



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Moorabool Shire Council's Community Grants Program supports local community projects, events, infrastructure and initiatives that strengthen participation, wellbeing and connection across the Shire. This guide answers common questions and helps you prepare a stronger application. Before applying, please read the Community Grants Program Guidelines and contact the Community Development team on 5366 7100 to discuss your project idea.

Program highlights

- \$280,400 provided annually through the Community Grants Program.
- Community Strengthening and Community Events grants now offer up to \$10,000 per application.
- A new Quick Response Fund offers up to \$3,000 for urgent or time-sensitive community needs, available year-round subject to funding.
- Arts, culture, sustainability and environmental projects are now supported through the Community Strengthening Fund.
- The Community Infrastructure Fund supports larger eligible projects from \$10,000 to \$100,000.
- Contribution requirements have been made more flexible for many projects.

Before applying

How do I apply for a grant?

To apply, read the Community Grants Program Guidelines, speak with a Community Development Officer to eligibility and the best funding stream, then submit your application online through SmartyGrants when the relevant round is open.

When to apply for a grant?

Community Grants Program rounds generally open twice each year, with the March round opening around 1 March and closing on 31 March and the August round opening around 1 August and closing on 31 August. Application opening dates may vary, so check Council's

website for the current round dates. from time to time. The Quick Response Fund is available year-round, subject to available funding. Late applications will not be accepted.

Why do I need to speak to a Council Officer about my project?

All applicants must speak with Council before applying. This helps confirm that your organisation and project are eligible, that you have selected the right funding stream, and that your budget and supporting documents are on the right track. Applications that have not been discussed with Council will not be assessed.

Am I eligible?

Eligibility depends on the grant stream and the type of project proposed. In general, applicants must be an incorporated not-for-profit organisation with a valid ABN, be auspiced by an eligible incorporated not-for-profit organisation with a valid ABN or be an eligible individual applying under a grant stream category that permits individuals. Applicants must also hold, or be covered by, at least \$20 million public liability insurance, have no outstanding grant acquittals, debts or accounts with Council unless an approved payment arrangement is in place, and must speak with a relevant Council officer before applying.

What grant stream should I apply for?

The Community Grants Program includes four funding streams, each designed to support different types of projects. These include the Community Strengthening Fund, Community Events Fund, Community Infrastructure Fund and Quick Response Fund. Each stream supports different project types and funding needs. Applicants must speak with a Community Development Officer before applying to ensure they are applying to the most appropriate stream and that their project meets the eligibility requirements.

What is the Quick Response Fund?

The Quick Response Fund provides up to \$3,000 to support urgent, unforeseen or time-sensitive community needs that cannot wait until the next scheduled grant round. Examples may include urgent repairs, essential equipment replacement, time-sensitive volunteer training or emerging community needs. Grants of up to \$3,000 per application are open year-round, subject to available funding. Organisations may receive one Quick Response Fund grant per financial year. Quick Response applications are generally assessed within approximately four to six weeks.

What is the Community Infrastructure Fund?

The Community Infrastructure Fund supports larger projects such as facility upgrades, building improvements and community infrastructure works that improve community participation, wellbeing, accessibility and community wellbeing. Grants are available between \$10,000 and \$100,000. Applicants should speak with a Community Development Officer before applying, as supporting documentation and approval requirements depend on the size, complexity and risk of the project.

Can I apply for funding for a project that has already started?

The short answer is no. Projects that have started, cannot be awarded funding retrospectively.

Do I need to read the guidelines?

Yes. The guidelines explain the purpose of the program, who can apply, what can and cannot be funded, contribution requirements, assessment criteria and what successful applicants must do after receiving funding.

Will the grant cover all my costs?

Not always. Some project costs may be ineligible or may need to be covered by your organisation. Your budget should clearly show the grant amount requested, any cash or in-kind contribution, and any other confirmed funding. Including ineligible costs may affect your application.

Do I need to contribute to my project?

Contribution requirements vary by stream and funding amount. Some smaller projects require no contribution, while larger projects may require cash or matched contributions. Approved in-kind support may include volunteer labour, donated materials, donated professional services, donated venue hire or use of equipment. Contributions should be realistic, clearly explained and included in the project budget. Different grant streams have different co-contribution requirements. For example, the Community Events Fund requires a dollar-for-dollar cash contribution, while the Community Strengthening Fund and Quick Response Fund have different contribution requirements depending on the amount requested. The Community Infrastructure Fund also requires matched contributions, with limits on the amount that can be provided as in-kind support. Applicants should review the relevant stream requirements carefully before preparing their budget. Co-contribution requirements for each grant stream can be found in the Community Grant Guidelines.

Can I apply if I am an individual?

Individuals may be eligible under specific categories where permitted, such as eligible arts projects, provided they have a valid ABN and meet all other requirements. Speak with Council before applying to confirm eligibility.

What can be counted as an in-kind contribution?

An in-kind contribution is a non-cash contribution that helps deliver a project. This may include volunteer labour, donated materials, donated professional services, donated venue hire or the use of equipment. In-kind contributions should be realistic, clearly explained and assigned an appropriate value within the project budget. Applicants should refer to the relevant grant stream requirements, as limits may apply to the amount of in-kind support that can contribute towards matched funding requirements.

What if my organisation is not incorporated?

Non-incorporated groups may apply through an eligible auspice organisation. The auspice must agree to support the applicant and accept legal and financial responsibility for the grant. An auspice agreement will need to be included with the application as one of the supporting documents for your application.

Can I apply if I am a business?

No. For-profit organisations are not eligible for the Community Grants Program.

What if our organisation does not have insurance?

Applicants must hold, or be covered by, public liability insurance of at least \$20 million. If your organisation does not have insurance, speak with Council about whether an auspice arrangement may be appropriate.

How will my application be assessed?

Applications are assessed against six criteria, including a project description, what the project will achieve, why it is needed in the community and its alignment to Council plans and strategies, who will be involved, how the project planning will be delivered and how the project demonstrates good value for money, along with budget clarity. Applications are

competitive and must meet the required assessment standard and receive a score of 70 or above to be considered for funding, noting that this does not guarantee approval.

Where can my activity take place?

Activities must take place within the boundaries of Moorabool Shire Council.

What feedback will I receive if my application is unsuccessful?

Applicants can request feedback on unsuccessful applications. Feedback can help organisations strengthen future applications by identifying areas for improvement, such as project planning, eligibility, community benefit, evidence of need or budget development.

During the project

Can I make changes to my funded project?

Contact the Community Development team as soon as possible if your project scope, budget or timeline changes. Significant changes or extension requests must be approved by Council before they are implemented.

Do I still need permits or approvals?

Yes, depending on the project, applicants may also need additional approvals, such as landowner consent, Council approval for works on Council-owned land, event permits, planning permits or other approvals. Receiving grant funding does not remove the need to obtain any required permits or approvals before delivering your project.

Can Council help me promote my project?

Applicants are responsible for promoting their project or event. Eligible marketing and promotion costs may be included in the project budget. If requested by Council, successful applicants must acknowledge Council's support on promotional materials and signage. Any use of Council's logo or branding must be approved before public use.

After the project is completed

What is an acquittal?

An acquittal is the process of reporting back to Council on how the grant funding was spent and what outcomes were achieved. Successful applicants must complete an acquittal online through SmartyGrants at the end of the project, including details of actual costs, and project outcomes and supporting information such as photos or feedback where available. Most projects, except for Community Infrastructure Fund projects, are generally expected to be completed within 12 months of funding notification of funding.