



Community Strengthening Grants

Council Guidelines

Council's Community Strengthening Grants stream is a source of financial support for local projects in West Wimmera Shire communities.

There are two rounds of grants each year as follows:

- Opening on the second Monday in March and closing the second Friday in April
- Opening on the second Monday in August and closing Second Friday in September

Applications will be assessed for eligibility and eligible applications will be submitted to Council for determination.

This grant is for financial support only.

Purpose & objective

The Community Strengthening Grants stream is designed to promote and increase participation of local residents in community initiatives, to build and strengthen local networks and partnerships and to support community leadership, learning and skill development.

- Council may provide financial assistance to community groups and organisations to support the provision of projects, activities and services, which respond to identified community needs, contribute to the building of a stronger community, develop innovative approaches to local issues and are in accordance with Council's strategic objectives.

Grants of up to \$5000 are available in two streams:

Community projects funding

- Maximum of \$5,000 on a \$2 for \$1 basis.
- Maximum of one successful application every four funding rounds per organisation.

Facilities upgrades and equipment purchases

- Maximum of \$5,000 on a \$2 for \$1 basis.
- Maximum of one successful application every four funding rounds per organisation.



Policy statement

Council provides grants to community groups for the development of positive and beneficial projects which deliver on the Community Vision 2041 and the Council's priority actions.

- West Wimmera Shire Community Vision 2041 is a statement that captures the hopes and aspirations of the West Wimmera community and ensures appropriate future planning.
- Council's strategic commitment to deliver on Council's Vision, which includes the following themes of Liveable & Healthy Community, Diverse and Prosperous Economy, Sustainable Environment, Good Governance & Our Commitment.

Key dates

All Community Strengthening Grants open on the:

-  Second Monday in March and closing second Friday in April
-  Second Monday in August and closing second Friday in September

Application process

- Step 1** Read the grant guideline criteria.
- Step 2** Talk to Volunteer and Events Officer via phone 13 99 72 or email grants@westwimmera.vic.gov.au.
- Step 3** Register your group or organisation on SmartyGrants.
- Step 4** Complete the online grant application form by the due date.
- Step 5** Application eligibility is assessed by a Council officer. If eligible the application will be forwarded to Council for determination.
- Step 6** Successful applicants notified, funding agreement issued and signed by both parties and funds paid.
- Step 7** At the conclusion of the grant period (12 months from the approval of the grant) the grant must be acquitted (see acquittal process in this guideline).

GRANT STREAMS

All funding streams should relate back to the objectives of the Council Plan

Community projects funding

Maximum of \$5,000 on a \$2 for \$1 basis.
Maximum of one successful application every four funding rounds per organisation.

Examples may include:

- These are projects that are designed to provide benefits to the community in a wide range of areas, for example:
- Community and cultural development
- Sport and recreation
- Health and wellbeing

Requirement:

- Quotations must be submitted with all applications in this category.
- Based on the \$2 for \$1 component of the grant, there is a maximum of 30% in-kind component of the applicant's contribution with the balance being a cash component.

Facilities upgrades and equipment

Maximum of \$5,000 on a \$2 for \$1 basis.
Maximum of one successful application every four funding rounds per organisation.

This category covers the funding of works or equipment related to community capacity building projects which support an ongoing community activity, project that can demonstrate one or more of the following objectives:

- Increases community participation in projects and activities.
- Assists community groups to operate more effectively.
- Encourages and supports the involvement of volunteers.
- Improves occupational health and safety.
- Contributes to environmental sustainability.

Requirement:

- Quotations must be submitted with all applications in this category.
- Based on the \$2 for \$1 component of the grant, there is a maximum of 30% in-kind component of the applicant's contribution with the balance being a cash component.

Eligibility criteria

Applicant must be a community group or organisation.

Community groups and organisations must be:

- not for profit; and
- incorporated or have an auspice arrangement.

Government organisations and agencies are not eligible to apply. However, kindergartens, Committees of Management, other community committees and local branches of larger organisations (e.g., CFA and SES) are eligible where significant community benefit potential can be demonstrated.

The project must be carried out within the West Wimmera Shire and must benefit the shire community.

Previously funded applicants must not have outstanding debts or overdue acquittals with Council.

Applicants must provide evidence of appropriate public liability insurance cover regarding the project.

Applicants must provide quotes or evidence to support the budget for any individual expenditure over \$250.

The following rates must be used to calculate in-kind budget expenses for applicable grants:

- Community group/individual labour: \$30 per hour.
- Professional labour provided by a qualified tradesperson: \$45 per hour.

The number of times an applicant has previously received funding through the Community Strengthening Grants stream will be considered during the determination process. Council may choose not to fund a project by applicants who have previously received funding should the program be oversubscribed.

For the facilities improvement grant, the applicant must either be the owner of the land/building/facility or have written consent from the owner. This consent must be attached to the online application.

Funding conditions

All applications must be submitted online at <https://westwimmera.smartygrants.com.au/>

- All applicants must acknowledge that they have read and understood the legislative requirements for volunteer health and safety. A Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers.
- All applicants must submit a completed application via SmartyGrants to Council before the closing date to be considered for funding.
- If successful, funding will be paid directly into the bank account specified in the tax invoice.
- Grant approval is subject to the applicant demonstrating that they have obtained the necessary permits or approvals to complete the project.
- All projects must be completed within 12 months of receiving funding notification unless Council gives prior written permission for an extension. Extensions may be granted up to a maximum of 6 months.
- Applicants are required to submit a final project/acquittal report via SmartyGrants at the completion of the project.
- Every approved project is subject to the acquittal process to validate the expenditure and confirm that the funding has been spent on the project in accordance with the funding agreement.
- Council accepts no responsibility for budget over-runs.
- Council accepts no responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of projects.

