Community Grants Program

GUIDELINES 2023/24

Overview

Intent / Purpose

Fraser Coast Regional Council's Community Grants Policy supports the Goals outlined in Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2028. https://www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/corporate-plan

- To embrace the Fraser Coast way of life and create connected communities through our places, spaces and people.
  - Provide inclusive cultural, sporting and recreation opportunities to encourage community participation.

Objectives of the Community Grants Program

- Provide identified and measurable social, community or economic benefits to the Fraser Coast communities;
- Align with Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2028

This Program is intended to:

- Provide eligible community organisations with support to meet identified community needs

- Build community skills, capacity and resilience

- Develop and maintain community infrastructure

- Provide opportunities for community organisations to leverage Council's assistance to obtain funding from other sources

- Provide opportunities for community organisations to assist Council to deliver on Councils strategic goals and identified key initiatives

Grants available

The Fraser Coast Regional Council Community Grants are targeted towards projects and one-off event funding.

Groups can apply for funding from $500 to $15,000 as cash.

- Maximum 2 applications per group per annum will be funded
- Maximum grant limit of $15,000 per annum will be funded
  (amount is inclusive of the value of any in-kind services provided by any Council Department)

The following funding is available in 2023-24 financial year through the Community Grants Program:

- $235,000 for projects and events to be spread over 4 rounds during the financial year with $58,750 notionally allocated per round
- For each round Council will approve a limited number of grants at each funding level as shown in the table below
- ***Due to the 2024 Council election rounds 3 and 4 have been combined, a total pool for this round is $117,500***

Grants on offer each round

Funding Levels	Funds Available
1 grant @ up to $15,000	$15,000
2 grants @ up to $10,000	$20,000
remainder of grant applications at up to $5,000	$23,750
Total	**$58,750**

Applications will be assessed as part of a competitive process targeting maximum benefits to the wider community. Organisations that have not received Council funding in the last 12 months will be prioritised in one of the selection criteria.

If an applicant does not have access to a computer, Council libraries can provide access to a computer and the internet and some initial guidance to enable access to the application form.

Co-contribution is not a requirement for this grant program, however projects where the applicant is making a financial contribution will be highly regarded.

An unsuccessful application does not mean that the project or activity is not worthy of support. Unsuccessful applications can be re-submitted in later Rounds.
Council's Grants Team can offer support to applicants to strengthen applications for re-submission.

Logistics

Proposed grant round dates.

Applications open at 12:01am on the opening date and close at 3:00pm on the closing date.

Round	Timing	Eligible Project Start and End Dates	Estimated Advice of Outcome
1 – 2023	Opens 10 July 2023 Closes 10 August 2023	Start 9 October 2023 End 9 April 2024	4 October 2023
2 – 2023	Opens 9 October 2023 Closes 9 November 2023	Start 24 December 2023 End 24 June 2024	20 December 2023
~~3 – 2024~~	~~Opens 2 January 2024~~ ~~Closes 31 January 2024~~	~~Start 25 March 2024~~ ~~End 25 September 2024~~	~~Estimated to be early March 2024~~
3 & 4 – 2024	Opens 15 April 2024 Closes 12 May 2024	Start 1 July 2024 January 2025	Estimated to be late June 2024

Applicants and grant projects must comply with the Fraser Coast Regional Council Community Grants Scheme Policy and the program guidelines.
Projects and activities are to be completed within six months of the approval date (unless a variation has been sought from and approved by Council).

'Request for Variation' forms are available for completion and lodgement online through the SmartyGrants applicant site. For assistance, please contact Council's Grants Team.

Any funds remaining unallocated from a round will be rolled into the subsequent round.

Assistance, Assessment and Approval Responsibilities

Council's Grants team is available to provide general advice and guidance to local groups when developing funding applications. It should be noted however that there is no capacity for Council Officers to write and submit applications on behalf of local groups.

Applications will be assessed for applicant and project eligibility by Council's Grants Team.
Initial assessment of project suitability and organisational capacity to deliver will be undertaken by the Grants Coordinator.
Council's Community Development and Engagement Team will be consulted for input on project relevance to adopted Community Plans and existing work within individual communities or groups of communities across the region. Feedback from other Council Departments will be sought as appropriate.

Applications will be assessed by an Assessment Panel appointed for each round.
The Panel will comprise a Councillor, Mayor/Deputy Mayor and CEO.

The panel will assess applications shortly after the grant round closes and make recommendations. Recommendations of the assessment panel will go to a full Council meeting for approval.

Subsequent rounds will open on the nominated date and after Council approval of the previous round.

Eligibility

Who <u>can</u> apply to Council's Community Grants Program?

