

# Ageing Well Living Lab Grant Guidelines

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| Applications Open  | 1 September 2026, 9:00 AM AEST                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Applications Close | 31 October 2026, 5:00 PM AEST                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Application Link   | Apply via <a href="#">SmartyGrants</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Amount             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Between \$20,001 and \$50,000 of financial contributions for large projects; 1:1 contribution (minimum 50% financial)</li><li>• Up to \$20,000 of financial contributions for small projects; 1:1 contribution (in-kind only)</li><li>• In-kind support for any applicant</li></ul> |
| Contact            | smartcity@casey.vic.gov.au                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

## What is a Living Lab?

A Living Lab is a place-based approach to driving innovation through co-design with partners, community, and Council. It enables businesses, not-for-profit organisations, research institutions, and the community to collaborate on local challenges and test solutions that will address them. A Living Lab requires three components:

1. Problem: A complex problem that our community faces and is only likely to increase with our growth.
2. People: A range of people from businesses, not-for-profit organisations, research institutions, and the community, who could address the problem.
3. Place: A physical location to trial and evaluate the solutions.

The objective of the City of Casey Living Lab is to efficiently trial, evaluate and potentially scale up innovative solutions that support Council strategies to stimulate the local economy, address environmental challenges, and improve community outcomes through private-public partnerships and innovation processes.

Responding to complex challenges requires new approaches and innovative concepts. The Living Lab aims to identify solutions that can meet the community's needs in new ways and evolve with community feedback and insights.

There are a range of funding pathways for Living Labs. For the Ageing Well Living Lab, a grant pathway is the most appropriate.

## Ageing Well Living Lab

As Casey's population ages, many older adults are facing increasing challenges that can affect their health, wellbeing and independence. Rising living costs, social isolation, limited access to services, chronic health conditions, and digital exclusion can make it harder to stay connected and live well.

The Ageing Well Living Lab brings together Council, community, industry and research partners to explore innovative prevention and early intervention solutions that help older adults remain healthy, connected and independent for longer.

The City of Casey is committed to fostering healthy, safe, inclusive and connected communities, as detailed in our Council Plan 2025-29. Furthermore, this initiative aligns with the key themes of connection, innovation and resilience within the Long-Term Community Vision 2031 and addresses community concerns about our ageing population highlighted in the Shape Your City 2024

engagement and the Challenges and Opportunities Report. The Ageing Well Living Lab complements other strategies including the Community Access and Wellbeing Strategic Service Plan and the Disability Inclusion Action Plan by supporting older adults to stay healthy, active and independent by promoting healthy lifestyles and improving access to information, services and community support.

## Challenges

Solutions should address one or both of the following challenges:

- **Prevention and Early Intervention:** How might we identify signs of declining health, wellbeing or social connection early and connect older adults with support before they reach crisis point?
- **Health and Wellbeing:** How might we support older adults to maintain and improve their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing as they age?
- **Independence and Connection:** How might we reduce loneliness and social isolation for older adults by supporting meaningful social connections at every stage of ageing?

Benefits are expected for older adults and the broader community, but projects may address a specific target group or area in the City of Casey. The types of organisations we are looking to partner with include established businesses, start-ups with more than one year of activity, not-for-profit organisations, social enterprises, co-operatives, research institutions, universities, and community groups.

## Grants available

- Between \$20,001 and \$50,000 of financial contributions for big projects; 1:1 contribution (minimum 50% financial)
- Up to \$20,000 of financial contributions for small projects; 1:1 contribution (in-kind only)
- In-kind support for any applicant

## Eligibility

### Who is eligible?

To apply for this grant, you must:

- be a business, not-for-profit organisation, or research institute
- be registered for at least two years (for start-ups)
- be a legal entity (e.g. an incorporated association, a co-operative, a company, or a trust)
- have a level of public liability insurance up to \$20 million
- have a level of professional indemnity up to \$5 million (where the organisation provides professional advice)
- have WorkCover insurance (where your organisation employs people)
- obtain a Working With Children Check if required
- submit a project plan with milestones, community benefits, trial methods, desired impact, and an itemised budget detailing how you will spend the funds
- submit your application and documentation online through our Smarty Grants system

### Who is not eligible?

You cannot apply for the grant if you are:

- an individual not submitting as part of a registered organisation
- a sole trader
- a start-up with less than two years of activity
- aligned with a political party or group
- a state or federal government agency, department, or public entity
- representing another Council
- a catchment management authority
- a non-registered business
- under an auspice arrangement

### What will be funded?

We can accept applications for the following:

- Pilot projects
- Events and community activations
- Project-related costs (including staffing costs directly related to the project)
- Digital and physical infrastructure and materials required for the trial
- Joint applications and partnerships
- Applied research projects

The applications must adhere to the following:

- Projects must be able to start within one month after the grant agreement sign-off
- Trial outcomes must be achieved within 12 months
- Projects must have tangible and measurable outcomes

## **What will not be funded?**

We cannot accept applications for the following:

- Projects that are unable to commence within one month from the formal approval by the City of Casey and contracts sign-off
- Projects that cannot be completed in a timeframe of 12 months, at agreed upon start date in early 2027
- Feasibility studies
- Cost to build
- Development of a new concept with low feasibility
- Multiple applications for different projects
- Projects already funded by Council
- Projects that take place outside of the City of Casey
- Ongoing operational costs such as utilities (electricity, gas and water), rent, insurance, or staff wages/ salaries not directly related to the trial
- Administrative costs
- Grants programs, prizes, awards, or donations
- Funding towards reimbursing retrospective projects or existing work unrelated to the application

## **Assessment Criteria**

We are looking for projects that are:

- Innovative: solutions should deliver outcomes by testing cutting-edge products and services.
- Data-led: data insights should be integrated into the solution to ensure measurable outcomes.
- Local: local providers will be favoured to maximise benefits for the local economy, although any Australian organisation is eligible to apply.
- Technology-enabled: when a particular technology is central to the delivery of a solution, the provider needs to ensure reliability, data privacy/ management, and share prior testing results.

