

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Grants Programs

Grants programs provide funding from local government, or through local government, to community individuals, groups, clubs, organisations and the not for profit sector. Grants programs aims to empower the community, build community capacity, encourage community participation and engagement, develop groups and recognise the achievement of individuals. The grants can be delivered in several ways including: funding for minor activities and events, sponsorship, donations, capital grants, youth encouragement awards, travel subsidies etc.

Local governments' Grants programs will need to be merged. Outlined below are tasks and activities for consideration during the amalgamation process.

KEY TASKS:

- 1.0 Audit and review current approaches and programs for funding external parties.
 - Identify all formalised community grants policies/programs and all informal approaches used to receive requests and fund external parties.
 - Review policies and approaches for: purpose, objectives, eligibility, items funded, assessment criteria, application processes, acquittal processes and identify commonalities and differences.
 - From the councils' annual budgets identify and list all items/funding allocations to external parties, analyse and group according to type, funding level and benefit to the community.
 - Determine and implement appropriate consultation strategies with grant recipients.
- 2.0 Build the foundations of a new community grants program.
 - Establish the total funding available.
 - Discuss and agree the purpose of a grants program and the different types of grants to be awarded within the level of funding.
 - Compare existing allocations and identify items to be discontinued.
- 3.0 Draft community grants policy for endorsement
 - Draft a grants policy.
 - Seek Council endorsement of draft policy.
- 4.0 Draft grants program and procedures based on endorsed policy.
- 5.0 Promote grants program
 - Prepare marketing and promotion materials/collateral and avenues of distribution to the community.
 - Train / communicate to staff new policy and procedures.
 - Establish the assessment structure/panels.
 - Liaise with groups currently receiving funding to explain the current and proposed approach. Undertake consultation.
 - Determine time frame for commencement and frequency of funding rounds.
 - Update Council via information bulletin on the new program and procedures.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Policy outline:

- Document purpose and objectives of the Grants program
- Confirm eligible and non-eligible applicants.
- Confirm types of grants and acceptable levels of funding to be provided

- Confirm criteria against which applications will be assessed
- Confirm items eligible for funding and establish rationale

Grants process:

- Application process and packages developed
- Evidence that the applicant has the legal authority to lodge the application
- How the program is made available to groups (website; hard copy)
- Format of submissions
- Access and timing of the application process (funding rounds vs all year round)
- Assessment process and criteria for assessment (for example: policy fit; risk; insurance other sources of funds; disclosure of interest; viability of project; community benefit; within the local government authority's boundaries; etc)
- Approval process and endorsement – by whom e.g. council v delegated authority
- How applicant will be advised of outcome and the nature of written Agreements established
- Payment procedures established
- Acquittals and evaluation package agreed and prepared
- General rules established, e.g. canvassing councillors
- Branding, marketing and promotion strategies
- Reporting requirements established
- Funding acknowledgement requirements
- Staff training