

This document is an extract of 2.37 Community Economic Development Grant Program Guidelines.

Toowoomba Regional Council (TRC) on Tuesday, June 17 2025, endorsed shifting to a yearly funding round for the competitive Community Grants Program. Changes endorsed by Council relate to 2.59 Community Grants Policy.

2.37 Community Economic Development Grant Program Guidelines

1 Program philosophy

Council recognises the important contribution community organisations make to the Toowoomba region's business environment. Council has developed this Community Economic Development Grant Program to provide funding to support local community groups to deliver programs and projects that are of benefit to local businesses and the broader economy.

Council offers a number of other grant programs targeted to specific priorities and objectives:

Scheme	Administering Branch
Cultural and Arts Support Grant	Library and Cultural Services
Environment Grant	Parks and Recreation Services
Event Support Grant	Community Development, Facilities and Tourism
Sport and Recreation Grant	Park and Recreation Services
Sports Tourism Event Grant	Community Development, Facilities and Tourism
Community Support Grant	Community Development, Facilities and Tourism
Youth Grant	Community Development, Facilities and Tourism
Floral Parade Entrant Grant	Community Development, Facilities and Tourism
Micro Grant	Community Development, Facilities and Tourism

These guidelines apply to the Community Economic Development Grant Program only. Details of the other grants are available through Council's website www.tr.qld.gov.au, or by contacting the Council's Customer Service Centre. If you are not eligible for support under this program, please check the guidelines for Council's other community grant programs.

2 Program objectives and outcomes

The Community Economic Development Grant Program seeks to achieve the community's vision for a "dynamic and diverse economy creating industry development and employment opportunities" by providing support for projects that aim to achieve one or more of the following:

1. Support the effective implementation of the Toowoomba Region Economic Development Strategy and the Community Growth Action Plans.
2. Encourage the establishment, growth and retention of sustainable businesses which enhance the region's reputation for innovation, creativity, diversity and sustainability.
3. Foster new partnerships and collaboration between businesses and business support groups.
4. Create employment opportunities and increase the level of business investment in the region.

3 Support and assistance

Applicants are encouraged to make contact with Toowoomba Regional Council's Economic Development Section and Community Development Officers to receive advice on funding and the application process, and identify additional or alternative grant opportunities. Interpreter services can be made available for people who have difficulty communicating in English, through the "Telephone Interpreter Service" (TIS).

4 Funding rounds – critical timeframes

One (1) round of funding will be offered in 2025/26. Applications open 1 July 2025 and close on 12 August 2025.

5 Funding amounts

Funding for the Community Economic Development Grant Program is set by Council on an annual basis as part of its budget process. Once all of the allocated funds have been used in the financial year, no further funding will be allocated. Grants of up to \$10,000 are available for any one project, but requests for smaller grants are encouraged. The maximum grant amount available for any one project is determined by the amount of matching cash the applicant can confirm will be contributed to the project. Grants for projects with a total cash cost of up to \$5,000 do not require a cash contribution from the applicant. Grants for projects with a total cash cost of over \$5,000 require a matching cash contribution from the applicant for grant amounts of between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Example Total Project Cash Cost	Example Applicant Cash Contribution	Example Maximum Grant Amount
Up to \$5,000	\$0	Up to \$5,000

\$8,000	\$3,000	\$5,000
\$15,000	\$7,500	\$7,500
\$25,000	\$15,000	\$10,000

Applicants will be required to provide written confirmation of any matching cash contributions from the organisation/s providing the contribution when applying for the grant. Grant funds are limited in individual amounts and total funds available. Irrespective of the size of the project, it is expected that the applicant will make a contribution to the project. Council will not wholly fund grant projects.

Contributions from applicant organisations could include:

- Applicant cash contributions
- Grants from other bodies
- Sponsorship
- In-kind support

6 Applying for a grant

Applications for a Community Economic Development Grant are made online, giving details of the project and attaching information regarding:

- The need for the project and who will benefit, with reference to program objectives; any relevant feasibility studies, statistical analyses; community survey results or a needs analysis.
- Identify how and why the support being requested will positively impact the local community.
- Planning undertaken, including a budget; cost estimates and/or quotes, and concept plans.
- Support for the project, including letters of support; partnership agreements or intentions.
- Confirmation of other funding; and evidence of the organisation's own contributions.
- Evidence that support has been sought from other funding schemes outside of Council.

There is no limit to the number of online applications an organisation can submit however, the Community Economic Development Grant Program will fund a maximum of two projects per applicant per year.

6.1 Who can apply

Organisations can apply for a Community Economic Development Grant if they:

1. are an eligible community organisation or is under the auspices of an eligible community organisation as defined in the Community Grants Policy.
2. operates or provides services within the Toowoomba Regional Council area.
3. have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

6.2 Who cannot apply

1. Individuals.
2. For-profit companies, Trusts and other organisations.
3. Government, semi-government organisations and statutory authorities.
4. Public and private educational institutions (primary, secondary and tertiary including Parents & Citizens and Parents & Friends Associations).
5. Unions and student guilds.
6. Research foundations and professional associations.
7. An organisation that has been granted approval for support through a Toowoomba Regional Council funding program for the same project.
8. Recipients who have previously defaulted on the conditions of funding.
9. An organisation that has not acquitted an overdue TRC funded grant application.

