Helpful tips when applying for a Community/Arts & Culture Grant

The following information is a summary from the community information sessions held in Stawell and St Arnaud in November 2021

Community Grants and Arts and Culture Grants Program

The Community Grants Program provides applicants with the opportunity to undertake locally-based projects that can demonstrate a positive impact on health, wellbeing and community participation.

1.Where to apply
 Community/Arts and Culture Grants information can be found on the
Northern Grampians Shire Council website

 2. Who can apply?
Information on eligibility can be found by going into the Eligibility Tab on the Community Grants and Arts and Culture Grants Program page. Detailed information can be found in the grant guidelines.
Grant Guidelines   Arts and Culture Grant Guidelines

3. How to apply

Northern Grampians Shire Council is now using the Smarty Grants platform which has new functions and efficiencies which we hope will improve your experience as an applicant.

To apply for the grant, go to the **Apply Tab.** You will find the application form as a link underneath the text.
Before you apply, please contact a Community Development Officer to discuss your idea to ensure you are applying for the most suitable grant.

The first page of the application provides details on who to contact if you have any queries, how to navigate the application form, how to save a draft, how to submit the application and attachments, and how to have multiple users.

At the top of the form there is the option of previewing or downloading the form before starting the on-line submission. This allows you to know what you will be asked in the application and what supporting documents are needed.

4. Application questions

 The application includes seven sections.
- Eligibility check – you must tick all the eligibility criteria to complete the form.
- Applicant details – organisational and key contact information.
- Project summary – what are you planning on doing why the funding is needed.
- Project Proposal – this is where you need to align the project to the grant objectives which can be found in the Guidelines.
- Detailed project plan – includes the need for the project, major tasks, outcomes, and measures of success.
- Financial details – detailed budget including all income and expenditure and quotes.
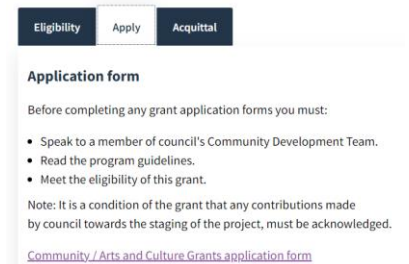
- Acknowledgement and submission – once your application is submitted you will receive an email with a copy of your application and details of when grants will be assessed.

5. Assessment process

Stages	Tasks
Compliance check	A Community Development Officer will; - check for outstanding payments and debts - check for any permits/registrations needed *Note: If payments or permits are outstanding the applicant will be contacted to discuss options.*
Eligibility check	A Community Development Officer will check if the application: - is from an organisation or group operating in the NGS - is from a legal entity (Not for profit or Incorporated Body) / ABN - is not from an organisation or group already receiving substantial support from Council. - is from an organisation or group which has liability insurance - is for a new project or components of a larger project/s - does not duplicate existing services/activities. - is not wanting to fund operational costs/wages *Note: If a group or organisation does not meet all the criteria the applicant will be contacted to discuss options.*
Stage One Assessment	Community Development Officers will assess the applications and make a recommendation using the following criteria; The application; - aligns with at least one of the program objectives - effectively outlines the benefits of the project aligning with program objectives - has clear outcomes and measures - demonstrates community involvement planning in and implementation. The project; - has been accurately costed - will be implemented by a group or organisation who has capacity to implement and report on the project.
Stage Two Assessment	The recommendations will be considered by the Manager Economic Development and Future Communities, Coordinator Economic Development and Coordinator Community Futures and either approved or not approved.
Administration	Letters and Funding Conditions will be written and sent to applicants.
Outcomes	Notification of successful and unsuccessful applications by 23 December.

6. Useful tools for finding and writing grants
- Grant Finder This service allows you to search grants that relate to your project.
- Grant Writing Helpful videos on how to write grants

7. Other local grants
- Bulgana Green Power Hub Community Fund
- Ararat Wind Farm Grants

Grant Writing Tips and Tricks

Presented by Amelia Kingston at the Community/Arts and Culture Grants Information Sessions in November 2021.

1. Read the application guidelines thoroughly.

   Download the guidelines and highlight the important points that are relevant to your organisation and your project.

2. Be aware of the closing date of a grant.

   If you complete the application before the closing date you will have time to make changes and deal with any technical issues that may arise.

3. Take time to look at the grants that have been successful in the past for the grant stream you are applying for.

4. Ring the contact person for the agency who is administering the grant. This provides an opportunity to understand the funding body's expectations.

   Listen to the language being used by the administrator. Ask questions on what needs to be included in the grant and how the grant can be written, ie using dot points.

   Successful applicants are more likely to have spoken to a grant administrator/advisor.

5. Investigate the motivation of a grant maker. What is the purpose of the grant and what is it trying to achieve?

6. Use professional language that is simple and not flowery

   - use easy to understand words
   - use words that are in the guidelines
   - use dot points to simplify your answers

7. Evidence such as quotes, and support letters can be important but are not always needed.

   Read the Guidelines carefully to understand the expectations and discuss this with the grant administrator when you talk to them.

8. You will not always be successful in receiving a grant. It is normal not to be successful for all the grants you apply for.

   The more you apply the more likely you are to be successful.

9. It is important not to lose motivation if a grant is unsuccessful. An unsuccessful application may mean;
   - there were a lot of applications and although it may have been good applications there were others that may have scored slightly higher.
   - the project may not have aligned with assessor's understanding of the grants purpose.

10. If an application is unsuccessful, it is useful to ask for feedback from the grant maker. Take the feedback on board and keep trying.

Key: ☺ Tip   🎩 Trick