

# Community Grants Policy

## Nillumbik Shire Council



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If you require the Community Grants Policy in an alternative format, email [grants@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:grants@nillumbik.vic.gov.au) or phone 9433 3111. Please refer to the 'accessibility' section on page 11 for additional information.

## **1. Introduction**

The Community Grants Policy provides an overarching framework for the various grants programs provided by Nillumbik Shire Council to assist Nillumbik based community groups, organisations, and individuals whose grant activities address specific community needs and Council's strategic objectives. This policy seeks to explain Council's grant processes by providing a consistent and transparent approach across all of Council's grant programs.

### **Context**

Each year, Council delivers a number of grant programs to facilitate and support community groups, organisations and individuals to apply for assistance to deliver projects and initiatives addressing various community needs. These include: community projects, events, arts projects, environmental initiatives, community development and inclusion initiatives, and other activities.

The Community Grants Policy confirms Council's commitment to providing funding avenues and support to community groups, organisations and individuals and ensures an equitable, open, transparent and accountable decision making process.

### **Scope**

The Community Grants Policy applies to all funding and support programs administered by Council to community groups, organisations and individuals, providing a common standard of grants administration, whilst recognising each individual grants program will have its own aim, requirements, funding levels, and criteria depending on the specific purpose of each grants program.

## 2. Principles

Grant funded initiatives provide Council with the opportunity to support community groups, organisations, and individuals to deliver initiatives that meet local needs, and reflect and promote objectives from both the [Council Plan 2021-25](#) and the [Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25](#).

The Council Plan 2021-25 is Council's commitment to delivering on the community's aspirations outlined in our community vision over the next four years. The Council Plan 2021-25 is structured around four key themes, all of which are aligned to the [Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040](#), which are:

- Community and Connection
- Place and Space
- Sustainable and Resilient
- Responsible and Accountable.

The Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 outlines our commitment to address health and wellbeing priorities and reduce inequalities over the next four years. The Health and Wellbeing priorities for the next four years are:

- Social inclusion and connection
- Community and climate resilience
- Gender equality and prevention of family violence
- Physical activity
- Food
- Reducing harm from alcohol, other drugs and gambling.

Every application will be considered on its own merits, but as we aim to fund the activities that will have the greatest positive impact in Nillumbik, applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed activities will align with these plans.

Council recognises that community groups, organisations and our residents are best suited to identify and meet community needs, and structures the grants programs to facilitate this process.

### 3. Eligibility

To be eligible for Council's community grants, applicants must meet the following criteria at the minimum:

- Applicants are required to be either based within Nillumbik or provide services, projects, events or programs within the boundaries of the municipality.
- Not-for-profit incorporated organisations, community groups, clubs, artists and other eligible applicants, that live, work, study, volunteer or play in Nillumbik, may be eligible to apply to Council's grant programs dependant on each grant program's eligibility criteria.
- If an applicant is not an eligible organisation as defined above but meets all other eligibility criteria, they may be auspiced by an eligible organisation to apply on their behalf. For example, if an unincorporated community group is auspiced by a not-for-profit incorporated organisation, they may be able to apply dependant on each grant program's eligibility criteria.

New groups, proposing to establish themselves within the boundaries of the Nillumbik, are also eligible to apply.

Additional criteria may be required for each individual grant program.

Relevant guidelines will be established and published on Council's website for each grant program which further define the eligibility and assessment criteria under which Council funding will be provided.

Council reserves the right to determine an application ineligible if any organisation or project is found to be non-compliant with a previous grant, has an outstanding debt, or commitment, or is the subject of any legal action, dispute or otherwise, which may damage Council's reputation.

### 4. Insurance

Public Liability Insurance is an eligibility requirement of most, if not all, Council grant programs and applicants must demonstrate insurance that is both appropriate to the grant activity proposed and a policy must be obtained to the minimum value of \$10 million as part of the application process. This insurance must be in the name of the applicant, group or organisation.

Where a grant applicant is being covered by an auspicing agency's public liability insurance cover, this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure the cover is sufficient.

