CITY OF WODONGA VIC

COMMUNITY FUNDING REQUESTS

Applicant Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Wodonga Council is dedicated to engaging the community in the annual budgetary process to ensure that the funds are used efficiently and effectively, for the community's benefit. There are two ways community members can participate in the budget development process.

1

Building the Budget

All community members can offer feedback and suggestions via makewodongayours.com.au to help shape the council's budget. This may involve expressing support for an existing council service, identifying areas in need of repair, or proposing new initiatives you'd like to see the council undertake. This enables you to have a say in determining the council's annual budget priorities.

2

Community Funding Requests

Eligible community groups and non-profit organisations have the opportunity to submit a community funding request for specific projects that align with the community's needs and aspirations, as established in the Wodonga Council Plan. These requests are made through our online Smartygrants platform. Approved applicants will assume responsibility for executing these projects.

These guidelines specifically pertain to the second type of engagement:
Submitting a Community Funding Request.

COMMUNITY FUNDING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Community Funding Requests are centred on supporting projects that align with the following objectives, all of which are aimed at promoting the well-being and prosperity of the community.



Sustainable and Forward-Looking Communities

We encourage projects that contribute to the long-term sustainability and forward-looking development of our community. This includes initiatives focused on:

- Environmental conservation;
- Increasing access to green spaces and outdoor recreation;
- Renewable energy;
- Sustainable infrastructure; and,
- Implementing strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate impacts.



Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities

We seek projects that promote the health and wellbeing, safety, and resilience of our community. This could involve supporting programs and initiatives that:

- Enhance emergency preparedness;
- Improve health and wellbeing;
- Improve community safety; and,
- Support volunteers and encourage volunteering.



Connected and Engaged Communities

We aim to foster connected and engaged communities by supporting initiatives that facilitate meaningful connections and interactions among community members. Funding will be provided to projects:

- Promoting social cohesion;
- Celebrating the cultural, social, and recreational diversity within the city;
- That provide transport solutions to link residents across the region; and,
- That use technology to enhance community engagement and civic participation.



Thriving and Vibrant Communities

Our goal is to enhance the vibrancy and prosperity of Wodonga. Funding will be directed towards projects:

- That stimulate economic growth;
- Promote entrepreneurship;
- Nurture cultural diversity enhance access to cultural and recreational activities, thereby creating a thriving and vibrant community for residents and visitors; and,
- Attract and grow new and inspiring events, which benefit the community, celebrate connection, and attract visitors to Wodonga.

FUNDING CATEGORIES

Community Funding Requests are provided in three funding categories based on the scale and potential impact of proposed projects.

1

Up to $5000 Small-Scale Community Project

This category provides initial funding for smaller projects that can be completed within a short timeframe. To apply for this category, you are required to submit the Small-Scale Community Project application form.

2

$5,001 to $50,000 Medium-Scale Community Project

This category is designed to allocate funding for medium-scale community projects that have a broader scope and a more substantial impact on a larger portion of the community. To apply for this category, you must submit a Medium-Scale Community Project application form and provide an accompanying project plan.

3

$50,000 + Large-Scale Community Project

This category recognises the importance of supporting larger-scale community initiatives capable of bringing about transformative change. To apply for this category, you must submit a Large-Scale Community Project application form and provide an accompanying project plan, risk management plan and letter/s of support.

BEFORE STARTING YOUR APPLICATION



Prior to beginning the submission process, all applicants MUST contact the council's Volunteer and Community Officer who will direct any queries to the relevant council department for advice.

This initial engagement serves the purpose of verifying your eligibility and ensuring a thorough comprehension of the guidelines and requirements pertinent to your proposal.

Should you have any questions or require clarification concerning the application process or guidelines, please feel free to contact the Volunteer and Community Officer on (02) 6022 9315 or email volunteer@wodonga.vic.gov.au

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- The Community Funding Request process is competitive and funding cannot be guaranteed.
- Applicants who co-contribute (financially or in-kind) towards the overall project costs will be looked upon favourably.
- Multi-year funding is permitted, where strategic benefit is substantiated.
- Funding is only provided for the purpose for which it has been granted.
- If an application is being supported by an auspicing body on behalf of another organisation, the application form must have written approval of the auspicing body submitted with the application.
- An organisation that acts as an auspicing body for an unincorporated organisation can also apply for a funding for a separate project.
- Funding requests will take a minimum of five months to consider and process. All applications must be submitted at least 12 weeks prior to proposed project start date.
- All applications must be submitted through the council's Community Funding Request online system. For assistance with accessing or completing the form, please contact the council's Volunteer and Community Officer.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

In order to be eligible for funding through this program, potential applicants must satisfy the following criteria.

- Possess official not-for-profit status, as officially recognised by the Australian Tax Office in accordance with the provisions of the *Income Tax Assessment Act* 1936.
- Be formally registered as an incorporated association, indigenous corporation, or a community group and, if necessary, have an auspicing body in place.
- Maintain sufficient public liability insurance coverage, with a minimum value of $10 million, to offer protection for staff, members, volunteers, and the public, as applicable.
- Ensure that the project yields a direct and positive impact on the residents of Wodonga.