6.3 Eligible projects

It is mandatory that projects:

1. Help to achieve the objectives of the Toowoomba Region Economic Development Strategy and/or Community Growth Action Plans, and;
2. Deliver one or more of the following outcomes:
 - a. Connect local businesses
 - b. Encourage business innovation
 - c. Build business capacity and skills
 - d. Contribute to the ease of doing business
 - e. Enable partnerships and collaboration between businesses and/or organisations in the Toowoomba region
 - f. Address a local workforce gap
 - g. Assist towards planning, professional and application fees in preparing grant applications for larger projects.

Funding for the continuation of existing projects will be considered, however preference will be given to new or unique projects that have not been delivered in the past.

6.4 Ineligible projects

Community Economic Development Grants will not fund:

- Loan or other debt repayments.
- Projects already started or completed.
- Recurrent administration and running costs, such as: regular wages and/or regular office expenses.
- Projects with a commercial purpose.
- Projects already funded by other Toowoomba Regional Council Grant programs.
- Prize money, trophies, raffle prizes or fundraising.

7 Assessment process and criteria

Community Economic Development Grant applications will be considered against the program philosophy, objectives and outcomes, eligibility criteria and selection criteria. Grants are highly competitive and as such not all applications that meet the criteria will be successful. Final approval and the level of support will depend on availability of funds, the number of applications received in the financial year, program priorities and geographical equity. Council may give a lower amount than requested and may place terms and conditions on which items may be funded by the grant. Where the support requested is to add to other funding, an interim acknowledgement letter of support may be provided, to be confirmed when and if the other funding is approved.

7.1 Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

- The extent to which the actions address recommendations in the Toowoomba Region Economic Development Strategy and Community Growth Action Plans.
- The scale of the economic impact likely to be achieved (e.g. creating the conditions for business success, industry or business development, investment attraction)
- The level of innovation, insight or creative thinking that makes the project unique
- The quality of the application (e.g. a well-developed, clear and realistic action plan, supported by research where appropriate and including an accurate financial plan/budget)
- The ability of the organisation and/or stakeholder group to deliver the project
- The potential for the project to create business/industry networks and partnerships that can drive future economic development activities.

8 Receiving a grant/acquittal process

Successful grant recipient organisations will have to meet certain obligations:

1. Enter into a Funding Agreement with Council.
2. Use the grant only for the nominated purpose for which it is given, unless written approval is given by Council for a variation.
3. Obtain all appropriate permits, approvals, licenses, insurances and indemnities etc. relating to the project.
4. Contact the relevant Council grants officer if unforeseen circumstances arise that cause delays, prevention or withholding of a proposed activity/event/project, including timeframes and budget. The grant recipient will be required to complete a Variation Request within SmartyGrants before the activity/project end date outlining:

- a) the changes sought to the funding agreement (e.g. change to timelines, change of scope and/or location), and
 - b) outline the reasons for the change. The Variation Request will be reviewed by the relevant Council officer with a decision (outcome) to be provided in writing.
5. Expend the funds within twelve months of being granted, unless written approval has been given by the delegated Council Officer for an extension.
 6. Submit evidence of expenditure e.g., receipts of purchase, tax invoice and banks statements.
 7. Acknowledge Council's support as set out in the Funding Agreement.
 8. Acquit the grant on as set out in the Funding Agreement, within six weeks of completion of the project. Council reserves the right to request an audit of grant expenditure and to demand repayment of any funds granted, and/or refuse consideration of further support, if the conditions set out in the Funding Agreement are not met. Any unused funds must be returned to Council.

9 Lodging your application

Applications for Council's Grants Program must be made online via SmartyGrants. Applications will only be eligible if they have been submitted by the due date and time and contain all required supporting documentation. An online application cannot be attempted without first creating an account. Intending applicants can create a SmartyGrants account (at no cost) by registering their username (e.g. email address) and password or utilising an existing account.

10 Frequently asked questions

Q. Can we get help in developing our project and completing the application?

A. Yes, you can attend a Community Grant workshop or contact your local Customer Service Centre for assistance.

Q. What if our organisation doesn't have an ABN?

A. You can still apply, but you will need to provide us with a copy of the group/organisation's Certificate of Incorporation together with a Statement by a Supplier form from the Australian Tax Office. The Statement by a Supplier form is available online at www.ato.gov.au

Q. What if our organisation is not registered for GST?

A. You can still apply if your organisation is not required to be registered for GST, but GST will not apply to any grant allocated.

Q. What if our organisation is not incorporated?

A. You can still apply, but the application must be under the auspices of an eligible organisation who will take full responsibility for the grant. Council staff may be able to assist in finding sponsors for applications with clear community benefits, or assist in getting your group incorporated.