Incorporated not-for-profit community organisations are eligible to apply for a Community Grant provided they meet the following criteria:

- The organisation:

  - Is based within the Fraser Coast local government area or is fully delivering a project within the Fraser Coast local government area;

  - Is a legal not-for-profit entity, complying with all incorporation requirements of the State and Commonwealth as at the closing date for the grant program;

  - Has appropriate insurances;

  - Has met all reporting and acquittal conditions for any previous Council grants;

  - Has no debt to Council outside standard trading terms or has entered into scheduled payment arrangements with Council that is being adhered to.

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If a community group is not incorporated and wants to apply for a Grant, the group is able to do so provided that the application is auspiced and administered by an eligible incorporated not-for-profit community organisation that is willing and able to accept legal and financial responsibility for the grant.

Please contact Council's Grants Team for advice or assistance in identifying a suitable auspice organisation.

Who cannot apply to Council's Community Grants Program?

- Government agencies or departments of local, state or federal government; or

- Educational, religious, political, or medical organisations, where the application is for the organisation's core business. Benefit to the broader community outside the applicant organisation must be addressed in the application; or

- Commercial businesses and enterprises – (these types of organisations are eligible to apply for events grants only through this program); or

- Individuals; or

- Not for profit community organisations with a liquor-licensed supporters / associated club, gaming licence or that commercially trades seven days a week (these types of organisations are eligible to apply for events grants through this program); or

- Organisations who have not provided requested reporting or Outcome Reports as required by any Council-provided grant or sponsorship.

Council will not consider applications that:

- Are incomplete or applications that do not include all the required supporting documentation

- Are for retrospective funding for events or projects

- Do not support Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2028; www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/corporate-plan

- Do not comply with the Community Grants Policy;

- Do not comply with any applicable legislative requirements;

- Are from organisations that have already received funding twice in the financial year through the Community Grants program; and/or

- Are for projects or activities that provide any ongoing financial or in-kind commitment for Fraser Coast Regional Council, unless agreed to by Council. (e.g. **ongoing and regular** maintenance of equipment, grounds works or structures located on Council Property)

- Are for fundraising activities where the profits are directed to one or more other local organisations

- Do not utilise local (Fraser Coast) businesses or services. Approval to use out-of-region suppliers must be sought before the time of application. Evidence to support this request must be provided.

- Have already received funding for the project through Council Sponsorship

Selection Criteria to be addressed by applicants

- Demonstrated community benefit from the planned activity or project

- Clear explanation of the Project need including how this need was identified

- Explanation of how the grant funds are to be spent and proportion that is local expenditure

- Contribution of the applicant organisation to the proposed Project or Event (including in-kind contributions)

- Recent funding History – priority will be given to organisations that have not received funding in the last 12 months through the Fraser Coast Community Grants Program

Application Requirements

All applications will require the following information:

- Incorporation Number; and

- ABN Number; and

- Latest Audited Financial Statement or Balance Sheet that is provided to Office of Fair Trading that shows organisational solvency; and

- Bank account verification (e.g. bank statement identifying bank account name and number); and

- Information on the project to be undertaken
  Outline of project need and the community benefit from the project,
  how the need was identified
  expected outcomes of the project and how these will be measured; and

- For capital projects, evidence of building permissions required to complete the project if applicable. Evidence that no permissions are needed should also be provided; and

- Completion of a Budget Table; and

- In order to demonstrate value for money 2 quotes from different suppliers will be required for funding requested amounts of $1,000 or more. 1 Quote required for funded requested amounts of under $1,000.   **Note:** If local suppliers are not used, a request to use non-local suppliers must be approved prior to application lodgement. Evidence of attempts to secure local suppliers must be included; and

- Land Owners Consent if applicable (includes leased properties); and

- Evidence of approval from Management Committee to lodge the Grant Application.
  Grants applications under $5,000 require a letter from organisation signed by 2 members of Committee.
  Grants applications over $5,000 require a copy of minutes of management committee meeting approving grant application or flying minute of executive approving application; and

- Details of how you will acknowledge Council support.

For all successful projects, the applicant organisation must:

- Enter into a Funding Agreement with Council for the approved project; and

- Provide an invoice to Council for the approved grant amount.

Application Process

1. Council will publicise availability of its grants programs on Council's website and social media sites and by direct email to individuals/organisations listed on the Grants Distribution list.

   Council will undertake ongoing engagement and capacity building with the community, assisting applicants to identify and develop projects.

2. Council's grant programs are based on-line and applications must be submitted though the SmartyGrants portal.

   The application form can be previewed prior to commencement of the application, and a pdf file can be printed from the final (review) page once an application has been commenced.

The online form is the only method for submitting an application.

   If an applicant does not have access to a computer, Council libraries can provide access to a computer and the internet and some initial guidance to enable access to the application form. If this process presents challenges for your Organisation please contact Council's Grants Team for advice.

   Once an application is started, any number of people within the organisation can work on the application using the same login and password (only one person can be logged in at a time).

   Council officers are available to provide advice to community organisations.

   They can assist organisations to identify additional and/or alternative sources of funding relevant to their project or activity.

