Community Grants Policy

Baw Baw Shire Council is a dynamic and vibrant place with a residential population of around 56,600 people and hundreds of community organisations, all striving to make Baw Baw a great place.

Baw Baw Shire Council has a proud history of working with community groups and volunteers to meet local needs. One of the ways Council supports these groups is through the Baw Baw Shire Community Grants Program.

Purpose

This policy outlines the guiding principles and overarching practices associated with the Community Grants Program to ensure that the program is consistent and publicly accountable.

Scope

This policy applies to grants provided to community organisations and groups through the Community Grants Program, including the following:

- Community Projects (e.g. events, programs, environmental projects or equipment purchases).
- Minor Capital Works.

This policy applies to Council Officers, Councillors, Community Grant applicants, and recipients and informs community grant processes and decision-making.

Rebates and sponsorship provided by Council and grants received by Council are outside of the scope of this Policy.

Guiding principles

Community Grants Program processes and decision-making are to be guided by the following policy principles:

Accountable and transparent: The Community Grants Program reflects public sector values and ensures decisions are impartial, transparent, well-documented, and have appropriate governance.

Community focussed and proportionate: The Community Grants Program is committed to being efficient and timely, with administrative requirements commensurate with the scale,

Baw Baw
Shire Council

T +61 3 5624 2411
F +61 3 5622 3654

E bawbaw@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au
W bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

PO Box 304
Warragul
Victoria 3820

complexity, and risks associated with the funding. Where program requirements are outside of community abilities, support is provided to assist them to participate in the program.

Seeking best outcomes: The projects funded by the Community Grants Program are aligned with the Council Plan and/or Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and demonstrate value for money and alignment with community needs and capacity.

Robust planning and design: Projects funded by the Community Grants Program are well-planned, evidenced-based, and demonstrate effective risk management.

Cultivating partnerships: Projects funded by the Community Grants Program enable partnerships to form across the community, including with Council, to deliver projects that achieve the best outcomes for the community.

Policy detail

Objectives

The Community Grants Program aims to support the community to be sustainable, healthy, and thriving. To achieve this, the program will:

- Deliver projects that align with the Council Plan and Baw Baw Shire's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.
- Support and partner with the community to deliver community priorities that improve participation, inclusion, and accessibility.

Governance roles

Council

Responsibilities include:

- Adopting the Community Grants Policy to ensure alignment with Council's strategic plans and community needs.
- Allocating the annual budget associated with the Community Grants Program.
- Approving the Minor Capital Works grant allocations valued up to $10,000 based on the recommendations from the grant assessment panel.

Executive Leadership Team

Responsibilities include:

- Endorsing the Community Grants Policy for Council approval to ensure alignment with Council's strategic direction and community needs.
- Approving the Community Project grant allocations valued up to $5,000 based on the recommendations from the grant assessment panel.

Council Officers/ Assessment Panel

Responsibilities include:

- Understand and undertake their responsibilities as detailed in the Community Grants Program Roles and Responsibilities guideline.

Applicants/ Auspice Organisations

Responsibilities include:

- Understand and undertake their responsibilities as detailed in the Community Grants Program Roles and Responsibilities guideline available on the Baw Baw Shire Council Website.

Applications

The Community Grants Program will be widely promoted and advertised throughout Baw Baw Shire to encourage diverse groups to apply for grants.

Applicants to the program will be advised:

- That their application has been received via SmartyGrants.
- Of the outcome of their application and provided with constructive feedback if their application is unsuccessful.

All successful applicants are subject to the terms and conditions, which are outlined in the Community Grants Program Guidelines.

Conflict of interest

At all stages of the grant assessment and approval process, any potential, actual, or perceived conflicts of interest must be declared and documented.

Any conflicts of interest will be managed according to the Local Government Act 2020 and the Council's Conflict of Interest procedures.

When a conflict of interest is declared, the relevant person must not have any involvement in any discussions or decisions relating to the specific application.

Eligibility

Community organisations can have one open grant application at any one time. In addition, a community organisation could have one open application in partnership with another organisation for whom they are acting as an auspice.

Who can apply for funding?

To be eligible for Community Grants Program funding, applicants must:

- Propose a project located or delivered within the Baw Baw Shire.
- Be a not-for-profit community group, organisation, or club.

- Be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 or supported by another incorporated organisation that will accept legal and financial responsibility for the project through an auspicing arrangement.
- Have public liability insurance with a minimum of $20 million cover or supported by an auspice organisation with a minimum of $20 million cover.
- Comply with their Child Safety standards obligations.
- Have complied with all terms and conditions, including submitting a project acquittal report for all previous Community Grants and any grants where the organisation has acted as the auspice organisation.
- Have no outstanding debts at Baw Baw Shire Council.
- Have written approval in writing from the owner of the land where minor capital works will take place, noting works on privately owned or leased land will not be funded.