Q. Does my project need to benefit all residents of the Toowoomba Region?

A. No. As long as there is a service/project/event being delivered in the Toowoomba Regional Council Local Government area and there is benefit to communities within the

Toowoomba region. It is extremely important that applicants identify how and why the support being requested will positively impact the local community. Remember, preference is to provide funding that will facilitate deliverable outcomes for the community - that is, providing programs/facilities/capital.

Q. Can I get funding for more than one year?

A. No. You will need to apply for funding every year, and there is no guarantee of repeat funding.

Q. Can a school apply?

A. No. Public and private educational institutions (primary, secondary and tertiary including Parents & Citizens and Parents & Friends Associations) are not eligible for funding consideration.

Q. Can Council grant funds be used to 'top-up' other grant funds?

A. Yes. Council funds can be added to other funds to make a better project, or can be used as seed funding at the 'front-end' to develop project plans and fund application fees etc. This is a high priority for Sport and Recreation grants.

Q. If my application is unsuccessful, can I apply for the same thing next round?

A. Yes. However, it is advised that you seek feedback as to why your application was unsuccessful in the first instance. It would also be very beneficial to attend one of the public community grant workshops, as this will enhance your chance of a successful application.

11 Relevant laws

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

12 Related policies/documents

Members of the public can access Council policies on Council's website. If a policy listed below does not appear on the website please contact 131 872 or email info@tr.qld.gov.au to request a copy. Staff may access policies via the Policy Register and Review Schedule.

Council policies

2.59 Community Grants Policy

2.71 Sponsorship Policy

Other documents

Nil

Corporate Plan 2019 - 2024

13 Related forms

The online application forms for the relevant Grant Programs can be accessed via Council's Grant Programs and Sponsorship webpage. Applicants can click the applicable Grant Program and then complete the online application form for that Grant.

14 Definitions

Term	Definition
Assessment Panel	Council appointed working group which includes Council Officers and subject area experts.
Auspicing	Auspicing is an agreement from one organisation to apply for funding on behalf of a second organisation
Community Economic Development Grant	Funding and/or in-kind assistance to support eligible community organisations to deliver programs or projects that are of benefit to local businesses and the broader community.
Community Organisation	An entity that carries on activities for a public purpose; or another entity whose primary object is not directed at making a profit (non-profit).
Community Support Grants	Funding and/or in-kind assistance to support eligible community organisations in their efforts to provide services, activities and events that are of benefit to the community; and/or Funding and/or in-kind assistance to support eligible community organisations to administer, maintain and improve facilities that are managed on behalf of the community.
Core Event	Annual local community events such as Australia Day, Anzac Day, Queensland Day and others as deemed by Council from time to time.
Core Community Support	Core Community Support is a Council endorsed non-competitive funding allocation to certain groups, organisations and/or committees within the Region.
Cultural & Arts Support Grants	Funding and/or in-kind assistance to support eligible community organisations to enhance

	opportunities for creative expression, cultural appreciation, and the preservation of our shared heritage.
Eligible Community Organisation	<p>An organisation registered as a not-for-profit entity and recognised by the Australian Taxation Office or Australian Securities and Investments Commission in at least one of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporated entity (Incorporated Associations) • Other unincorporated entity with an ABN • Australian public company, limited by guarantee • Charitable institution • Public benevolent institution (PBI) • Health promotion charity (HPC).
Environment Grant	Funding assistance to eligible community organisations to protect, maintain and enhance the environmental assets of the region, pursue sustainable water and energy strategies, and respond to climate change.
Event Support Grant	Funding and/or in-kind assistance for eligible community organisations to conduct events that have social and economic benefits to the community and region.
Floral Parade Entrant Grant	Funding assistance for eligible community organisations to participate in the Floral Parade event that have social and economic benefits to the community and region.
In-kind assistance	The supply of support in the form of staff time, Council equipment, donation of decommissioned equipment. Costs of these services will be accounted for internally so as to transparently track and report on Council's support for the community.
Micro Grant	Funding assistance to eligible community organisations to deliver one-off, innovative activities and minor resource and equipment purchases that support community

	strengthening initiatives and enhance the quality of life to the community and Region.
Non-profit	An organisation is non-profit if it is not carried on for the direct or indirect profit or gain of its members, both in its operations and winding up.
Offset - Use/Hire/Rental - Facilities and/or service	Partially or fully subsidised use/hire/ rental of Council facilities and/or services at below commercial rates, or at no charge. Costs of these services will be accounted for internally as an 'offset' so as to transparently track and report on Council's support for the community.
Sport and Recreation Grant	Funding and/or in-kind assistance that provides financial assistance in addition to other sources, to assist eligible community organisations in the region to develop sport and recreation facilities and programs for the benefit of the community.
Sports Tourism Event Grant	Funding and/or in-kind assistance for eligible organisations to support the development and delivery of successful sports tourism events that make a positive and ongoing contribution to the region's economic prosperity, community wellbeing and diverse lifestyle.
Youth Grant	Funding and/or in-kind assistance to support youth/community organisations in their efforts to provide services, activities and events that are of benefit to the young people of our region. The Youth Grant program aims to increase young people's engagement with their communities and targets young people 12–25 years of age.

15 Policy details

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