including rent, leasing fees, bank fees and accounting fees
- Charitable fundraising
- Any events conducted for a commercial profit
- Purchases of equipment or services that benefit an individual
- Sponsorship or donations to other organisations
- Political activities
- Development of privately owned facilities

7. Funding Allocation

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Applicants are expected to contribute at least 20% of the total project budget through financial or in-kind support. These contributions highlight the applicant's commitment to the event's success and help maximise the financial investment made by Council.

The Signature Community Events program provides financial support to successful applicants in the form of a funding allocation determined by Council. The program provides financial assistance to help support the delivery of established events and is not intended to fund all or the majority of costs associated with an event.

8. Application Requirements

The Signature Community Events Grant follows a two-stage application process. Applicants must provide all required information in the application form to be considered for funding. **Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted** unless approved under exceptional circumstances

8.1. Stage 1: Expression of Interest (EOI)

Eligible applicants must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) through SmartyGrants, Council's online grant application portal.

The EOI must include:

- Event name, proposed start and end dates and event location
- A brief description of the event, including its purpose and objectives
- A brief statement on the anticipated benefit to the Noosa community
- Evidence of alignment with Council's strategic goals and key initiatives
- Evidence of the successful delivery of the event over at least three years in the Noosa Shire

EOI's will be assessed based on alignment with Council's strategic goals and key initiatives, demonstrated community benefit and demonstrated track record of delivering the event.

Successful EOI applicants will be invited to submit a full application in Stage 2.

8.2. Stage 2: Full Application

Applicants invited to submit a full application can do so through SmartyGrants. Full applications must include:

- A detailed event description, outlining the purpose, objectives and significance of the event
- A detailed explanation of the event's significance, including the specific community needs it addresses, the benefits it will provide, and how it contributes to the Noosa community
- Evidence of community support, including letters of support, partnership agreements, or details of collaborative initiatives
- Proof of relevant insurances
- A project plan detailing key milestones, timelines, risk management and sustainability measures

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- A comprehensive budget, detailing expected income and expenditure.
- Details of other funding sources and in-kind contributions
- A copy of meeting minutes confirming the organisation's commitment to hosting the event over the next three years.

9. Assessment

Only complete EOIs and full applications received before their respective closing dates will be assessed. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Demonstrated community need**
Clear evidence of a genuine need for the event, including community support, collaboration with other organisations and alignment with shared interests
- **Demonstrated benefit to the community**
The event provides benefits to the Noosa community, extending beyond the applicant organisation's membership
- **Applicant contribution**
Evidence of financial or in-kind contributions, funding from other sources, and effective use of Council's funding to achieve value for money
- **Demonstrated need for funding**
Clear justification of the funding required to successfully deliver the event
- **Capability to deliver the event**
Evidence of the applicant's ability to plan, coordinate and deliver a safe and successful event, including realistic budgets, necessary approvals and insurances

In some cases, applicants may receive partial funding to allow for the distribution of funds to more community groups. If this occurs, applicants will be responsible for funding the balance of the project cost.

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10. Grant Assessment Process

The following table outlines the grant assessment process:

| STAGE | ACTIVITIES |
|---|---|
| Stage 1 - Expressions of Interest (EOI) Open | Access to the EOI form on SmartyGrants is available from 9am on the day the grant round opens. |
| Stage 2 - EOI Closes | EOI submissions close at 12 noon on the nominated closing date. EOI's submitted after this time will not be accepted unless approved under exceptional circumstances. |
| Stage 3 - Pre-Assessment | Council's Grant Officer assesses the eligibility of each applicant. EOI submissions that are not properly completed, or do not include the required supporting evidence or attachments will be deemed ineligible and will not move to the next stage. |
| Stage 4 - EOI Assessment | EOI submissions are reviewed by a panel of senior staff to decide which submissions will proceed to the full application stage. |
| Stage 5 - Invitation to Full Application | Successful EOI applicants are invited to submit a full application. Unsuccessful EOI applicants will be notified. |
| Stage 6 - Full Application Period Opens | Access to the full application form on SmartyGrants is available to invited applicants from 9am on the day the full application period opens. |
| Stage 7 - Full Application Closes | Full applications close at 12 noon on the day the full application round closes. Applications submitted after this time will not be accepted. |
| Stage 8 - Allocation of Submissions for Review | The Grants Officer allocates each eligible application to a Council staff member whose experience aligns with the requested funding project. |
| Stage 9 - Assessment | An additional assessment is then completed by a Council staff member whose experience does not align with the requested funding project. |
| Stage 10 - Departmental Feedback | Applications are then sent for feedback from relevant Council departments. For example, events that require permits or approvals may need to be sent to Council's planning, property and/or heritage departments for further feedback. |
| Stage 11 - Moderators Meeting | Applications are presented to a panel of senior staff who consider all assessment feedback. The panel then makes recommendations on successful projects and funding amounts for consideration by Council. |
| Stage 12 - Councillor Workshop | A report is presented to Councillors for their consideration prior to the Ordinary Meeting. |
| Stage 13 - Ordinary Meeting | An Ordinary Meeting of Councillors is held to approve projects to be funded. |
| Stage 14 - Notification | Applicants are notified of the outcome of their applications via email on the day after the Council Meeting. A list of successful projects is also published on Council's website. |

