

PREPARING YOUR PROJECT BUDGET

1. What is a project budget?

Your project budget clearly explains how City of Casey grant funding will be used. It shows:

- All income that will support your project
- All project costs required to deliver the activity.

Your budget must be clear, realistic and balanced. Outputs are the activities or services your project will deliver.

2. Common income and expenditure items

When preparing your budget, it can be helpful to think through all possible income sources and project costs. Below are examples of commonly approved income and expenditure items for City of Casey grants. These examples are not exhaustive and will vary depending on your project.

2.1 Common income items

Examples of income that may support your project include:

- City of Casey Grant funding
- Your organisation's cash contribution
- Participant fees or ticket sales
- Sponsorships or donations from local businesses or partners
- Funding from other grants (confirmed or unconfirmed)
- Fundraising activities linked directly to the project

All income sources that contribute to delivering the project should be included in the budget table, even if they are not yet confirmed.

2.2 Common expenditure items

All expenses must directly relate to delivering the funded project. The following are examples of common expenditure items that Council grants can cover:

- Venue, facility or room hire for project delivery or events.
- Program delivery costs (for example, workshop materials, activity resources or catering)
- Facilitator, trainer, keynote speaker or specialist fees
- Design and printing of flyers, posters or programs
- Digital promotion and advertising linked to the project.
- Equipment hire such as sound, lighting or staging

Each item should be clearly described so Council and grant assessors can understand what the funding will be used for.

2.3 Ineligible expenditure

Some costs are not eligible to be funded through grants. These are outlined in the relevant grant guidelines.

If your project includes ineligible expenses, you can still proceed but these costs must be covered by your own financial contribution or other income sources.

Clearly separating eligible and ineligible costs helps ensure your budget is realistic and compliant and makes it easier for Council and grant assessors to review your application.

3. Tips for preparing a strong budget

- Start with a clear project plan so you understand everything you need to deliver the project.
- List each income and expense item on a separate line.
- Provide specific descriptions so assessors understand what you are funding.
- Include all funding sources contributing to the project, not just the Casey grant.
- Only include income and expenses that relate directly to the grant-funded project.
- Avoid overestimating or underestimating costs.
- Make sure the total income and total expenditure are exactly the same.
- Indicate when income is not yet confirmed.
- You run the activity (output) so people's lives can improve in a specific way (outcome).

Example of a well-prepared budget

Income	Amount (\$)	Expenditure	Amount (\$)
City of Casey Community Grant	2,500	Venue hire (\$250 per day x 2 days)	500
Organisation contribution	500	Catering (\$10 per person)	1,000
Ticket sales (\$5 per person)	500	Sound equipment hire	200
Local business donations (Not yet confirmed)	1,000	Printing flyers (x 200)	100
		Printing booklets (x 45)	1,400
		Videographer (3 hours)	1,800
Total income	5,000	Total expenditure	5,000

This example budget:

- Identifies all funding sources
- Clearly describes all project costs
- Includes quotes and realistic pricing
- Balances income and expenditure

4. What to avoid

If your budget is unclear or incomplete, grant assessors may not be able to understand how the grant funding will be used.

Avoid budgets that:

- Use vague descriptions such as "event" or "other costs"
- Do not explain what items are for
- Do not include pricing or quotes for large items
- Do not balance total income and expenditure

Example of a poor budget

Income	Amount (\$)	Expenditure	Amount (\$)
Council grant	4,000	Printing	-
Other	4,000	Event costs	5,000
		Other costs	800
Total income	8,000	Total expenditure	5,800

5. In-kind support explained

In-kind support is non-cash support that contributes to your project. This may include donated goods or services such as:

- Volunteer time
- Donated professional services.
- Free or discounted venue or equipment hire.

In-kind support should:

- Be listed at its reasonable market value.
- Be clearly described so assessors understand what is being contributed.

Including in-kind support helps demonstrate community contribution and partnership in your project.

6. Easy budgeting checklist

A quick way community groups can use this checklist;

- Spend 30 minutes in a committee or volunteer meeting
- Assign one person to follow up each action

What to check	Simple steps volunteers can take	Why it matters
Does spending reflect what we say we will do?	- Review the biggest spending areas - Ask 'Does this match our project?'	Budgets show what you plan to do so it needs to align with your project proposal
Are we just repeating last year's budget?	- Pick one cost area to rethink - Look for savings (bulk-buying, sharing resources)	Encourages smarter use of funds for community impact
Is there any budget for learning or skills?	- Consider adding a small training budget (even \$200–\$500) - Identify one learning opportunity per volunteer or leader	Signals that growth and development are valued by your group
Are we prepared for issues?	- Check insurance and safety essentials are covered	Balances safety with confidence to operate
Who helped shape the budget?	- Ask volunteers/staff for 1 improvement idea each - Run a short discussion before finalising budget	Shared input builds ownership and commitment
Are income targets realistic?	- Review all your income sources - Consider new ways to generate income to cover project or organisational costs - Avoid committing income that is not yet confirmed	Prevents burnout and supports long-term stability
Are important things not covered at all?	- Check for gaps (e.g. community engagement, training, promotion) - Add even small placeholder amounts	Missing budget lines reveal blind spots

For further information or assistance, contact the City of Casey Grants team communitygrants@casey.vic.gov.au or refer to the relevant grant guidelines.