

Financial Assistance, Grants and Donations

Purpose

This policy describes the specific conditions associated with Council providing and managing funding opportunities offered to support community organisations and individuals to conduct activities, build capacity, host events, and to build strong partnerships with Council.

Scope

This policy applies to all Council provided and managed funding rounds including grants, donations, financial rating subsidies, and the Mayoral Discretionary Fund for community projects.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Community Grants	A Community Grant is a financial contribution by Council, or managed by Council, towards the costs of a project or initiative which has been approved for funding via the selection criteria and processes of Council's Community Grants Program which may include a financial donation towards rates or Council charges for eligible community groups and organisations.
Local Heritage Grants	A Local Heritage Grant is a financial contribution towards the costs of a project which has been approved for funding via the selection criteria and processes of Council's Local Heritage Grants Program
Mayoral Discretionary Fund	Council provides for the Mayor to make small donations for the benefit of community organisations and individuals not otherwise in receipt of Council funds.

Policy Principles

Yass Valley Council is committed to providing consistent, open, and equitable financial assistance to the community within the Local Government Area (LGA). Funding is provided under the three funds (Community Grants, Local Heritage Grants, and Mayoral Discretionary).

- Applications for grant funding must:
 - be made to the relevant funding round
 - be made by submitting the relevant application form and any supporting documentation by the due date, and
 - comply with and address criteria prescribed in the guidelines for each funding round.
- Ranking, criteria, and assessment processes are described in the guidelines for each grant fund.
- Previous receipt of funds from Council does not guarantee application approval.
- The body or individual which has not satisfied the conditions of previous funding are eligible to apply for further grants, as each application is assessed on merit.
- The body or individual receiving financial assistance will be accountable to Council for the administration of any funds provided:

- Council must be immediately notified, and its approval obtained for any changes in the proposed use of its funding. Where the change is not approved any funding provided under the program must be immediately returned.
- Council will expect a written report for financial assistance over \$1,000. The acquittal report should include receipts and any relevant publicity and promotional material associated with the project.

As required by the Local Government Act Section 428(1) the total amount contributed or otherwise granted under Section 356 will be disclosed in Council's Annual Report.

Community Grants

Council will resolve annually to provide financial assistance through a community grants program to eligible not-for-profit community organisations, and groups which are incorporated associations, based in the LGA who apply for community grants. Council will set aside an appropriate amount in the annual operating budget.

Grants made under the Community Grants Program will be for projects or initiatives which contribute to the achievement of one or more of the following strategies of the Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036:

- CO1: Facilitate and encourage equitable access to community infrastructure and services, such as health care, education and transport.
- CO2: Encourage and facilitate active and creative participation in community life.
- CO3: Foster and encourage positive social behaviours to maintain our safe, healthy and connected community.
- CO4: Recognise and celebrate our diverse cultural identities and protect and maintain our community's natural heritage.
- CO5: Maintain our rural lifestyle.
- EN1: Protect and enhance the existing natural environment, including flora and fauna native to the region.
- EN3: Protect and rehabilitate waterways and catchments.
- IN4: Maintain and update existing community facilities and support the development of new community infrastructure as needed.

Community grant applications will be open to the public each February and March, to enable determination of successful applications to be included in the annual Operational Plan (budget).

Assessment of Community Grant Applications

Applications will only be considered once per year. Applications will be assessed on how they contribute and achieve one or more of the above Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036 strategies.

The Director Corporate & Community will review all applications and provide comment for the elected Council to make the final determination on which applications will be approved for funding and what amount is allocated. The decision will be recorded in Council minutes, will be published in the local media, and reported in the Annual Report under Section 356.

Local Heritage Grants

Local Heritage Grants aim to promote conservation of heritage items identified in Schedule 5 of the *Yass Valley Environmental Plan 2013* and can assist property owners to carry out restoration works.

In addition, one local Heritage Grant will be available annually for a project managed by a recipient of the Age Pension. This grant may not be combined with any other grant and does not require a funding contribution from the project manager.