Who cannot apply for funding?

- For-profit applicants or applicants applying for projects or funding to support for-profit activity.
- Community groups, organisations, or clubs that host or promote gambling.
- Schools, kindergartens, and their associated parent groups.
- Health services.
- Government departments, agencies, authorities, and organisations.
- Individuals.

What can be funded?

- Events, projects, programs, and equipment that align with the strategic direction of Baw Baw Shire Council's [Council Plan](#) and/or [Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan](#).
- Costs incurred in hiring a venue, excluding costs associated with renting business premises.
- Materials, printing, advertising, translations, promotional, and freight costs associated with the project.
- Minor Capital Works projects where the total project value is less than $50,000, e.g., netting behind goal posts, goal post installation, fencing, lighting upgrades, playing surface upgrades, kitchen upgrades, painting a hall, and public seating.

What will not be funded?

- Items that are part of an organisation's core business or normal operational expenses, e.g., insurance, utilities, rental, staff salaries, or the payment of debts or loans.
- Projects or items that have already been purchased, started or have been completed.
- Purchase of land.
- Projects where the primary focus is to advocate for religion or faith.
- Projects that promote political views.

- Catering, alcohol, fireworks, and firearms.
- Projects that duplicate existing services and programs.
- Baw Baw Shire Council owned or run activities, projects, programs, and events.
- The purchase or repair of used goods or equipment.
- Projects that create a capital improvement for privately owned or rented properties.
- State-wide projects.
- Minor Capital Works projects where applicant cash contributions equal less than 25 percent of the total grant amount. (Note: Projects not involving Minor Capital Works do not require financial contributions).
- Minor Capital Works or equipment for parts of facilities or venues where alcohol is sold, e.g., Club bar areas.
- Minor Capital Works projects that are considered by Council to be inadequate in planning, or an inappropriate project type including paths, building entrances, and projects that involve the construction or renovation of existing building structures.
- Sporting uniforms unless it can be demonstrated their purchase is linked to a project that seeks to increase participation from people experiencing social and economic disadvantage, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people living with disability and/or the LGBTQI+ community.

Assessment

Applications and Minor Capital Work EOIs will be assessed by a panel convened by Baw Baw Shire Council Officers. The applications will be assessed based on the criteria provided in the Community Grants Program guidelines.

Where grant allocations approved vary from the assessment panel recommendations, the assessment panel will be informed and provided with an explanation.

Acquittals and recovery of funds

All grant recipients will provide a project acquittal report upon completion of their project to demonstrate the delivery of the agreed project and the appropriate expenditure of the funds received.

Paid tax receipts showing a zero outstanding balance are required for all expended funds as part of the acquittal.

Any unacquitted grant funds held by the recipient greater than $100 at the completion of the project will be required to be returned to Council.

Recipients who have failed to acquit or deliver the project in accordance with the grant terms and conditions will be required to return part of or all grant funds to Council.

Should funds not be returned on request Council may take action to recover funds or agree to preclude the applicant (and auspice organisation if applicable) from being eligible to apply for BBSC Community Grants for the remainder of the current financial year and the whole financial year directly following. Decisions will be notified in writing.

Project variations

Where a recipient needs to vary the agreed project delivery arrangements or budget, they must discuss the proposed variation with Council Officers. Project variation requests must be submitted and approved prior to any project variation being made. Project variations will be handled as followed:

- Project variations associated with project timing that do not impact the overall project delivery timelines require a written variation approval from Council.

- Variations that propose changes to project delivery arrangements, changes to quotes, or changes to budget within the bounds of the allocated budget require a written variation approval from Council.

- Variations that significantly change the scope, objectives, and project delivery arrangements, or request an increase in funding from Council, will not be considered.

Grievance procedure

All funding decisions are final and cannot be disputed. If the community has another type of grievance about the Community Grants Program, they should follow the process outlined in Baw Baw Shire Council's Complaints Handling Policy.

Related documents

The following Baw Baw Shire Council documents are related to the Community Grants Policy:

- Community Grants Program guidelines.

- Community Grants Program Roles and Responsibilities guideline.

- Child Safety Policy.

- Complaints Handling Policy.

- Council Plan.

- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Approval date	Insert date
Approval authority	Council
Effective from	Insert date
Review term	4 years
Next review date	Insert date
Responsible position	Manager Connected Communities
Responsible Director	Director Strategy and Organisational Performance
Version	Draft 2.4