If hiring a Council reserve or facility and applicants do not carry their own public liability insurance, they may be eligible to apply for community liability insurance through Council via our [website](#) or by contacting the Risk and Safety team via [nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au) or 03 9433 3111.

## 5. Application process

Council offers a range of grants across a number of programs and a list of Council grants currently accepting applications is available on our website at [nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Grants](http://nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Grants).

Grant opportunities will be widely promoted across Nillumbik using a variety of promotional avenues to inform the community of the grant program and enable everyone who is eligible to apply for a grant, if they choose to do so.

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. The guidelines also include the relevant contact details for further information and applicant support.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read and follow the grant guidelines and address all relevant criteria outlined in the grant application. It is highly recommended, and in some cases mandatory, that applicants discuss their projects with relevant Council staff prior to submitting a grant application. A number of [grant writing resources](#) are available online to support applicants.

The amount of detail required in the application from the applicant will be proportional to the grant amount. Applicants may be required to include quotations as part of the application process. Details of these requirements will be outlined in the respective guidelines for each grant program.

Council use the [SmartyGrants](#) online grants administration system to ensure a consistent, efficient and user-friendly customer experience. Registration provides applicants with secure access to their forms allowing them to work on them over time rather than having to complete them all at once. It only takes a moment to [register online](#) and applicants can start a submission immediately after registering.

Applications must be submitted online at [nillumbik.smartygrants.com.au](http://nillumbik.smartygrants.com.au). Applicants can contact the grant program lead officer if they need support submitting an online application.

Additional support on the use of this system will be provided at Grant Information sessions or upon request. For more help using SmartyGrants download the [Help Guide for Applicants](#) or the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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

## Supporting Information

Upon application, the following supporting information will be required at a minimum depending on the level of funding available for each individual grant program as outlined in the table below:

Grant funding value	Supporting requirements
Under \$5,000 (excl. GST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ABN details or completed Statement by Supplier form</li><li>• A Public Liability Insurance Certificate</li><li>• Banking details</li><li>• Letter of support from Auspice organisation (if applicable)</li></ul>
\$5,000 or above (excl. GST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ABN details or completed Statement by Supplier form</li><li>• A Public Liability Insurance Certificate</li><li>• Banking details</li><li>• Letter of support from Auspice organisation (if applicable)</li><li>• Quotes for requested expenditure items</li></ul>
\$10,000 or above (excl. GST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ABN details or completed Statement by Supplier form</li><li>• A Public Liability Insurance Certificate</li><li>• Banking details</li><li>• Letter of support from Auspice organisation (if applicable)</li><li>• Quotes for requested expenditure items</li><li>• Two quotes for any expenditure items valued over \$10,000</li><li>• 1-2 prior year financial statements</li><li>• Assurances from the President/Director/Treasurer around the financial viability of the community group seeking the grant</li></ul>

## 6. Assessment process

Applications for Council grants will be assessed against each individual grant criteria as outlined in the grant program guidelines.

In addition to the grant program criteria outlined in the respective guidelines, to support an equitable and transparent distribution of funds, Council may also consider the following assessment criteria and factors, in determining whether to support grant applications:

- Number of grant applications received and funds sought
- Amount of grant funding available within the grants program budget
- Degree of alignment of the project with the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, or other strategic documents
- Distribution and spread of funded activities across the municipality
- Degree of involvement of other stakeholders
- Evidence of adherence to accessibility and inclusion principles, targeting and supporting all people regardless of age, gender, race, ability or socio economic status
- Potential to develop, maintain, or increase project initiatives and sustainability in the community, following Council support.

Council will establish appropriate grant assessment panels for each grant program to assess the applications received, based on how well they meet the required grant program criteria.

To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process:

- Applications for grant programs offering funding lower than \$5,000 will be assessed internally by Council officers with coordinator/manager oversight.
- Applications for grants programs offering funding equal to and above \$5,000 will be vetted internally against eligibility criteria before being assessed by an assessment panel of community representatives or experts drawn from existing advisory committees and/or stakeholder groups.

