

# **MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

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## 1. COMMUNITY GRANTS OVERVIEW

Murray River Council Community Grants offers financial support to not-for-profit community organisations and groups for projects, equipment, events, exhibitions, or performances which contribute positively to the Murray River Council community.

The Community Grants Program aims to:

- Be responsive to emerging themes, issues, and trends
- Support not-for-profit community groups to provide a range of opportunities for residents;
- Provide equitable opportunity for the community to seek funding assistance from council;
- Strengthen communities with local responses to identified community needs;
- Facilitate support for initiatives that strengthen the community through opportunities for participation, development, inclusion, and sustainability;
- Foster support across a range of pursuits and interest areas including health and welfare, education, arts and culture, sports and recreation, youth, ageing, environment and access and equity; and
- Assist council to deliver identified objectives, priorities and strategies that align with the Community Strategic Plan.

## 2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

The following conditions apply to all applications for financial assistance from Council:

- Council will only enter into a grant agreement with an organisation/group whose reputation and image is consistent with the values, objectives and policies of the Council.
- Financial assistance will only be granted by Council in accordance with s356 of the Local Government Act 1993 for the purpose of exercising Council's functions.
- Grant applications under the Community Grants Program will be accepted only during the advertised application period (one per year).
- Grant approval will be limited to the defined funding period. Approved applications will not automatically apply to subsequent years.
- Applications will be assessed on merit using the assessment matrix.
- All grantees are required to publicly recognise Council's contribution.

## 3. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for funding through the Community Grants Program, applicants must:

- apply online using the specified application form,
- demonstrate how funds will be used for community benefit
- have no outstanding debts to Murray River Council,
- have acquitted any previous community grants by the due date;

- if successful, comply with the conditions of funding outlined in the letter of offer,
- if successful, provide any required acquittals to Council for grant funding received, by the specified date.

## 4. WHAT WILL NOT BE FUNDED?

The following will not be considered for funding:

- Retrospective funding;
- Recurrent costs, salaries, and on-costs;
- Insurance, such as (but not limited to) Public Liability insurance;
- Social excursions, e.g. bus trips or picnics;
- Applicants applying to another council funding stream for a grant for the same activity;
- Late or incomplete applications.

## 5. WHO CAN APPLY?

Community groups seeking to apply for funds through the Community Grants Program must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be submitted by a not-for-profit community organisation, group, or association that has its own bank account (please note, groups who do not have their own bank account may organise for an auspice organisation to receive the grant on their behalf, should they be successful);
- Provide direct benefits to the residents of the Murray River Council Local Government Area (MRC LGA);
- Be able to demonstrate capacity and competence to deliver the proposed project;
- Have adequate insurance and appropriate health and safety policies, relevant to the proposed activity;
- Be able to demonstrate a contribution in the form of funds, services, or in-kind support;
- Be based in the MRC LGA or have significant benefit for the MRC residents;
- Be able to plan effectively and be well organised;
- Have no outstanding grant acquittals or outstanding debts owing to council;
- Be submitted by the due date.
- Only one application can be submitted by each entity per funding round.

## 6. HOW MUCH CAN BE REQUESTED?

The Community Grants Program provides funding up to a **maximum amount of \$3,000**. Matching funding is not compulsory however a cash or in-kind contribution from the applicant will be looked upon favourably.

## 7. WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE APPLICATION?

- All sections of the application form must be completed.
- If your project is to take place on a public or private site or venue, you must obtain the consent and support of the landowner (include a letter of support with your application).
- If relevant, please attach a copy of current public liability insurance.
- Uploading estimates and quotes to support your request and budget is looked at favourably.
- All applicants have the option to attach additional material in support of the application such as letters of support, photos, or recent media coverage.

*NB: Applications need to be completed in full. All supporting documentation requested; including public liability insurance, quotes etc, if relevant, must be submitted at the time of the application. Applications that do not include all the required information will not be accepted.*

## 8. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Multiple applications from the same group will not be assessed.
- Applications to fund an event or a project that may be offensive to sections of the community, will not be considered.
- Applications submitted will be acknowledged via a confirmation email (from Smartygrants).
- Successful applicants will be provided a letter of offer, outlining any funding conditions. Council may make funding conditional and subject to specific conditions being met.
- Funding will be provided once the letter of offer has been accepted.
- Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge council's support. For example, an official Murray River Council logo must be used on any promotional material or at any official events associated with the activity and on any produced literature.
- Successful applicants will need to report on how the grant was spent (acquittal).
- Applicants must not spend money on the proposed activity before funding decisions are announced. This is considered retrospective funding, which is not eligible for support.
- Funding is not automatic on application. All requests are subject to consideration on their individual merits each year.

