

Community Grants Application Guidelines

Introduction

Swan Hill Rural City Council as part of its Annual Budget has set aside funds that are available to suitably qualified community organisations, to obtain financial assistance to pursue their organisations objectives.

It should be noted that the funds are limited and it is in the interest of the applicants to provide as much relevant information as possible to support their application. Please note that the maximum amount that can be approved from Council is \$2,000.

The following document has been designed to assist you in writing and submitting an application for a community grant with Swan Hill Rural City Council. You are strongly encouraged to read the following important information before completing your application form and if you have further questions to contact Council to discuss your application.

Important Dates

Category 1 -

Applications open: Thursday, 3 September 2009

Applications close: Friday, 16 October 2009

Successful applications announced: November 2009

Category 2 –

Applications open all year round

Funding Available

Council has allocated \$40,000 to its community grants program for the 2009/10 financial year. The budget for the Community Grants Program shall be divided into two categories. The indicative breakup will be:

Category 1 - Projects up to \$2,000	75% of Budget allocation
Category 2 - Discretionary Fund	25% of Budget allocation

Council will invite written applications for funding annually, with 100% of the funds from Categories 1 - being available in this round.

Category 2 - discretionary funds are available to community groups throughout the year, on an application basis without a closing date. Generally no more than \$200 will be allocated to a request in Category 2.

Category 1 Community Grant

Eligibility

Groups and organisations based within the Swan Hill Rural City Council, or Organisations based outside the Swan Hill Rural City Council, but with a project proposal delivering program services, activities or events to residents of the Swan Hill Rural City Council, are eligible to submit proposals to the Community Grants program.

Eligibility Criteria

Funding will only be provided to Community Organisations which:

- Operate within or provide services targeting people resident within the municipality.
- Are incorporated.
- Provide access to Council residents either as members, participants or supporters.
- Have a membership of at least 10 people.
- Operate for the benefit of the community.
- All successful organisations must ensure adequate legal and insurance requirements are met eg. Public Liability insurance coverage.
- Provide a financial statement for the previous year with the application.

Generally, funding will only be provided for applications that target:

- Structural repairs or minor upgrades to community facilities.
- New or upgraded equipment essential to the operation of the community group
- Current OH&S or risk management issues.
- New programs or activities within a community.
- Minor or local festivals or events that have broad community benefit.
- A specific high needs group.

Condition of Grant and Other Information

- Applicant organisations are expected to at least match Council's contribution in either cash or "in kind" or a combination of both.
- Grants will not be provided for works already commenced, or completed by the organisation, unless Council's prior written consent has been received.
- Generally costs associated with salaries will not be approved.

- No change can be made to your grant without a written proposal for a variation being submitted to Council in writing for approval.
- Grant projects applied for through the community grants process must be completed within 6 months of the date of approval for the grant unless otherwise agreed to by Council. In the case of a change in timeline a proposal must be submitted to Council in writing for approval.
- At the end of the project period you must provide an evaluation of your grant. This can be made through the evaluation form found on Council's website.
- All unspent funds must be returned to Council.

Applications

Applications for Category 1 will not be accepted after the closing date.

All applications for funding must be on the official application form.

Applications may be lodged in person, by mail, by fax or by e-mail. Where lodged by e-mail or fax, any supporting documentation not lodged with the application form must be received not later than three business days after the close of applications, or the application will not be considered.

Council will invite written applications for funding annually, with 100% of the funds from Category 1 being available in this round.

As funds are limited all applications may not be funded or funded to the amount requested.

How will the application be assessed?

Applications will be assessed by a committee comprising of Senior Council Officers. Recommendations are presented to Council who endorse the funding recommendations at a formal Council meeting. From there successful applicants are announced publically and all those who have applied for a grant will also receive a letter notifying them of the outcomes.