Where appropriate, advice or information given to one applicant will be made available to all other applicants.

All applicants will be informed of their application outcomes, and the successful applications may be announced publicly. Unsuccessful applicants will be offered the opportunity to discuss the application process.

All successful applicants will receive the approved funding from Council subject to terms and conditions, which are outlined in the relevant guidelines for each grant program.

## **7. Conflict of interest**

A conflict of interest occurs when there is a conflict between a person's private interests and their public obligations.

To ensure probity and fairness, all Councillors, Council officers and community members involved in grant assessment processes are required to declare their interests prior to assessing any applications.

In the event of a conflict of interest, the relevant person must decline to participate in any discussion about the application and have this declaration noted as per Council's conflict of interest process. This process ensures that any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is promptly identified and managed appropriately.

## **8. Funding Conditions**

Successful applicants must agree to the following funding conditions:

- Keep Council informed of any changes to the proposed funded activity, which would require an approved variation
- Submit an acquittal to Council after completion of the funded activity
- Return the full or remaining amount of the grant to Council if the funded activity is no longer viable and/or cancelled, or obtain a variation from the grant program lead officer
- Return the remaining amount of the grant to Council if the funded activity is less than budgeted, or obtain a variation from the grant program lead officer
- Liaise with Council's Communications team, regarding their promotional material and use of the appropriate Nillumbik Shire Council logo.
- Adhere to all current Victorian Coronavirus restrictions during the delivery of the activity
- Obtain all relevant project and event related permits, approvals, and licenses from the relevant authorities prior to commencement

Other funding conditions may be required at the discretion of individual grant programs.

Grant recipients are also required to acknowledge the support provided by the Nillumbik Shire Council in the following ways:

- Inclusion in their organisation's promotional material such as, but not limited to media releases, brochures, flyers, advertising, newsletters and digital media
- At events and activities by way of signage, public announcements, opportunity for speech and or presentation and participation at the event
- Inclusion in any relevant publications e.g. annual report

Further details are provided to successful grant recipients when funding is awarded.

## **9. Acquittal Requirements**

It is generally a condition of accepting a grant that successful applicants submit an online acquittal within two months of completion of each funded project.

This information enables Council to evaluate the achievements of funded activities, monitor the effectiveness of the grant program and ensure that we are meeting the needs of grant recipients and the community.

Recipients who have an outstanding funding acquittal for a grant, and do not have an approved variation in place, may be ineligible for funding in future grant rounds until the outstanding acquittal is completed.

In general, acquittal reports may request (but are not limited to):

- A summary of the activity undertaken
- How the project achieved its objectives
- An evaluation including attendance figures, community impacts and outcomes
- Participant feedback received
- What challenges were encountered and how they were overcome
- Were there any unanticipated benefits
- Any future plans related or as a result
- Financial documentation showing actual expenditure
- Supporting documentation, including publicity and promotional materials, items produced with Council's logo, reviews, photos, recordings, DVDs, manuscripts, etcetera
- Applicant's feedback on the grant program.

## 10. Accessibility

Not everyone may have access to online facilities nor be confident submitting an application via SmartyGrants. Council Officers are able to assist applicants with specific needs to submit their application using the SmartyGrants portal.

In addition:

Council can be contacted through the [National Relay Service](#) (NRS). The NRS is available as a phone solution for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment. All calls are confidential. Users must be registered via [www.relayservice.gov.au](http://www.relayservice.gov.au) to make and receive calls:

TTY users phone 133 677, then ask for Council on 9433 3111.

Speak and Listen (speech-to-speech) users phone 1300 555 727, then ask for Council on 9433 3111.

A Hearing loop is located at the Civic Drive Customer Service Counter, Civic Centre, Civic Drive Greensborough

Communication boards are available at our Customer Service Counter at the Civic Centre, Civic Drive, Greensborough.

For further information regarding this policy, contact Nillumbik Shire Council via [Grants@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:Grants@nillumbik.vic.gov.au) or call 9433 3111.