There is an upper limit of \$4,000 for each Local Heritage Grant and in each case the grant must not total more than 50 per cent of the cost of the project or initiative.

In addition, one Local Heritage Grant of up to \$2,000 will be annually available for a project managed by a recipient of the Age Pension. This grant may not be combined with any other grant but does not require a funding contribution from the project manager.

Applications for Local Heritage Grants must be made to Council by the annually specified due date.

If projects which are the subject of grant applications require Development Consent or approval under the Local Government Act 1993, the Consent or approval must have been granted prior to the application being lodged.

A discussion of the project and any advice provided by Council's Heritage Advisor prior to submitting the grant application will be a consideration in determining funding.

Grants are not available for the retrospective financing of projects however, in exceptional circumstances payment in arrears may be considered for priorities not awarded in the first round.

Landowners, organisations, and groups which have not satisfied the conditions of previous grants are not eligible to apply for further grants.

Assessment of Local Heritage Grant Applications

Applications will be assessed and ranked as follows:

- Clear articulation of:
 - The objective of the project or initiative
 - Its design characteristics
 - Its implementation steps
 - How it will contribute to the achievement of the relevant CSP objective/s
 - Clear specification of a budget relating to each element of the project or initiative.
- The demonstrated capacity of the applying organisation, group, or landowner to successfully undertake the project or initiative
- Whether there is an alternative source of funds

Applications will be assessed by panels appointed by Council.

Council's program of Local Heritage Grants is dependent upon funding being received from the Office of Environment & Heritage and the grant awarded to any applying landowner, organisation or group will reflect the availability of funds.

Local Heritage Grants must be expended on the relevant projects and initiatives in the financial year that they are received and an acquittal report lodged with Council.

Mayoral Discretionary Fund

Each year Council considers the need for and level of funds that can be provided for the Mayoral Discretionary Fund and will set aside an appropriate amount in the annual Operational Plan. Donations from this fund are to benefit community organisations and individuals where other Council financial support or grant programs are not suitable or available.

Donations under the Fund:

1. are determined by the Mayor
2. will have an upper limit of \$200 for each donation
3. can be made at any time during the financial year, within the budget allocation

4. will typically constitute one-off assistance which may include, but not limited to, contributions for welfare support, community fundraising initiatives, venue hire fees, or a contribution towards a community-based activity or event, and
5. will be limited to organisations which have not received funding from Council or a government agency in the previous 12 months.

The Mayor may consult other Councillors and/or the General Manager in considering applications for donations.

Councillors, Council staff and their immediate families (parent, spouse, partner, or children) are ineligible to apply.

Applications for funding will be recorded in a register detailing the name of the applicant, nature of the request, and the Mayors determination.

Responsibilities & Review

The Corporate & Community business unit will provide all necessary administrative support for the operation of Community Grants and the Mayoral Discretionary Fund, developing and documenting any procedures, ensuring the effective implementation of this policy.

The Planning & Environmental business unit will provide all necessary administrative support for the operation of the Heritage Grants, developing and documenting any procedures, and ensuring the effective implementation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years. Next review date will be in 2024.

References

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

Legislation	Sections 8 and 356 <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
Policies and procedures	Section 4 (definitions) <i>Charitable Fundraising Act 1991</i>
	Schedule 5 <i>Yass Valley Environmental Plan 2013</i>
	Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW
	Regional Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036
	Yass Valley Heritage Strategy 2017-2020

This policy will be reviewed following a general election of Council and the Director Corporate & Community is responsible for arranging completion of the review in consultation with senior Council staff.

Approval History

Stage	Date	Comment	MagiQ Reference
Original/Review	February 2022	This policy replaces the following policies: - SP-POL-02 Mayoral Discretionary Donations - SP-POL-01 Rates and Charges Donations - SP-CP-04 Local Heritage Grants	
Review	24 February 2022	Council Meeting	Doc ID 484274 Min 40
Review	28 April 2022	Adopted	Doc ID 484274 Min 118

Ownership and Approval

Responsibility	Role
Author	Director Corporate & Community
Owner	Director Corporate & Community
Endorser	Executive Management Team
Approver	Council