
Funding Policy

June 2024



Northern Grampians Shire Council
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Funding Policy



Council Policy

Responsible director	Director Strategy, Prosperity, and Engagement
Responsible officer	Manager Strategic Planning and Prosperity
Functional area	Strategic Planning and Community Development
Date adopted by Council/ELT	June 2024
Review date	June 2026

Purpose

The policy's purpose is to set out a framework to guide all grants, sponsorship and contributions distributed by the Council to external parties.

The policy is supported by guidelines for the consistent management of Council's grants programs based on the following objectives:

- **Responsiveness** - Meeting identified community needs in a relevant and timely manner.
- **Equity** - Ensuring opportunities and resources are distributed in a fair and equitable manner.
- **Inclusiveness** - Providing opportunities for the community to meaningfully participate in planning and decision making.
- **Capacity Building** - Supporting and strengthening the community to identify needs and develop local solutions.
- **Collaboration** - Establishing partnerships to work together to achieve positive outcomes and deliver strategic outcomes.

Background

The *Grants Funding Policy* and the *Sponsorships and Contributions Policy* have been combined to enable Council to be comprehensive with providing avenues for funding and resourcing to businesses local groups and organisations.

The new integrated policy will:

- provide clear definitions and requirements for the different ways the council provides funding and support
- acknowledge the differences between grants, sponsorships and contributions resulting in program guidelines being able to be more relevant and specific
- acknowledged contributions are less contractual
- allows for the development of new and emerging partnerships under the sponsorship stream
- capture in-kind contributions
- capture legacy sponsorships
- show maturity in how funding and support are provided by the council.

The integration does not assume that sponsorships and contributions are a grant but are a means of providing financial or in-kind support and although they are under the same banner do have significant differences.

Scope

The policy provides a framework for the Council to allocate funding and resourcing to local business, groups, and organisations within the financial means of the Council in a responsible, transparent and ethical manner.

The policy directs the development of funding and resourcing programs within the Strategic Planning and Prosperity work area. The Coordinators for Economic Development and Strategic Planning, and Community Development are responsible for the implementation and compliance monitoring with oversight from the Manager Strategic Planning.

Council officers in the Economic Development, Strategic Planning, and Community Development Teams are responsible for the implementation of the policy within their respective work areas.

The coordinators and relevant Council officers will need to be consulted in the review of the policy.

Policy Objective

To ensure the responsible, transparent and ethical management of public funds to support all members of the community to deliver initiatives that uplift our community's economic well-being and quality of life.

The policy is aligned with the Council Plan Strategic Goal to Improve Organisational Effectiveness with the desired outcome of 'Being a better Council.'

Policy

Council will allocate funds through the annual budget process to fund programs and resourcing that aim to:

- grow the economic capacity of our businesses
- ensures diverse, unique, high quality, and enriching experiences are dispersed appropriately throughout Northern Grampians Shire
- provide access to a diverse range of offerings in the shire, including arts, culture and entertainment
- protect, enhance, and celebrate our natural, cultural and heritage assets
- enable and improve the health and wellbeing of the community
- foster the community to promote gender equality
- foster the community to be inclusive and supportive of diversity
- empower community groups and organisations to continue to provide high quality programs and activities for residents

Funding programs and resourcing are developed in line with Council Plans and Strategies.

Council will not award funding for requests that are

- the responsibility of other funding sources, government agencies or available from other programs - for example Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Small Business Victoria, Agriculture Victoria, Sustainability Victoria.
- Are regarded as being inappropriate such as:
 - political sponsorships, donations, or merchandising
 - events or programs that denigrate, exclude, or offend marginalised minority groups
 - events or programs that create environmental concerns
 - events or programs that may present a hazard to the community.

Any requests to the Council for financial or in-kind resourcing will be directed to an appropriate funding programs and resourcing must meet requirements as detailed in the relevant guidelines to be considered for funding or in-kind resourcing.

1. Grants

Council Grants are a financial assistance support mechanism providing money or access to a program to an eligible entity to carry out an approved project or activity in support of the Funding Policy objectives.

The grants program includes funding for:

- community groups and organisations hold events for the local community
- the implementation of projects, activities, and programs for the public benefit
- specific arts and culture related initiatives
- opportunities for business to grow, be innovated, resilient and sustainable
- opportunities for community groups and organisations to be effective and sustainable.

The Grant funding program is administered in line with individual grants program guidelines to ensure funding is distributed in an equitable manner.

Guidelines specific to each program include:

- purpose of the program
- focus/priority areas
- eligibility (includes what is not eligible)
- requirements (for example: the need for a co-contribution or addressing gender impacts)
- application process
- assessment criteria
- evaluation and award process
- acquittal and reporting process
- timelines
- funding conditions

2. Sponsorships

Sponsorship is a commercial arrangement in which the council provides money or in-kind resourcing to an activity/event/program, in return for certain specified benefits, including but not exclusive to promotional rights for the Council.

