

Grants Policy

Version: 1.0

Date updated: 9 November 2017

Responsible Department: Active Communities

1. Purpose

This policy outlines Council's commitments and responsibilities in providing grants to the community and provides guidelines for the consistent management of grant programs across Council based on the principles of community development, good governance and best practice in grant making.

2. Definitions

Council	means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989
Councillors	means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council
Council officer	means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer
Grant	means a sum of money given to organisations or individuals with an expectation that the money will be used for an agreed and specified purpose
Auspice	means an agreement where one organisation agrees to apply for and manage a grant on behalf of another organisation. The auspice is responsible for financial and acquittal requirements
Acquittal	means information provided by a grant recipient that ensures that funds have been administered responsibly and in line with conditions of the grant program.

3. Scope

The Policy applies to grants to the community that are considered and approved by Council for specific agreed purposes. It applies to all Council Departments involved in the promotion, assessment and management of grant programs where Council is providing a funding contribution directly to an organisation, auspice organisation or individual. (Refer to Appendix 1 for Council grant programs within the scope of this policy).

Council policy documents change from time to time and it is recommended that you consult the electronic reference copy at www.casey.vic.gov.au/policiesstrategies to ensure that you have the current version. Alternatively you may contact Customer Service on 9705 5200.

4. Context

Council provides ongoing, annual and multi-year funding to support the community to respond to community needs, provide programs and services that strengthen the Casey community and deliver strategic outcomes for Council. The City of Casey is committed to providing this funding efficiently, equitably and ethically.

5. Policy

5.1 Objectives

In providing funding, Council aims to:

- » Strengthen the Casey community through support of 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, brings communities together and reflects the diversity of Casey.
- » Build the capacity of local organisations and strengthen partnerships within the Casey community to support planned growth, collaboration and sustainability.

5.2 Community development

Grant programs are developed and administered in the context of Council's Community Development Principles. The following principles will be reflected in grant practices:

- » **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 solutions at a local level
- » **Collaboration** – establishing networks and fostering partnerships to work together to achieve positive outcomes and partner with Council to deliver strategic outcomes.

5.3 Management of grants programs

In line with good governance and best practice in grant making, Council is committed to delivering grant programs that are:

- » **Ethical and accountable** – grant processes are robust and stand up to scrutiny, governance is clear and strong and appropriate policies and procedures are followed.

- » **Strategic and needs based** – a range of grants that align with Council's strategic priorities, respond to community needs and provide outcomes that benefit Casey residents.
- » **Customer focused and efficient** – grant programs that are consistent across Council, grant information is accessible and processes for applicants are well-organised and streamlined.

5.4 Administration of grant programs

5.4.1 Application processes

Grant opportunities will be widely promoted across the municipality using a variety of promotional avenues to enable everyone who is eligible to apply for a grant is given the same opportunity to do so.

The amount of detail required from the applicant will be proportional to the grant amount.

Each grant program will have its own set of guidelines. These guidelines will be provided in a consistent format across Council and will outline to the community the specific purpose, process and conditions of the grant program. Guidelines specific to each grant program will include the following:

- » Objectives of the program
- » Application process
- » Eligibility and assessment criteria
- » Acquittal/reporting process
- » Timelines
- » Funding conditions (if different to standard conditions detailed in 5.5)

Council will use an online grants administration system to ensure a consistent, efficient and user-friendly customer experience. Customer support on the use of this system will be provided at Grant Information sessions or upon request.

Personal information about individuals collected during the grant process will be treated in accordance with Council's Privacy Policy.

Unsolicited requests for funds will be directed to an appropriate grant program and must meet requirements as detailed in the relevant guidelines to be considered for grant funding.

5.4.2 Assessment processes

Where possible, community members will be involved in the assessment of applications and will adhere to Council's Code of Conduct of volunteers. To ensure transparent decision-making, applications will be assessed based on criteria provided in the program guidelines.

Any Conflicts of Interest will be managed according to the Local Government Act 1989 and Council's Conflict of Interest Disclosure Operating Procedure. To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process anyone with a conflict of interest will not participate in any discussions or decision relating to the specific application.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in writing and offered the opportunity to discuss the application process.

Customer concerns and complaints will be managed according to Council's Complaint Handling procedure which can be found on the City of Casey website.

5.5 Standard Conditions

The following conditions apply to all Council's grants and funding programs. Council's contribution is limited to the amount granted with all other costs associated with the project being borne by the grant recipient.

- » Funding must only be used for the purposes outlined by Council in the letter of offer or agreement. Changes can only be made if requested in writing and approved by Council beforehand.
- » When an organisation or individual accepts a grant and/or signs an agreement it means that they accept the conditions within this policy and the guidelines relevant to the specific grant program.
- » If more than 10% of the grant is not spent, it must be returned to Council in full, unless stated otherwise in guidelines.
- » Council reserves the right to withdraw funding and/or cease partnership with a grant recipient if the project is not progressing satisfactorily, the organisation ceases to be eligible, the organisation breaches funding conditions, or the project risks the positive reputation of the City of Casey. If this occurs, the organisation will be fully liable for costs involved and grant funds must be returned to Council.
- » The organisation receiving the grant must obtain all relevant permits or approvals from Council before they proceed with their project.
- » The organisation or individual receiving the grant cannot use Council's logo in promotional material unless they have approval in writing by the City of Casey.
- » Any other funding conditions will be outlined in individual program guidelines, letters of offer and/or funding agreements.

6. Administrative Updates

It is recognised that from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

7. Review

The next review of this document is scheduled for completion by 30 June 2021.

Appendix 1

The following grant programs fall within the scope of the Grants Policy.

- » Achievement Grants
- » Arts Development Grants
- » Biodiversity Incentive Scheme Grants
- » Commonwealth and Home Support Program (CHSP) Social Support Groups
- » Community Grants
- » Community Service Contributions program
- » Environmental Sustainability Grants
- » Equipment and Training Grants
- » Home and Community Care (HACC) Planned Activity Groups
- » Heritage Grants
- » Large Events Funding
- » Quick Response Grants