   For help with the questions within the application form, assistance can be provided by Council's Grants Team and Community Development and Engagement Team.
   Contact information is contained within the application form.

3. Quotes or qualified estimates for project costs must be submitted with the application.

4. When an application is submitted, the applicant will receive an email confirming lodgement and a copy of the submitted application for the organisation's records. If this email is not received, it means that the application was not successfully lodged. Please contact the Grants Team for advice.

Approval Process and Payments

1. Applications will initially be assessed by the Grants Officer to confirm organisational and project eligibility. If the grant round has not yet closed, and errors are identified, the Grants Officer will endeavour to work with the applicant to correct the application. Any amendments must be undertaken within the open application status of the Grant Application Round.

2. After the Grant Round closes, the Assessment Panel will undertake assessment of applications. The Assessment Panel makes recommendations for project grant funding.
   In assessing the grants, the panel will:

   - Ensure public monies are allocated in a fair and equitable way

   - Ensure the best possible value for money

   Panel recommendations will go to a Council Meeting to be approved by resolution.

3. Following the Council meeting successful applicants will be notified by email and provided with a funding agreement for signing.
   The agreement must be returned within 90 days of the 'advice of funding' to Council with a valid invoice from the applicant Organisation for the grant amount.
   Failure to return within this time could result in cancellation of the offer of funding.

   In some instances there may be specific Conditions of Funding that need to be met before payment can be made.
   Where the application is auspiced, the invoice will need to be from the auspice organisation.

4. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and will be provided an opportunity to seek feedback from Council's Grants Team on how they can strengthen future applications.

Grant Acquittal Requirements and Conditions

1. All successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Council and acquit funds within the allocated timeframes.
   Project Outcome reports (Acquittal) will be available to successful applicants online through the SmartyGrants portal.
   All questions must be completed on the acquittal form and evidence supplied including:

   - receipts;

   - photographs of activities;

   - proof of Council acknowledgement (logo placement on flyers, advertisements, social media etc.)

2. Successful applicants will be required to actively and publicly acknowledge Council's support.
   The level of acknowledgement will be determined by the amount funded and will be outlined in the funding agreement.

3. All projects must be completed within six months of the Funding Agreement being executed.

4. Unspent grant funds must be returned to Council within 60 days of the project completion.

5. Changes must not be made to the approved project or activity without the prior agreement of Council. Council will endeavour to approve changes where the level of community benefit is maintained as per the application.

6. Any purchases associated with the project must be transacted with a Fraser Coast business where possible. Approval must be sought for the use of out of region contractors indicating reasons.

Examples of eligible projects and activities

Facilities / Improvements – Undertaking necessary repairs / improvements to the applicant's facilities.

Applicants applying for funding to undertake facility improvements must either:

- own the building and/or land; or

- have an instrument of tenure, demonstrated custom and practice (or a combination of both); and

- have written approval of the owner (lessor) to undertake the proposed facility improvements – this includes for any land/buildings leased by the applicant group from Council; and

- provide evidence of consultation of planning / building permissions needed.

  Improvements might include:

  - construction of demountable buildings, amenities blocks, playgrounds, sheds, lighting or storage facilities;

  - internal and external building improvements

  - upgrades or refurbishments to existing facilities

  - fit-out costs required for occupation and use

  - removable items requiring fixed footings (e.g. goal posts or shade structures)

  - permanent fixtures to buildings including air conditioners, extensions, patios or decking, solar panel and system installation, solar battery storage, awnings

  - grandstands or stadium seating

  - fencing

  - shade structures

  - landscaping

Equipment – Purchase equipment that will be used by the applicant organisation in delivering services to its members and the broader community. This might include:

  - Kitchen equipment (fridges, stoves, canteen equipment)

  - Office equipment (photocopiers / scanners)

  - Grounds maintenance equipment (mowers etc.)

  - Sporting equipment

Events – event elements including:

  - Marketing Costs -including advertising

  - Hire of temporary infrastructure

  - Road closure costs

  - Programming elements that have lasting benefit to the community (workshops etc)

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Examples of in-eligible expenditure

- Core operational funding costs

- Repairs or maintenance to buildings or assets that form part of an Organisation's responsibilities in a lease agreement with Council

- Activities undertaken or committed to purchase before the organisation is notified in writing their application is successful

- Repayment of debts and loans

- Overseas travel costs

- Consumables including catering

- Funding for a staff or member social event

- Purchase of goods or services that benefit an individual or small, targeted group in the community;

- Purchase of Alcohol.

- Projects or activities that provide and ongoing financial or in-kind commitment for Fraser Coast Regional Council unless agreed to by Council. (e.g. **ongoing and regular** maintenance of equipment, grounds works or structures located on Council Property)

- Gifts or prizes in the form of cash, gift card or goods and services.

- Donations to and sponsorship of other groups

- Grant writer fees and associated costs are ineligible for funding. Associated costs include project management fees (including payment for managing the construction of facility improvements and/or the purchase of funded items)