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11. Outcome Notification

All applicants are notified of the outcome of their application by email. A list of successful projects is also published on Council's website. Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback on their application by emailing grants@noosa.qld.gov.au.

Council **will not** enter into discussions with organisations regarding the outcome of their applications prior to the funding announcement being made.

12. Successful applicants

Successful applicants will be sent a Funding Agreement and instructions on how to claim their grant funds. If the applicant is being auspiced, the Funding Agreement and instructions will be sent to the auspice organisation. All grant funds will be paid to the auspice organisation. Grant funds will not be released until the Funding Agreement is completed and signed.

Council may impose special conditions on any successful grant applicant. These special conditions need to be met either before funding is received, or during the project/before the funding is acquitted. Applicants will be notified if their funding is subject to special conditions.

13. Acknowledgement

As a condition of funding, successful applicants are required to actively and publicly acknowledge Council's support. The level of acknowledgement is determined by the amount funded and is outlined in the funding program agreement. In addition, funding recipients must also ensure that Council's positive reputation is maintained at all times

Further information on how to acknowledge Council and to download Council's logos can be found at noosa.qld.gov.au/community/grants/council-grants/funding-acknowledgement

14. Project reporting and acquittal

All successful applicants must provide an annual financial acquittal and project report within 30 days of their event. Additional reporting and acquittal requirements, including proof of acknowledgement and any special conditions, will be outlined in each applicant's Funding Agreement.

All applicants must maintain accurate financial and progress records relating to the delivery of the project during the funding period. Acquittals may be subject to an audit by Council, therefore all grant recipients are required to keep accurate financial records. These records are to be made available to Council should the applicant be selected for an audit.

Organisations will not be eligible to apply for future grant funding if grant acquittal conditions have not been met.

14.1. Reporting Requirements

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Successful applicants must submit the following documentation each year:

- Financial Acquittal
 - A breakdown of actual event income and expenditure, demonstrating how grant funds were spent
- Event Report
 - A summary of the event's outcomes, including attendance figures, community engagement, and how the event aligned with Noosa Council's strategic priorities
- Acknowledgement Evidence
 - At least two examples of how Council's support was acknowledged, such as promotional materials, media releases, or social media posts

14.2. Multi-Year Funding

Successive years of funding is contingent upon:

- Successful completion of annual acquittals and report
- Continued alignment with Council's strategic goals
- Meeting any special conditions outlined in the Funding Agreement

14.3. Auditing

Council reserves the right to audit grant recipients to verify compliance with funding conditions. All grant recipients must maintain accurate financial records and provide them upon request.

Failure to meet acquittal requirements may result in:

- Ineligibility for future Noosa Council grants
- Requirement to return unspent or inappropriately spent funds

15. Variations to Project Scope and Timing

Organisations must notify Council immediately if there are any changes to the project within the funding period. Please contact Council's Grants Officer on 07 5329 6437 or grants@noosa.qld.gov.au if a variation is required. Council will assess the variation request and notify the applicant of the outcome.

16. Applicant support

For further information or assistance with your application, contact Council's Grants Officer on 07 5329 6437 or grants@noosa.qld.gov.au

17. Resources

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17.1. Relevant Plans and Strategies

Councils adopted strategic documents can be [found here](#).

17.2. Definition of terms

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 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. |
| Audit | Closer financial examination of an acquittal to ensure that grant funds are expended correctly. |
| A 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 |
| Confirmed funding | Another source of grant funding already approved, or cash at bank etc. |
| Eligible | Satisfies the conditions, allowable expense |
| 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. |
| Ineligible | Not allowed, legally or officially unable to be considered |
| In-kind | Donation or provision of goods or services other than cash contributions e.g. donated materials, volunteer labour |
| Not-for-profit 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. |

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| 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>). |
| Unconfirmed funding | Another source of funding not yet approved or raised |

17.3. 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

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