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE?

Applicants will be deemed ineligible for program funding if they meet any of the following criteria.

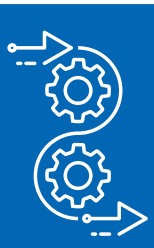
- Currently have outstanding debts with the council or have not met previous funding obligations to the council's satisfaction.
- Are already receiving ongoing financial support from council.
- Represent a government entity.
- Function as a formal educational institution.
- Are seeking funding for any of the following.
    - Works to buildings that are managed and occupied by for-profit organisations
    - Works to buildings that are primarily used for religious or political purposes
    - Works to property that is owned or under the management of state or federal government agencies . (Property owned by Wodonga Council will be considered)
    - Standard equipment such as team uniforms, balls etc., unless specifically forming part of a new initiative
    - Operational costs, for example wages and salaries, utilities, rent and insurance

FUNDING CONDITIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND EXTRA INFORMATION



- Applicants are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and authorisations, including public liability insurance. However, council officers can offer guidance on these requirements.
- Applications from entities leasing or renting a facility from another organisation must include written permission from that organisation.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the council of any changes to key project contact details.
- Acknowledgment of Wodonga Council's support is required on all promotional materials related to the project or event.
- The council's assistance must also be recognised in any media associated with the project and the council's Communications team must be notified to maximise appropriate publicity through the council's communication channels.
- Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with council and submit an invoice for 50 per cent of the awarded amount within four weeks of notification of their successful application. The remaining 50 per cent will be paid upon the successful completion and acquittal of the project. All successful applicants must complete an acquittal within 60 days of concluding their project or event. In cases where community groups are auspiced, a payment shedule may be negotiated.
- Applicants who have previously received funding through the council's earlier community grants programs will only be considered if they have met all acquittal requirements.

SUBMISSION PROCESS



1. Community Funding Requests will be made available on an annual basis.
2. Applicants are required to initiate contact with the Volunteer and Community Officer to commence discussions regarding their eligibility and the proposed project.
3. Applicants will then be directed to a designated council officer who will offer guidance and expert advice on the proposed project.
4. Submissions will be accepted through the online Community Funding Request submission portal.
5. Council officers will evaluate applications using established assessment criteria and provide recommendations to the council.
6. Councillors will review funding requests and ultimately determine which funding requests (if any) will be incorporated into the upcoming budget.
7. Applicants will receive written notifications informing them of the inclusion or exclusion of their application in the draft budget.
8. After the evaluation process, applicants will be formally informed in writing of the council's decision when the final budget is approved. Council's decision shall be considered definitive.

ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Funding will be allocated based upon the merit of the application and the availability of funds. Strong funding requests will demonstrate that the proposal addresses a distinct need in the community and that it will have broad community benefit. The submission will outline sustainability considerations if the activity is to continue beyond the requested funding period. Applicants will have sufficient expertise in the respective field and demonstrate a commitment to fostering positive outcomes for Wodonga.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA (25 per cent weighting for each)

Strategic alignment

- Alignment of the project with the key priorities outlined in the Wodonga Council Plan
- The project's contribution to the community's vision
- Integration of community priorities and needs into the project's design

Impact and benefits

- Assessment of the project's social, cultural, economic, or environmental impact on the community
- Examination of the project's significance and its reach within the community, considering both immediate and long-term effects

Community engagement and participation

- Evaluation of the extent to which the project actively engages and involves community members
- Assessment of the level of community participation and ownership in the project's planning and execution
- Examination of the methods employed to gather community input, feedback, and support for the project

Capability, feasibility and viability

- Review of the applicant's available resources, skills, and infrastructure
- Examination of the applicant's track record in successfully completing similar projects
- Evaluation of the applicant's relevant skills and prior experience



ASSESSMENT CRITERIA (continued)

Evaluation of supporting documentation

In addition to reviewing the responses against the assessment criteria, the quality of the following mandatory documentation will also be assessed.

- Site-specific plan of works (applies to infrastructure projects only)
- Quotations for budget items exceeding $1000, along with a comprehensive budget breakdown
- Relevant building permits and approvals (relevant to infrastructure projects only)
- For applications from entities that lease or rent a facility from another organisation, inclusion of written permission from the facility owner is required
- Evidence confirming funding sources (if the requested amount does not cover the entire project budget, include proof of secured funds from other sources)

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Wodonga Council recognises diversity as one of our community's greatest strengths. The council commits to supporting the growth of a community that builds on the strengths of all people. It values diversity and tolerance and recognises that everyone has the right to respect, inclusion and equitable access to services and opportunities. Projects can impact people of diverse genders, abilities, ages, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds in different ways. **Applicants must demonstrate how their project or event will be inclusive and accessible to diverse populations.**

For more information on council's commitment to equity, inclusion and community wellbeing, please refer to council's *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy*.



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