Community Inclusion Grants Guidelines

Contents

City of Melbourne Community Grants and Partnership Framework

City of Melbourne adopted the [Community Grants and Partnerships Framework](#) in September 2022.

Through the Community Grants and Partnerships Framework, the City of Melbourne provides funding, expertise and support to socially-oriented organisations that address key social issues to ensure that our communities thrive. The [Council Plan](#)[1] is the guiding document which sets out Council's priorities and the Community Grants and Partnerships Framework enables the City of Melbourne to:

- empower [our communities](#)[2] to identify and respond to local areas of need

- partner with community organisations to deliver shared outcomes

- activate community participation amongst residents

- build capacity within the community sector.

We encourage our communities to take an active role in identifying and responding to social issues.

The following best practice principles and practices underpin the Community Grants and Partnerships Framework and inform the priorities for funding:

PRINCIPLE	PRACTICE
IMPACT	We take a purposeful and strategic approach to funding projects that deliver meaningful social impact in line with municipal priorities.
PARTNERSHIP	We know we can't solve tough problems alone. We use our funding to establish partnerships with organisations and individuals who share our ambitions for our communities.
INNOVATION	We discover new solutions to changing community needs and foster innovative approaches to addressing our social challenges.
TRANSPARENCY	We are transparent in our funding priorities, processes and decisions.
RESPONSIVENESS	We listen to our communities and adapt our funding focus areas and processes to be relevant, timely and proportionate.

---

[1] https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/pages/council-plan.aspx
[2] https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-melbourne/research-and-statistics/city-population/pages/community-profiles.aspx

Purpose of Community Inclusion grants

The City of Melbourne is committed to working in partnership to enable an inclusive community. Community Inclusion grants provide funding for projects that support diverse communities through increased community connection, access and participation, building on principles of equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Council Plan 2021-25 outlines six strategic objectives for the City of Melbourne to build on its strong foundations to be a city that thrives as a place that benefits all.

Applications to this program must align to the Council Plan[3] Strategic Objective of either Safety and Wellbeing or Access and Affordability.

Objectives of Community Inclusion grants

Community Inclusion grants allow the City of Melbourne to work in partnership to:

- support the needs and aspirations of diverse communities in the municipality

- empower local communities to identify and respond to issues

- increase community connections and belonging to increase participation and progress equity and inclusion

- build community capacity

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for funding through Community Inclusion grants, applications must meet the following criteria:

- Applicants must be a not-for-profit constituted body or a school. Auspiced applications are permitted in this program except for capital works projects.

    - Body Corporates are eligible to apply for a Community Inclusion grant only for the provision of a publically accessible community garden.

- Applicants must be located within, or be running the project within, the City of Melbourne municipality.

- Applications must have a focus on City of Melbourne's local communities and/or communities that are considered disadvantaged.

- Projects funded through Community Inclusion grants are eligible for up to two years of funding. Applications to this program are for one year of funding. Applicants may reapply for a second year of funding. This second year of funding is not guaranteed and applications will be assessed as per the standard process.

- Capital works projects:

    - Capital works projects will be considered for funding for local community organisations whose work aligns with Council priorities.

    - Auspiced applications will not be accepted for capital works projects.

    - Capital works applications will only be considered where the facility is located within the City of Melbourne boundary and owned by not-for-profit organisations. Funding cannot be used for capital works projects on Council-owned land or property.

---

[3] https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/Pages/council-plan.aspx

- Community garden applications will only be considered for property that is within the City of Melbourne boundary, and either owned by a not-for-profit body or privately owned. Funding will not be considered for gardens that are on Council owned land.

Funding will <u>not</u> be considered for:

- applicants who have already received funding thorough the Community Inclusion grants for projects taking place in the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

- core operational funding

- activities with a religious focus. For example activities that include religious service, education, preaching or proselytizing, or those that exclude community members of different faiths from participating

- party political activities

- activities that denigrate or exclude parts of the community or that breach Commonwealth and State anti-vilification laws

- commercial activities and/or organisations

- events

- fundraising activities, competitions, prizes

- interstate and international travel costs including travel costs for facilitators/consultants

- projects that duplicate existing services and programs

- activities that have already commenced or occurred

- projects that are being, or have already been, funded through other City of Melbourne grant or sponsorship programs

- projects that include the establishment of a social enterprise

- activities run by the City of Melbourne

- organisations with outstanding acquittals or debts owing to the City of Melbourne

- incomplete applications

- late submissions

Funding level

Applications for Community Inclusion grants funding can be made for between $1000 and $20,000.

Key dates

- Applications open 9am on Monday 15 January 2024.

- An online information session will be held on Wednesday 24 January at 1pm. Registration details can be found on the website.

- Applications close 11.59pm on Monday 12 February 2024.

- Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by mid-June 2024.

- First instalment of grant payments will be paid in mid-July 2024.

- Projects must start after 1 July 2024.

- Projects must be completed by 30 June 2025.

