1. PURPOSE

Horsham Rural City Council (HRCC) Community Development Grants Program helps groups in the Horsham and district community to improve community facilities and work together for more engaged and healthy communities.

This policy provides the framework for the delivery of Council's Community Development Grants Program.

2. INTRODUCTION

The HRCC Community Development Grants Program is an annual funding program that allocates grants to local not-for-profit organisations, groups and associations every year.

This policy outlines the funding priorities, eligibility, application requirements, assessment criteria, grant approval and payment processes, timelines and reporting process, and general information.

3. SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all community not-for-profit groups who operate in or provide activities for the benefit of the residents of Horsham Rural City Council.

4. PRINCIPLES

The HRCC Community Development Grants program is an annual funding program allocated as part of Council's yearly budget process to not-for-profit community organisations.

4.1 Funding Priorities

The Community Development Grants Program aligns with the key priorities of the current Council Plan , Youth Strategy, Community Inclusion Plan and Age Friendly Communities Implementation Plan. Accordingly, successful applications should support one or more of the following key funding priorities:

- Values and respects the culture of First Nations peoples
- Improves First Nations peoples health and wellbeing
- Provision of accessible, inclusive, safe and welcoming spaces
- Supports Tourism and Events
- Addresses family violence, alcohol and other drugs, tobacco and gambling harm
- Supports gender equity
- Improves mental health and social connection
- Encourage participation and diversity in sports, events, arts and culture
- Supports child and youth initiatives
- Supports social inclusion and positive ageing for older people
- Encourages innovation and new technologies in our community
- Supports adaptation to reduced emissions and climate change

- Supports protection and conservation of our natural environment
- Other (provide details)

An application may also be lodged for any project that may not fit the key funding priorities but is linked to other Council plans or strategies or has a community focus.

Council may, for a particular year, add or change key funding priorities.

The maximum allocation per organisation is $10,000 although the majority of successful applications range between $500 and $5,000. Council may consider a larger staged project over a number of years for an application in excess of $10,000.

Projects which have a significant cash and/or in-kind contribution by the applicant organisation are encouraged.

Total funds made available, for a particular financial year, will be a decision of Council within the annual budget process.

4.2 Eligibility

All not-for-profit organisations, groups and associations based within Horsham Rural City Council may apply for a Community Development Grant.

The project must be delivered within the Horsham municipality and include direct benefits for residents of the municipality.

Who cannot apply and what projects are ineligible for funding?
- Individuals
- Those seeking funding for a commercial business
- Those groups who have not expended or reported back on a community grant allocation from a previous financial year
- Funding for organisational operating costs, for example, wages and utilities
- Projects that are the responsibility of other sectors of government
- Projects that are a clear duplication of other services
- Projects that have already commenced
- Projects that require ongoing funding from Council
- Projects seeking funding for religious assets
- Applications that are received after the closing date.

Projects are to commence after 1 July and be completed by 30 June of the following year.

4.3 Application Process

Eligible groups must apply by the due date and using the form supplied on the HRCC Council website: Guidelines and Templates for Community Development Grants https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Community-Services/Grant-Information/Community-Development-Grants-Program

All applications must include:

- Completed details of what the grant funds will be spent on
- An indication of other funds that will be put towards the project
- An estimate of volunteer in-kind support for the project
- A quote for all goods and services over $1,000
- A copy of the organisation's most recent audited financial statements where the application shows a cash contribution from the organisation of >$5,000
- A copy of any permits required for the project i.e. planning/building
- Land owner consent for all building and external works on Crown Land
- Endorsement of all groups/organisations who will use or benefit from the project.

4.4 Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:
- The level of contribution to the project by the applicant
- The extent of previous assistance provided by Council
- The spread of grants across community, cultural and sporting areas (including geographic spread)
- Projects that specifically support diversity and inclusion
- How well the project supports Council's funding priorities
- Value for money – considering membership and number of users to benefit from the project
- Council may determine that one or more significant projects may have preference over several smaller projects.

4.5 Assessment Process

- All applications are received by the Records Department and saved electronically
- The Community Grants Team prepares a grants summary which ranks applications in accordance with the assessment criteria
- All the applications relating to building or external works on Crown Land or Council Owned Land are to be reviewed by the Co-ordinator of Recreation and Open Space Planning and the Co-ordinator Facilities Management
- Initial assessment panel consisting of:
  - One representative from Corporate Services - Finance Manager (or delegate)
  - Two representatives from Infrastructure – Co-ordinator Projects Office and Manager Operations(or delegate)
  - Three representatives from Communities and Place –
    Managers (or delegates) of Investment Attraction and Place, Community Services and Safety and Arts Culture and Recreation
  Administration support for the assessment panel to be provided by the Community Grants Team
- The initial assessment panel makes recommendations to the Executive Management Team
- Executive Management Team endorses final grants list
- Final adoption by Council as part of the yearly budget process.

Council may only allocate part funding for a project rather than the full amount requested in the application. A grant allocation by Council does not mean any ongoing funding commitment or obligation by Council.

HRCC assistance should be acknowledged on any promotional material or media coverage relating to the successful project.

4.6 Timelines

Timelines are established by the Finance Manager in December each year to fit in with the budget process for the following year. General guideline for timelines is as follows:

- Applications open   End of January
- Applications close   End of February
- Council Adoption   End of April
- Advice to applicants   End of May

4.7 Grant Payment

In general, grants will be paid in October of each year, however, the payment date may be varied in justifiable circumstances, upon written request to Council.

Payment of grants will be made upon receipt of invoices or evidence of project payments by the organisation. These invoices and payments must coincide with the grant financial year.

4.8 Grant Reporting

Successful applicants are required to complete a Community Grants Project Report upon completion of the project.

The template for the Project Report can be downloaded on the HRCC website at:
https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Community-Services/Grant-Information/Community-Development-Grants-Program

5. COMMUNICATION

The Community Development Grants program has a dedicated page on the HRCC website at:
https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Community-Services/Grant-Information/Community-Development-Grants-Program.

The Guidelines and Application Forms are forwarded to all applicants from the previous year.

The Community Development Grants Program is promoted during February each year in local media, co-ordinated by the Media and Communications Officer. Community information sessions are co-ordinated by the community grants team in February each year.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner: Co-ordinator Community Relations and Advocacy

7. DEFINITIONS

Nil

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
HRCC Community Grants Program – Funding Guidelines	Internet
HRCC Community Grants Program – Application template	Internet
HRCC Community Donations Policy (C04/025)	Internet

9. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01	3 March 2014	Council	• New Policy	
02	February 2017	Council	• Disability Access Criteria • Revised notification month • Inclusion of project ranking • Inclusion of Grants Information Session	
03	19 March 2017	Council	• Changes to funding categories	
04	N/A	N/A	• Change in Departmental titles only	
05	16 Dec 2019	Council	• Addition of Youth category • References to new strategies and plans • Removal of S86 reference • Copy of any permits required for project • Projects that require ongoing funding from Council • Projects seeking funding for religious assets	
06	14 December 2020	Council	• A number of minor changes to reflect organisational changes • Assessment criteria – extent of previous assistance, shortened to be more readable	December 2021
07	24 January 2022	Council	• Assessment Criteria – changes to reflect the new Council Plan • Project Assessment Team • Crown Land Assessment Requirements	December 2022