Detailed criteria are as follows:

### **1. Community Desirability 30%**

- Applicants can operate within the City of Casey
- Strong alignment to City of Casey Council Plan, Ageing Well priorities and related strategies
- Demonstration that the solution will meet community needs, particularly improving health, wellbeing, independence and/or social connection for older adults in Casey
- Clear explanation of how the solution will solve a problem, including outcomes and benefits
- Evidence that the solution will produce the expected result
- Project success measures identified

### **2. Project Viability 25%**

- Detailed and realistic budget within the bounds of the grant funding amount available
- Expenditure items listed are necessary and meet eligibility

### **3. Project Feasibility 30%**

- Feasible and comprehensive project plan
- Ability to manage data, technology, and privacy in a secure way (if applicable)
- Risks identified and mitigation plan provided
- Evidence of experience in delivering the proposed project

#### **4. Innovation Potential & Local Business Enhancement 15%**

- Demonstration of an innovative solution
- Utilisation of data and insights
- Scale-up potential and sustainability beyond the trial
- Applicant is based in Casey (local providers will be favoured to maximise benefits for the local economy, although any Australian organisation is eligible to apply)

#### **Assessment Process**

1. Funding applications will be checked for eligibility by Council officers.
2. Eligible applications will be assessed by the internal Living Lab judging panel of subject matter experts from a range of departments.  
Note: The full amount requested may not be approved; the assessment panel may recommend partial funding. Consideration will also be given to the total funding available and the distribution of funding across the priority areas.
3. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in December 2026.

## How to Apply

- All applications must be submitted online using the Ageing Well Living Lab Application Form. Access the form here: <https://casey.smartygrants.com.au/> from 1 September 2026.
- Applications must include additional information as specified. Supporting documents and attachments must be in an electronic format and submitted as part of the online application process. The application must be submitted by the due date. No paper applications will be accepted, and applications outside of Smarty Grants will not be considered. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

## Application timeline

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 1 September 2026 | <b>Applications open</b><br>Applications completed on <a href="#">SmartyGrants</a> . An automated acknowledgement email is sent to the applicant as soon as the application is submitted. |
| Friday 11 September 2026 | <b>Information session</b><br>Online, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm<br>Register via <a href="#">Eventbrite</a> to receive the Teams link to participate.                                              |
| Saturday 31 October 2026 | <b>Applications close.</b> There is no access to online applications after 5:00 pm.                                                                                                       |
| November 2026            | Applications are processed to determine eligibility. Applications are assessed against the assessment criteria by Casey officers and shortlist confirmed                                  |
| December 2026            | Applicants notified of outcome                                                                                                                                                            |
| January – April 2027     | Funding and Service Agreements signed, and funding is distributed                                                                                                                         |
| May 2027 – May 2028      | Delivery of Ageing Well Living Lab activities with successful partners                                                                                                                    |
| June 2028                | Grant acquittal                                                                                                                                                                           |
| July 2028                | Final report                                                                                                                                                                              |

## If your application is successful

We will notify you by email or phone to organise a project kick-off meeting.

- You will need to read [Council's Grants Policy](#).
- If you have any outstanding payments to Council, you must clear these before we can pay the grant.
- Please note that some events and installations may require Council permits and approval. In this case, approval must be obtained before grant funds can be paid.

## Useful information

The following resources contain information that may be useful in preparing a Living Lab funding application:

- [Ageing Well Living Lab website](#)
- [Ageing Well Living Lab grant website](#)
- Ageing Well Living Lab - Challenge Brief (see grant website to access document)
- Ageing Well Living Lab - Desired Outcomes (see grant website to access document)
- [Ageing Well Living Lab Casey Conversations website](#)
- [City of Casey Council Plan 2025-2029](#)
- [City of Casey Long Term Community Vision 2031](#)
- [City of Casey Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029](#)

## What are the conditions of the funding?

All successful applicants must adhere to the conditions outlined in the [City of Casey's Grants Policy](#). The following conditions also apply:

- Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding and service agreement with the City of Casey, which lists funding conditions. This must be signed, and appropriate documentation provided before funds are issued.
- Successful applicants will be required to provide a statement of expenditure or an audited statement at the completion funding period. If Council's grant funds are not spent, all remaining funds must be returned to Council.
- Please note that a Living Lab funding application will not necessarily result in funding or may result in only a portion of the amount requested being allocated.
- Groups will need to satisfy acquittal requirements for previous Council grants and funding before funds will be released.
- Depending on outcomes and benefits for Casey, some successful applicants may be invited to scale up their project with additional funding provided at the discretion of the Council.
- Council may also choose to take the learnings from the trial to inform future market activities at the discretion of the Council.

## Reporting and Acquittal

After completing your project, you must tell us how you spent the grant money and share the outcomes of the project. This is known as an acquittal process. You must complete the acquittal process online within 60 days of completing the project. The reporting format and agreed outputs will be provided upon the successful appointment of the grant.