The Council will only pursue sponsorship opportunities that:

- enhance the profile and appeal of Northern Grampians Shire
- align with the objectives of the Council Plan and/or objectives of relevant strategies and policy documents
- deliver one of the following outcomes:
 - provide opportunities to drive social, environmental, cultural, and economic outcomes in the Northern Grampians Shire Council
 - provide potential to generate revenue through attracting visitors/participants outside of the Northern Grampians municipality.

Key focus areas:

- Tourism event sponsorships
- Tourism sponsorships
- Community sponsorships
- Corporate sponsorships

The overall Sponsorships Funding Program is administered in line with individual sponsorship specifications (guidelines) to ensure opportunities and resources are distributed in an equitable manner.

Specifications specific to each sponsorship area include:

- purpose of the sponsorship
- focus areas
- eligibility
- requirements/expectations of the sponsorship
- how the sponsorships are awarded
- how to apply for the sponsorship
- acquittal and reporting process
- timelines
- sponsorships conditions

Sponsorships will be approved as per existing officer financial delegations within the Strategic Planning, Prosperity, and Engagement Directorate. Applications above the specified delegation or particularly sensitive and/or strategic will be escalated to Director, ELT, and/or Council as necessary.

3. Contributions

A contribution is an allocation of funding, a waiving of charges, or an allocation of in-kind support in recognition of significant community benefits provided by a group or organisation.

Contributions provide an opportunity to foster strong engagement opportunities which enable the council to connect with its community in a meaningful and relevant way that may not be possible without the contribution.

What will be funded/provided:

- on-going costs towards enabling the community group/organisation/school to function and run programs
- in-kind support to enabling the community group/organisation/school to function and run programs
- waiving of fees that relate to the group / organisation being able to complete needed tasks and functions
- provision of educational scholarships.

The program is administered in line with guidelines to ensure funding and resources are distributed in an equitable manner.

Guidelines will include:

- purpose of the contributions program
- who is eligible to request a contribution
- how to request a contribution
- expectations related to receiving a contribution
- feedback mechanisms

Contributions will be approved as per existing officer financial delegations within the Strategic Planning, Prosperity and Engagement Directorate. Applications above the specified delegation or particularly sensitive and/or strategic will be escalated to Director, ELT, and/or Council as necessary.

As a contribution is closely related to a donation where there is no contractual obligation, the council will only require a verbal or logo acknowledgment and the completion of a short feedback form.

Legislation and Standards

Local Government Act 2020

Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation Act 2011

Food Act 1984 Code of Practice for running safer music festivals and events (2013)

Building Act 1993

Building Amendment (Places of Public Entertainment) Regulations 2013

Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Information Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014

Records Management Policy

Conflict of Interest Procedure Planning and Environment Act 1986

Age discrimination Act 2004

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Sex Discrimination Act 1994

Fair Access Policy (currently under development to be adopted by 30 June 2024)

Responsibilities

- The manager of Strategic Planning and Prosperity is responsible for overseeing the *Grants Funding Policy*, guidelines and assessment processes.
- The functional areas of Community Development and Economic Development are responsible for the operational delivery of the grant's programs.

Review

Following the adoption of the annual Council Budget, grant program guidelines, supporting documents and procedures are updated to ensure best practice in grants management and continual improvement. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Communication and implementation

This policy will be communicated via Council's media and communication channels. The policy will be available on the EDRMS for all staff to view. Process associated with the policy will be available on ProMapp.

References

Event Strategy 2023
Northern Grampians Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2021-31
Council Plan 2021-2025
Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan, 2021-25
Open Space and Recreation Strategy
Community Plans
Arts and Culture Policy and Strategy
Waste Management Strategy
Multi-Cultural Action Plan 2024

Compliance

Local Government Act 2020
Local Government Act 1989
[*Gender Equality Act 2020*](#)
Child Safety Act 2015
[*Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*](#)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010
[*Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*](#)
Freedom of Information Act 1982

Privacy and Data Protection compliance

This policy has considered the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the Victorian Data Security Framework, which adopts a risk-based approach to protective data security.

Gender Equality compliance

Council has considered if gender equality principles, workplace gender equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes and the promotion of gender equality in the development of this policy. These have been incorporated into the policy.

Charter of Human Rights compliance

It is considered that this policy does not impact on any [human rights](#) identified in the *Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Definitions

Policy: What we will do and why (e.g. legislation governs Council actions).

Procedure: Step by step instructions as to how we will complete Council actions.

In-kind: Goods, services, and transitions not involving money.

Review history

Date	Review details	Action
30 April 2024	Draft policy reviewed and submitted for consideration by ELT	ELT to consider the draft policy and determine whether a Councilor briefing is required.
3 June 2024	Policy went to Council Meeting.	Adopted.