Community Grants Program
Guide to writing a grant application

What does an effective Gannawarra Shire Council Community Grant Program application look like?

Council wants your project to succeed. You need to make your project stand out. Tell us why your project is important and why it should be funded instead of others. Council only has a limited amount of money, so demonstrate how your project is supported by, and will benefit, the wider community. To do this, your project needs to link to the draft 2021 - 2025 Council Plan and/or other Council strategies. You can find these on our website. You need to demonstrate community partnerships and support for your project by providing letters of support. Also, make sure your budget is accurate and reflects the true cost of your proposal.

Keep the following two questions in mind:
1. What is the Community Grants Program looking for in a project?
2. What does your proposed project offer the Community Grants Program?

What project/s does your community group want to achieve (hint: pick projects that may not usually attract funding from other sources). Your project needs to link to the three broad goals of the 2021 – 2025 Council Plan (Liveability, Growth, Sustainability)

Think carefully about the project and ask yourself - *Why are you applying?*
- Are you looking to fulfill a need, solve a problem, or create a better community?
- Who is involved and who will benefit?
- Call a community meeting to brainstorm the project idea
- Find other groups who may want to work with you on this project

Things you SHOULD do:
- Read the grant guidelines carefully to make sure your project meets the relevant funding criteria
- Follow the application instructions
- Document the need the project addresses or the problem that needs fixing
- Use positive, action orientated words like 'will' or 'can' in your application
- Use language describing how the funds, if successful, will provide an 'investment' in the community, rather than the expectation of a gift
- Highlight the positive benefits to the community from the project
- Keep your application short and to the point
- Provide realistic and achievable timeframes
- Check your budget adds up correctly - the total figure for expenditure must equal the total figure for income e.g. **Income** = $5,000 (includes grant, in-kind etc) and **Expenditure** = $5,000

- List other sources of funding for your project and if that funding is confirmed or not
- Talk to people within the Community Engagement Team about your project if you need support

Things you SHOULD NOT do:
- Do not assume that your project will be funded – there is a limited amount of money available
- Do not dwell on problems; instead provide the solution or opportunity your project will address

The most common reasons why a grant application is rejected:
- Too many applications and not enough money
- The project is ineligible, which indicates that the applicant hasn't read the guidelines
- Poorly written – application doesn't get to the point of the project and is hard to read
- Budget doesn't add up and no quotes attached
- Many applications are for a worthy cause, but are a poor fit with Council's strategic focus
- The project doesn't have broad community benefit, or evidence inclusiveness

Ideas for community projects that connect to the Council Plan:
- Projects that bring the community together
- Events that increase economic activity and tourism
- Arts and culture projects
- Sport and recreation activities that aim to increase the participation, particularly of females and disadvantaged children
- Community safety initiatives
- Projects that celebrate diversity, inclusion and social connectedness
- Projects that support health and wellbeing outcomes such as mental health, alcohol, drug and violence prevention