Assessment process

After the application period has closed and we have received your application:

- You will receive an email confirming receipt of your application.

- Your application will be assessed against the eligibility and assessment criteria by a panel of external assessors.

- Funding recommendations will be submitted for a decision by Council.

- All applicants will receive a notification via email with the result of their application by mid-June 2024. Information about grant decisions will not be given over the phone.

- The list of successful applicants will be published on the City of Melbourne's website approximately one week after all applicants have been notified of the outcome of their application.

Assessment criteria

Community Inclusion grant applications are assessed against the assessment criteria below. Only applications that adequately respond to the assessment criteria will be considered.

1. **Alignment to the Council Plan 2021-25 Strategic Objective Safety and Wellbeing and/or Access and Affordability priorities and other Strategic Objectives**

   - Does the project address Council Plan Safety and Wellbeing and/or Access and Affordability priorities?

   - Does the project address additional Council Plan Strategic Objectives?

2. **Meeting Community Inclusion grant objectives and community need at the local level**

   - Does the project respond to a need, aspiration or issue identified by the community? What is the evidence of this need?

   - How will the project be successful in addressing this need? What are the positive outcomes?

   - Does the project demonstrate community empowerment and capacity building in conception, development, delivery and outcomes?

   - How many City of Melbourne residents will benefit?

   Organisational capacity

   - Is the scope of the project appropriate to the organisation's resources and expertise?

   - Is the application well planned with clear deliverables and a realistic timeframe?

   - Does the application identify appropriate partners that will work with them in a collaborative way?

   - Does the organisation have a track record of delivering similar types of projects successfully?

   - Does the application outline an evaluation plan?

4. **Budget**

- Does the budget accurately reflect the scope and scale of the project?

- Have other funding sources been identified?

- Have the resources that are required to deliver the project been clearly identified?

- Does the total revenue match the total expenses?

- Is the project financially sustainable if it is to continue beyond the funding period?

- Have quotes been provided to support capital purchases?

Additional assessment notes:

City of Melbourne reserves the right to:

- not consider applications that do not meet the eligibility or assessment criteria

- request further information to inform our assessment

- when making final recommendations, take into consideration any funding that is already received from the City of Melbourne

- recommend partial funding

- require normal permits for all projects. If relevant, these should be outlined in the application (refer to the City of Melbourne website[4] for permits required within the City of Melbourne)

- request a declaration if quotes and/or other proposed services are provided by family, friends or committee members.

Additional assessment notes for Capital Works (including community gardens) applications:

- Building or landscape works for establishment, upgrade or renewal are a priority over routine maintenance applications.

- Facilities must be within the City of Melbourne boundary and owned by not-for-profit organisations or privately owned; funding cannot be used on Council owned land or property.

- Body corporates can apply for grants to establish community gardens within their property, that are publically accessible. Applicants must provide a copy of their constitution to show that they do not distribute profits or assets to their members.

Essential attachments for all applications

- Applicants must provide a certificate of currency for public liability or other relevant insurance.

- If the project targets children or young people aged 0-18 you must provide a copy of the organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Plan. Ensure your organisation's Plan is updated to reflect the new Child Safety Priorities that are mandatory from January 2023.

- If you are applying for capital works or maintenance on a community facility, you must submit at least two quotes.

- If you are applying to purchase significant single expenditure items (i.e. any items over $1000) you must include at least one quote.

---

[4] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/pages/permits.aspx

Lobbying

Canvassing or lobbying in relation to an application is strictly prohibited during the application process. No further consideration will be given to an application submitted by an applicant that canvasses or lobbies the Lord Mayor, City of Melbourne councillors or employees of the City of Melbourne.

Grant terms and conditions

If your application is successful, you will be required to:

- sign a funding agreement with the City of Melbourne that provides details about the terms and conditions of funding. The funding agreement will outline reporting and acquittal requirements specific to your application.

- supply all requested information prior to any funding being released.

- submit paperwork within the allocated timeframes. Funding is allocated from specific financial year budgets and if paperwork is not submitted within the allocated timeframe, then funding is forfeited by the funded organization.

- in some instances, meet or discuss your project with the grant manager and provide revised information.

- if the funded project includes contact with children aged 0-18, the organisation must have in place a Child Safety and Wellbeing Plan. The organisation must also ensure that all relevant staff, contractors, volunteers and committee members hold a valid working with children check and provide copies of these if requested by Council.

- use the funding allocated for the purposes specified in the application. Grants may not be used for any purpose other than for which it is granted, without the written permission of the City of Melbourne.

- deliver the project within the allocated budget. City of Melbourne will not be responsible for shortfalls in project budgets if the applicant is unable to meet project costs.

- acknowledge the City of Melbourne in all promotional materials relating to the successful application, including use of the logo.

- complete the project by the date stated in the funding agreement. Requests for extensions will need to be considered and agreed to by City of Melbourne.

- invite the Lord Mayor and Councillors to attend any significant launches or events associated with the project.