Evaluation

Each application will be assessed on its merits and the following factors will be taken into account to determine priorities for funding:

- Number of active members.
- The immediate and future contribution the project will make to support community development and resilience.
- Availability of alternative facilities.
- Any other evidence of demand.
- Long term viability of applicant organisation.

- The level of cash contribution.
- The level of “in kind” contribution.
- Availability of other funding source(s).
- Prior receipt and utilisation of grants.

Payment of Grants

Payment of the Community Grant to approved applicants can occur after official notification of their successful application, on the basis that they have provided the following to council

- A tax invoice or statement by relevant supplier to Council.

Organisations that have been successful in receiving a grant are encouraged to contact Council to discuss payment prior to claiming their grant.

ABN & GST

Prior to submitting an application form please check if your organisation/group has:

An **Australian Business Number (ABN)**. If so, please write the ABN on the Grant Application. Please also check if your group is registered for the **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**. **Note:** that having an ABN does not automatically mean you are registered for GST.

Under the Australian Taxation System, Council are required to pay differing amounts depending on your organisation. Please use the following information to determine where your organisation/group sits:

1. Registered with an ABN and registered for GST

If your group are chosen to receive a grant, you must give Council a Tax Invoice before payment will be made. Council will then pay your grant amount in full **PLUS 10%** to allow for GST.

2. Registered with an ABN but are NOT registered for GST

If your group are chosen to receive a grant Council will pay the full amount of the grant allocated to you. 10% will not be added to the amount to compensate for GST.

3. If your group does not have an ABN

Your group must fill out a Statement by a supplier form and return it as part of your application. Council, if you do not supply this form, must take 46.5% of the grant allocation and send this to the Australian Taxation Office. You can obtain a copy of this form through the ATO website <http://www.ato.gov.au/content/downloads/nat3346.pdf>.

Note: A business can not be registered for GST without an ABN.

Category 2 Community Grants

Category 2 - funds are available to groups in between the formal Category 1 round. Applications will be accepted at any time with no fixed closing date or time. Generally no more than \$200 may be allocated to a request in Category 2. As funds are limited all applications may not be funded or funded to the amount requested.

All applications must be made on the official Application Form and may be lodged in person, by mail, by fax or by e-mail. It is not expected that detailed supporting documentation will be required.

Eligibility

Groups and organisations based within the Swan Hill Rural City Council are eligible to submit proposals to the Community Grants program.

Eligibility Criteria

Funding will only be provided to Community Organisations which:

- Are financially stable and be able to demonstrate that they involve residents in the planning and management of local activities.
- Are incorporated or have some other legal status or auspiced by another agency (this arrangement must be confirmed by written agreement).
- Operate for the benefit of the community.
- Not already receive substantial support from Council.
- All successful organisations must ensure adequate legal and insurance requirements are met eg. Public Liability insurance coverage.

Generally, funding will only be provided for applications that target:

- New programs or activities within a community.
- Activities that have broad community benefit.
- A specific high needs group.
- Grants will not be provided for activities already commenced or completed by the organisation, unless Council's prior written consent has been received.

Tips on writing a successful application

- Read the grant guidelines and criteria carefully.
- Discuss the application with your organisation and keep them informed. Also discuss your project with Council to make sure that your project fits the guidelines.
- Include support letters and copies of quotes. This builds your application.
- Read over your application and make sure you have read each question correctly and that your answers are relative.
- Keep your answers clear, to the point and free of any spelling error.
- When answering questions, refer back to the objectives of the organisation.
- Do not skip a question or write “N/A” (not applicable). Every question requires an answer.
- Make sure you post or deliver your application by the due date. Late applications will not be considered.
- Always remember the Community Grants are very competitive and an unsuccessful application does not necessarily mean it was not a suitable project. If you wish, contact Swan Hill Rural City Council to receive feedback on your application

For further information

If your organisation requires any further information regarding the Community Grants Program or has specific questions regarding the application form please contact:

Steve Matthews

Community Facilitation Manager

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Email: smatthews@swanhill.vic.gov.au