



Shopfront Improvement Grant Guidelines

Council Guidelines

Shopfront Improvement Grant Guidelines

1. Program Overview

The Shopfront Improvement Grant Program supports retail and hospitality businesses to improve the appearance, accessibility, and functionality of street-facing shopfronts within the West Wimmera Shire.

The program aims to enhance streetscapes, increase foot traffic, and strengthen local business activity.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Shopfront Improvement Grant Program are to:

- Improve the visual appeal of retail and hospitality shopfronts
- Encourage investment in local business premises
- Support accessible and inclusive business environments
- Contribute to vibrant and attractive town centres

3. Funding Available

West Wimmera Shire Council has allocated **\$20,000 per annum** to the Shopfront Improvement Grant Program.

- Grants of up to **\$5,000 (plus GST)** are available per business
- Funding is provided on a **\$2 to \$1 co-contribution basis**
- Applications will be accepted until the annual budget allocation is exhausted

4. Who Can Apply (Eligibility)

✓ Applicants must:

- Operate a retail or hospitality business with a **street-facing shopfront**
- Be located within the **West Wimmera Shire**
- Hold a **current ABN**
- Be located within a **shopping strip**
- Be a **small business**, defined as employing fewer than 20 people
- Hold all required **permits and licences**
- Be **up to date with Council rates**
- Hold **public liability insurance**
- Not be in breach of any laws
- Have **at least 12 months remaining on their lease** (if leasing)

5. Who Cannot Apply

✗ The following are not eligible to apply:

- Political groups or government agencies
- Charities primarily focused on fundraising
- Businesses operating gaming machines or receiving support from EGM venues
- Large franchises (e.g. supermarkets)
- Home-based businesses
- Applicants who have received funding from this grant program in the past **two years**
- Applicants who do not meet eligibility requirements or fail to provide required documentation

6. What Will Be Funded

✓ Eligible shopfront improvement works include:

- Accessibility upgrades (e.g. ramps, automatic doors)
- Metal/wood awnings and canopies
- External lighting
- Painting and redecorating shopfronts
- Window and door upgrades
- Window decals and digital display boards
- Serving windows

7. What Will Not Be Funded

✗ Ineligible items include:

- Building and planning application fees
- Works required as a condition of a development approval
- Works on buildings that have received Council grant funding in the past **three years**
- Outdoor dining furniture
- Security systems (including CCTV)
- Ongoing business costs (e.g. rent, wages)
- Sign writing

8. Application Process

Applications must be submitted online via **SmartyGrants**:

<https://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/Business/BusinessSupport/>

Applications must include:

- A short project summary with “before” photographs
- Detailed quotes for the proposed works (local contractors preferred)
- Copies of any required permits or licences
- Owner consent (if applicable)
- Financial reports for the previous 12 months

Applicants will receive a confirmation email upon submission. Council may request additional information if required.

9. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

| | |
|--|--|
| | The application is for façade or access improvement works |
| | The applicant is a small business owner |
| | Proposed works align with approved colour palettes, façade designs, or streetscape plans |
| | Proposed works are consistent with heritage character (where applicable) |
| | Accessibility works comply with relevant disability legislation |
| | The application includes all required information and documentation |

Council reserves the right to approve or refuse applications based on colour, materials, or methods of execution.

10. Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed by a panel consisting of:

- A member of the Community Development team
- A member of the Planning team
- A member of the Engineering team
- A member of the Projects and Innovation team

Projects may not receive the full amount requested. Final approval will be endorsed by Council at its next available meeting.

11. Funding Agreement and Conditions

Successful applicants must:

1. Enter into a funding agreement with Council prior to commencing works
2. Complete approved works within **12 months** of signing the agreement
3. Use funds only for the approved project
4. Obtain all required planning and building permits prior to receiving funds
5. Submit two quotes for works exceeding \$1,000 (if not owner-completed)
6. Cover any cost overruns
7. Participate in promotional activities related to the program

12. Acquittal

At the conclusion of all works and within 12 months of the receipt of the grant the successful applicant must complete the Smarty Grant online acquittal form. The grant recipient will be required to demonstrate the following:

- All funds provided under the Shopfront Improvement Grant Program were used exclusively for eligible project costs as defined in the program guidelines.
- Expenditure included approved items such as accessibility upgrades, repainting, window refurbishments, or other permitted façade improvements.
- The grant recipient has submitted all required documentation including:
 - Photographs of completed works
 - Copies of invoices and receipts
 - Contractor quotes, where applicable
 - Confirmation that all permits and regulatory obligations were met
- All works were carried out in compliance with Victorian legislation, relevant safety requirements, and any applicable planning or building permit conditions.
- The project did not obstruct public access or compromise safety during construction.

13. Compliance and Safety Requirements

Applicants must comply with all relevant Victorian legislation, including:

- Occupational Health and Safety laws
- Electricity Safety regulations
- Road Management Act 2004 requirements
- Asbestos handling and management requirements

Works must not obstruct pedestrian or vehicle movement, and appropriate traffic management must be implemented where required.

14. Disclaimer

- Council is not responsible for underestimation of project costs
- Meeting eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding
- Funding is subject to available budget
- Council reserves the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances

15. More Information

Applications can be accessed via:

<https://westwimmera.smartygrants.com.au/>

For further information, contact the Community Development team:

Phone: 13 99 72

Email: council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au