Council will not fund:

- ✗ Applicants whose project has received Council funding for the same activity through another grant stream.
- ✗ Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education, and other Government organisations.
- ✗ Projects that provide direct financial benefit to a commercial business or individual.
- ✗ Projects that cannot demonstrate significant benefit/outcomes to the West Wimmera Shire community.
- ✗ Works that have already commenced prior to the grant application deadline.
- ✗ The purchase of land.
- ✗ Projects for which the funding is the responsibility of other levels of government.
- ✗ An organisation's recurring operational costs such as salaries, rent and utilities or insurance.
- ✗ Duplicates of existing services/activities unless it can be demonstrated that it meets an unmet community need.
- ✗ Applications made by individuals.
- ✗ Funding for prizes, donations, awards, scholarships, sponsorships, or gifts.
- ✗ Activities that are inconsistent with the Council Plan.
- ✗ Payments or wages for contracted staff, players, coaches, and/or administrators.
- ✗ Deficit funding (to repay cash shortfalls).
- ✗ Applicants who have received funding in the past four Community Strengthening Grant rounds.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Council staff will assess the application against the grant guidelines and provide a report for Councils determination.
- Council will approve or refuse an application at its discretion.
- All applicants will be informed on the outcome of their application in writing.
- If the application is assessed as ineligible under the grant criteria, the application will not proceed to Council for determination.
- Applications under this guideline will cease when grant stream budget has been exhausted.

Acquittal report requirements

Having completed your funded project, Council requires the following information from you:

- Account for your use of public funds, demonstrating that the funding was used for the purpose for which it was provided and in accordance with your funding agreement
- Assist Council in assessing how successful funding programs are in meeting the needs of the West Wimmera Shire community.
- Provide you with the opportunity to make suggestions regarding improvements to the funding program.

Your acquittal report due date and full acquittal requirements are specified in your letter of offer / funding agreement.

Acquittals are submitted online using SmartyGrants. All funding recipients will be sent information about the acquittal process (including a link to your acquittal report form) and timeline directly via email.

If you do not satisfactorily acquit your grant, you will not be eligible to apply for further Council grant funding and you will be required to return any funds not spent on the project to West Wimmera Shire Council. Council will notify you once we have received and accepted your acquittal. If you have any difficulty providing your report on time or complying with any specified requirements, you should discuss this with West Wimmera Shire Council's Volunteer and Events Officer as soon as possible on Ph: 13 99 72.

CONTACT

For assistance in completing the online application please contact the Volunteer and Events Officer via phone 13 99 72 or email grants@westwimmera.vic.gov.au

Disclaimer: these guidelines are updated regularly. Please ensure your application aligns with the most current guidelines available on Council's Community Grants webpage.

Additional information

Features of a strong funding application.

There are ways to make your funding application more competitive:

- Broader community reach, multiple objectives.
- Clearly outline what is proposed, why it is needed, how it will be achieved, who is involved and where it will take place.
- Provide relevant support material: preference will be given to projects that can demonstrate clear, defined partnerships with other community organisations and demonstrate partnership by providing letters of support from partner organisations/groups.
- Provide relevant support material that shows the potential of the proposed activity.

Auspice information

If your group is a not-for-profit organisation but is not incorporated, you must find a local organisation that can auspice your application prior to application lodgement.

Once you have an agreed auspice organisation you will be required to complete an auspice agreement form and upload the completed form and the auspicings organisation's proof of incorporation.

- It is the applicant's responsibility to have an auspice agreement completed using the grant stream auspice agreement form.
- Applicants must keep the auspice organisation fully informed of the details of the application and all project aspects and progress.
- In some instances, an applicant may request the auspice organisation provides public liability insurance (PLI) for their project. Should this occur, the applicant must obtain a public liability certificate of currency from the auspice organisation and include this in the applicant application. A policy statement or receipt is not acceptable.

Legal and taxation requirements

- If required, you must arrange public liability insurance to cover the activities detailed in the grant application.
- All applications must include an Australian Business Number (ABN) or provide a statement by a supplier form available from the ATO website.
- Allocated funds must be expended within 12 months of receiving the grant unless an extension has been granted.

Acknowledgement, promotion and marketing

- Successful grant applicants must acknowledge West Wimmera Shire Council as a funding source on all marketing and publicity material.
- You must include the Council official logo and the following wording: 'This project is supported by the West Wimmera Shire Council through its Community Strengthening Grants'.
- A logo will be supplied via email to successful applicants. Successful applicants are required to contact the Volunteer and Events Officer to arrange approval of all proofs/materials before making these public.
- Unauthorised use of the West Wimmera Shire Council logo or inappropriate attribution may result in the funded applicant being ineligible to apply for further grants.

Guideline no:

Adopted by council: 17 April 2024

Next review date: May 2025

Executive Director: Director Corporate and Community Services

Responsible Officer: Manager Community Development and Tourism

Functional Area: Corporate and Community Services

Guideline Adopted:	Council Meeting 19/04/23		Policies and Procedures Team
Guideline Reviewed:	Council meeting 17/04/24		Policies and Procedures Team



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