- acquit the grant and provide receipts to demonstrate the expenditure of a minimum 75 per cent of the grant. Grants for capital works and/or capital purchases must provide receipts to demonstrate the full expenditure of the grant.

How the grants will be paid

- Grants under $10,000 will be paid in one instalment.

- Grants from $10,000 to $20,000 will be paid in two instalments. The first instalment (70 per cent of the total grant) will be paid on provision of signed contract, invoice and any other requested information. The second instalment will be paid on submission of a mid-term report.

Completing your application

Applications will be submitted and managed online via SmartyGrants. Application forms can be accessed from the City of Melbourne website.

Applications will automatically be closed by the SmartyGrants system at 11.59pm on Monday 12 February 2024.

Please avoid submitting your application at the last minute. If there is heavy use of the system with others submitting last-minute applications, there may be delays which will affect your ability to lodge your application before the deadline and it will be deemed ineligible.

When your application is fully submitted you will receive an automated email containing a PDF copy of your application and confirmation that it has been received.

If you experience technical issues with the SmartyGrants system, please contact SmartyGrants directly (contact information on page 10).

Contacts

General enquiries

Please contact the City of Melbourne Community Grants Officer by email[5] or phone 03 9658 9901

SmartyGrants technical assistance

If you experience technical issues with the SmartyGrants system please contact them directly on email[6] or by phone: 03 9320 6888.

Further application assistance

If you are unable to complete the application form online due to access issues or you have difficulty using technology please contact us via email[7] or phone 03 9658 9901 and we will discuss how we can assist you to complete the forms.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Can my organisation submit more than one application?

A: No only one application per organisation will be accepted.

Q: We already have funding for this project from the City of Melbourne for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, can we apply again to continue the project?

A: Not at this time. Applications for projects taking place in the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 will open in July 2024, and you can apply for more funding in this round.

Q: What kind of things can I apply for?

A: To get an idea about the type of applications that have been funded in the past, visit the website[8] and review previous successful applications

Q: If we already have some funding allocated to this project, can we still apply for additional funding?

---

[5] commstrength@melbourne.vic.gov.au
[6] service@smartygrants.com.au
[7] commstrength@melbourne.vic.gov.au
[8] https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/strong-communities/funding-grants/pages/community-grants.aspx

A: Yes. In fact we encourage multiple funding sources for a project as this can strengthen the application and create greater sustainability for the project. The application form will ask you to declare additional funding sources for your project.

Q: My organisation is located outside of the City of Melbourne; can I apply?

A: To be eligible, organisations must be located within, or offer the project within, the City of Melbourne municipality. In addition, the program must have a focus on local and / or disadvantaged communities. City of Melbourne suburbs include: Carlton, Central Business District (Melbourne), Docklands, East Melbourne, Fisherman's Bend, Kensington, North Melbourne, Parkville, part of Port Melbourne, Southbank, parts of South Yarra and West Melbourne. You can view a map of the boundaries at the [City of Melbourne website](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/cityofmelbourne_boundarymap.pdf)[9].

---

[9] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/cityofmelbourne_boundarymap.pdf

Q: My group is not incorporated; can I apply?

A: To be eligible, applications must come from a school or a not-for-profit community organisation that is a legal entity. If you are an unincorporated group, you will be required to find an auspice prior to applying for an Inclusive Community Grant. If you apply under the auspice of an organisation, the City of Melbourne requires that you provide a letter from your auspice confirming that they agree to this arrangement. Note that for successful applicants that have an auspice, the City of Melbourne pays the grant to the auspice organisation.

Q: I am registered as a sole trader or my organisation is a for-profit can I apply using an auspice?

A: No, organisations that are registered as for-profit, or individuals are not eligible to apply either directly or using an auspice.

Q What is an auspice?

A: An auspice is an organisation that agrees to take legal and financial responsibility for administering the grant on behalf of the applicant where an applicant is not eligible or unable to apply for funding. To find out more about an auspice arrangement visit http://www.nfplaw.org.au/auspicing[10]

Q: I am applying for capital works; can I apply using an auspice?

A: No, applications for capital works and community gardens cannot be auspiced.

Q What are 'capital works'?

A: Capital works projects include community gardens, renovating existing buildings, constructing new buildings and purchase of items over $1000 that are not part of a larger project.

Q How many years can I apply for funding for the same project?

A: Organisations are eligible to apply for the same project a maximum of two times

Q: Can I ask for funding for operational costs?

A: No, any costs that are considered operational will not be considered for funding. Operational Support Grants[11] provide funding for operational costs up to $2000 for volunteer run organisations.

Q: Can I apply for funding to hold an event through this program?

A: No, events can be applied for through the Community Events Grants[12] program only.

---

[10] http://www.nfplaw.org.au/auspicing
[11] https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/strong-communities/funding-grants/Pages/operational-support-grants.aspx
[12] Community Events Grants - City of Melbourne