
Stronger Partnerships Program Guidelines

September 2020



Northern Grampians Shire Council
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Stronger Partnerships Program Guidelines



Purpose

The objective of the Stronger Partnerships Program is to provide funding to encourage collaboration between business and community to undertake local projects that enhance community pride, encourage economic growth, local participation and test new initiatives in the Northern Grampians Shire.

Aims of Northern Grampians Shire Council grants

Council recognises the importance of local partnerships and developing initiatives that enhance social and economic participation. The Stronger Partnerships Program has been developed to provide assistance for projects that display collaboration, contribute positively to local communities and enhance civic participation.

- Strengthen Northern Grampians Shire communities through supporting a diverse range of activities, services and programs that are responsive to community needs
- Create a thriving and active community that is safe, healthy, inclusive and enhances civic participation
- Build the capacity of local groups, clubs, associations and businesses to strengthen partnerships within the Northern Grampians Shire to support growth, collaboration and sustainability
- Are delivered in partnership with community and/or business groups, organisations, clubs and associations
- Contribute to or facilitate sector and/or regional specific economic growth initiatives in the Northern Grampians Shire
- Capitalise on opportunities and address identified challenges specific to the Northern Grampians Shire
- Connect with local groups and/or businesses to deliver practical, easy-to-implement ideas that will benefit communities in the Northern Grampians Shire

Objectives of the Stronger Partnerships Program

Northern Grampians Shire Council Stronger Partnerships grants are to support locally-based projects that can demonstrate collaborative partnerships that:

- Support community wellbeing
- Encourage innovative and new partnerships and projects
- Enhance business development
- Boost economic growth

What projects will be funded?

Council will consider projects, initiatives and/or activities that:

- Enhance community and businesses
- Are inclusive and encourage participation
- Are responsive to the current needs of businesses
- Encourage local economic growth
- Are responsive to the current needs of the community
- Encourage business to business partnerships

- Are professional services that support feasibility projects
- Can demonstrate project planning and articulate what the project is set to achieve
- Support community recovery initiatives

What projects will not be funded?

Council will not consider projects that:

- Are for wages and staffing costs
- Are for the purchase of gifts and prizes
- Have already commenced
- Are non-compliant of regulatory requirements
- Are for the reimbursement of council fees and charges

Who can apply for funding

Eligibility criteria

Applications will be considered on a case by case basis.

All Stronger Partnerships applicants will:

- Be a business, sole trader, community group, organisation or association operating in the Northern Grampians Shire
- Submit an online application form
- Propose a project which aligns to objectives of the Stronger Partnerships Program
- Demonstrate their readiness and capacity to deliver the proposed project
- Have the ability to commence their project within the current financial year
- Work collaboratively with Council
- Not already receive substantial support from Council

Ineligible applicants

Applications will be ineligible if:

- The lead applicant is outside of the Northern Grampians Shire
- The funding is clearly the responsibility of other Government departments i.e. Small Business Victoria, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education, Agriculture Victoria
- Duplicate other locally available services, resources or programs
- The project has already commenced
- Applications are for ongoing or recurrent funding

Funding and Timelines

- Applicants can apply for up to \$10,000 to support their Stronger Partnerships project.
- Council's Stronger Partnerships Program is open throughout the year, until all funds have been expended.
- Application assessment panels are scheduled monthly and applicants will be notified within two weeks of the panel assessment of the outcome of the application.
- This is a non-competitive funding program; successful applications may not receive the full amount requested in their application and must satisfy the funding program criteria.

Funding conditions

If your application is successful in obtaining a Stronger Partnerships grant you will be required to enter into a written agreement with Council, stating that your organisation will adhere to the following conditions while undertaking the funded project:

- Grants are allocated specifically for the project and cannot be used for any other purpose without prior formal written agreement from Council
- Only one application per organisation or business is permitted per financial year
- Grant funds allocated to the organisation are GST exclusive.
- Funds are required to be expended within 12 months of the letter of offer. Funds not expended by this date are to be returned to the Northern Grampians Shire Council unless a written extension is obtained from Council
- Any change to the original submission must be approved by Northern Grampians Shire Council in writing
- All works to be undertaken must obtain relevant permits and approvals prior to commencement
- Organisations are required to sign a funding agreement with Council and partake in media and communications opportunities that promote the council's community grants program, as requested.
- Any programs or activities undertaken with grants or funding under this program must acknowledge the support and sponsorship of the Northern Grampians Shire Council
- Successful applicants will be provided with the Northern Grampians Shire Council corporate logo, use of the logo must be approved by the Northern Grampians Shire Council media and communications department
- Organisations are required to meet relevant government legislation requirements (eg Occupational Health & Safety Issues, Risk Management Equal Opportunity, Workcover, Privacy)
- Organisations are required to ensure volunteers are registered with the organisation and adequately covered by insurance - where required.
- An evaluation report must be submitted to Council one month after completion of the project. The report is to include details of the success of the project, photos of the completed project and an income and expenditure statement detailing the grant from Council and how this was expended.
- Grant acquittals are submitted via the Council's website; Council officers are available to assist applicants with the final acquittal
- Applicants will be ineligible for further grants if the evaluation process is incomplete.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- The project effectively meets identified local need and meets the objectives of the Stronger Partnerships Program
- The project has clear and achievable objectives and outcomes
- The project can demonstrate partnership involvement in the project planning and implementation
- The project has been accurately costed
- The applicant has the capacity to implement and report on the project

Application and Assessment Process

The Stronger Partnerships Program will be communicated and promoted to the public via Council’s website, social media and corporate communication channels.

Application

- Applicants must contact the Community Development team to discuss their project and grant availability prior to submitting an application.
- Applicants develop their project plan - a project template is provided for applicants
- Submit grant application online via www.ngshire.vic.gov.au
*council officers are available to assist
- Applicant is notified of the application received by Council

Assessment

All applications are assessed against the program criteria and eligibility:

- Applications are reviewed by a cross-departmental panel of three Council officers
- A community development officer provides administrative and record-keeping support in the assessment process - they are not a member of the assessment panel.
- A partner agency, community or business representative may be invited to participate in the assessment panel to provide specialist input, knowledge or perspective - this will be approved by the Director Communities
- Applicants will be notified in writing within 2 weeks of Council approval if their application has been successful.

Assessment Guide

- All Stronger Partnerships grant applications will be assessed against the Stronger Partnerships Assessment Guide. The outcome of the grant application assessment will guide the eligibility of the project to receive grant funding.
- The level of funds awarded will be determined by the grant assessment panel with consideration for:
 - The number of applications received
 - Total funding pool available for the financial year
- Projects may not receive the full amount requested.

Submitting the Application

Applications may be submitted via www.ngshire.vic.gov.au

Applications can be posted to Northern Grampians Shire Council, PO Box 580 Stawell Vic 3380.

Review history

Date	Review details	Action