## 9. IMPORTANT DATES

<b>1 December 2023</b>	Applications open
<b>4pm, 3 April 2024</b>	Applications close
<b>30 April 2024</b>	Assessment of applications
<b>28 May 2024</b>	Council to approve funding for recommended projects
<b>Early June 2024</b>	Applicants notified of outcome
<b>By 15 June 2024</b>	Successful applicants to submit invoice for payment
<b>By 15 June 2025</b>	Projects completed and funding acquittal submitted

## 10. FUNDING PRINCIPLES

Priority will be given to applications that respond to identified community needs and align with Council's vision, corporate objectives, priorities, and strategies.

The Community Grants Program will prioritise support where:

- Applicants are based in the MRC LGA or the project must provide significant benefit for MRC residents
- The applicant is not already in receipt of substantial funding/in-kind support from MRC;
- The proposed activity or project is innovative or unique for the MRC LGA;
- The proposed activity incorporates collaboration/partnerships with other groups;
- The proposed activity maximises community benefit;
- The proposed activity or project meets any identified council priorities; and
- The proposed activity demonstrates sustainability;
- The proposed activity enables access and inclusion in accordance with council's 'Disability Inclusion Action Plan'

## 11. APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

- Applications will be assessed by council using the assessment matrix below.
- Applications will be reviewed to ensure they are eligible for consideration and that all sections of the application have been completed and all documents are attached.

## 12. ASSESSMENT MATRIX

CRITERIA
<p><b>Community benefit</b> What social, economic, or environmental benefit does the project provide to the community? Benefits are realistic and achievable.</p>
<p><b>Evidence of need</b> What evidence is there to demonstrate the need for the project (e.g. community meetings, data or research findings)?</p>
<p><b>Evidence of community support</b> What evidence is there to demonstrate community support for the project (e.g. letters of support, partnerships in place etc)?</p>
<p><b>Innovation</b> Is the project looking at new ways to address local issues? Has the project considered the different and best ways to achieve the outcomes they want?</p>
<p><b>Access and equity</b> Has the applicant considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access and equity</li> <li>• the needs of community members who suffer financial, social, or physical disability</li> <li>• gender issues</li> </ul> <p>In general, is the applicant organisation welcoming of minority groups and disadvantaged members of the community?</p>
<p><b>Budget</b> Are the budget items clearly articulated and it adds up? Is the budget reasonable and realistic? Have hidden costs been considered (e.g. administration and evaluation costs)? Do the quotes seem legitimate and reasonable?</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b> Does the applicant appear prepared to assess/evaluate the project/program, adjust course as needed along the way, and disseminate lessons to help build the field?</p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b> Will the project continue after the grant funding has been expended? Will the benefits of the project continue into the future? Can the project be easily replicated by other communities?</p>
<p><b>Capacity</b> Does the applicant have the skills, experience and aptitudes required to deliver the project?</p>

## 13. LODGING YOUR APPLICATION

Applications open on 1 December 2023 and **close at 4pm on 3 April 2024.**

Application forms must be submitted using **the online application form** on the Murray River Council Smartygrants webpage, **via this link** <https://murrayriver.smartygrants.com.au/>

To be eligible for assessment, applications must be completed in full with all questions answered and documents attached where requested. Applicants must hit the SUBMIT button at the end of their application to ensure it is submitted. An email notification will be sent to the applicant to confirm the application has been submitted.

Please Note: only one application per entity can be made in each round.

## 14. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information and assistance in relation to council financial assistance programs is available by contacting;

Tiana Christie Grants Officer Murray River Council P: 1300 087 004 E: <a href="mailto:tcronin@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au">tcronin@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au</a>	Beck Hayward Manager Economic Development Murray River Council P: 1300 087 004 E: <a href="mailto:rhayward@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au">rhayward@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au</a>
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