



CUMBERLAND  
CITY COUNCIL

# Community Grants and Donations Policy

## AUTHORISATION & VERSION CONTROL

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<b>Policy Owner</b>	Director Community & Culture
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## PURPOSE

This Policy outlines the framework under which all grants and donations made by Council to the community will be governed. It ensures Council meets legislative requirements prescribed in Section 356 of the *Local Government Act* as the decision-making authority for approval of the granting of funds. It also seeks to ensure all grants and donations deliver social, economic, cultural, recreational, and environmental benefits to local communities.

## SCOPE

This Policy applies to all grant-making activity and donations provided by Cumberland City Council as per Section 356 of the *Local Government Act* and independent of the regular procurement of goods, works and services.

This Policy applies to all aspects of grant and donation programs, including their design, application processes, decision making, agreement making, monitoring and support services. It also covers requests and granting of fee waivers for the use and hire of Council facilities and open spaces, which are considered as a monetary contribution made by Council within the context of this Policy. It includes the Community Grants Program and Emergency Relief Fund.

This policy excludes:

- Incoming and outgoing funds for corporate sponsorship, which will be governed by the *Corporate Sponsorship Policy*.
- Subsidies for use of community facilities which are reflected in Council's Fees and Charges.
- Financial assistance programs classified as rebate schemes, which provide retrospective funding.
- Other fee for service arrangements with not-for-profit organisations.

All Councillors, Council employees, contractors and consultants are responsible for implementing this Policy.

## DEFINITIONS

- **GRANT:** A sum of money given to an organisation or individual for a specified purpose. A grants program awards funds on a competitive basis using clear and accountable policies and procedures and the effectiveness of grants is measured through monitoring and evaluation processes.
- **AUSPICE:** An agreement where an incorporated organisation agrees to apply for funding or resources on behalf of an applicant that is not incorporated. If the application is successful, the auspicing organisation then administers the resources on behalf of the applicant and is legally responsible for ensuring that the terms of the agreement are met.
- **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:** Payment given to an individual or organisation which are not commensurate with a reciprocal benefit received by Council. Financial assistance includes both grants and donations.

## POLICY STATEMENT

In administering grant and donation programs, Council is to ensure that it complies with *Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993* which makes provisions for Council to grant financial assistance to others for the purpose of exercising its functions.

## PRINCIPLES

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure the administration of Cumberland City Council's grants programs are guided by the following principles:

- **Robust planning and design** which underpins efficient, effective, economical, and ethical administration of financial assistance programs including the establishment of effective risk management processes.
- **Probity and transparency** in decision making which reflects ethical behaviour, in line with Council's Code of Conduct, and complies with public reporting requirements.
- **Governance and accountability** in which a robust governance framework is established that clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders; establishes the policies, procedures and guidelines and administration processes that comply with all relevant legal and policy requirements; and supports public accountability for decision-making, financial assistance, and performance monitoring.
- **Access and equity** in administration of financial assistance programs to support the diverse needs, interests, and aspirations of the community.
- **Collaboration and partnership** in which effective consultation and a constructive and cooperative relationship between Cumberland City Council, financial assistance recipients and other relevant stakeholders contribute to achieving more efficient, effective, and equitable financial assistance administration.
- **Capacity building** which focuses on further developing existing skills, knowledge, and access to opportunities for residents and organisations.
- **Outcomes focussed** on which grants administration focuses on maximising the achievement of strategic directions and lasting outcomes rather than outputs.
- **Achieving value with public money** which involves the careful consideration of costs, benefits, options, and risks.
- **Proportionality** in which key program design features and related administrative processes are commensurate with the scale, nature, complexity, and risks involved in the granting activity.
- **Commitment to continual improvement** with regular review and evaluation of grant making processes to ensure legislative requirements are met, program objectives reflect Council's strategic directions and best practice innovations are utilised.

## REQUIREMENTS

1. Cumberland City Council's grant programs must align with outcomes identified in Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan and specific community priorities outlined in the guidelines for Community Grants Program and Emergency Relief Fund.
2. Detailed guidelines for Council's grant programs will be publicly available. The guidelines will outline the funding priorities, eligibility and assessment criteria, and administration practices, including application processes, decision making, agreement making, monitoring and support services.
3. Changes to the funding pool for all financial assistance programs must be approved by Council.
4. Council will actively promote and invite applications for all rounds of the funding programs. Applications will only be accepted during the advertised round dates for each funding program.
5. Applications will only be accepted by submission through Council's online grant management system and will not be accepted via hard copy or email.
6. All applicants must meet the requirements specified in the guidelines of Council's funding programs to be eligible for funding.

7. Council will not provide funding to an activity that has already been funded, or that can be readily assisted by any other existing Government funding program, or that is the core business of other Government departments.
8. Council will not fund activities that duplicate existing services or programs within the local area.
9. Assessment of applications will be undertaken by a panel of Council staff. Where appropriate, the assessment panel may seek the advice of external agencies to ensure projects funded meet proposed outcome areas and community priorities.
10. Recommendations for funding will be recorded with reference to the assessment criteria.
11. Recommendations for funding will be reported to a Council meeting for determination. Any variances to recommendations proposed by Councillors will be recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting and reflected in the final resolution of Council.
12. Allocations of all funding support will be included in Council's annual report.
13. Applications will be ineligible for funding if the applicant undertakes canvassing or lobbying of Councillors or employees of Cumberland City Council in relation to their application during the application and assessment process.
14. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within a timely manner.
15. Successful applicants may only hold one grant at a time and must provide an acquittal for this grant and have no outstanding debts to Council, prior to applying for a subsequent round of funding.
16. Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with Council and meet all requirements of project delivery, reporting and acquittal. Applicants who do not complete an approved acquittal, will not be eligible to apply for any further funding with Council.
17. Council reserves the right to request return of funds should the funding recipient not use the funds for the specified purpose.
18. All funded activities must comply with relevant legislation and Council approvals. This includes meeting legislative requirements that ensure financial assistance recipients are delivering projects in an accessible and equitable manner.

## **RELATED LEGISLATION**

- Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Department of Local Government Circular - Ref. 06-32 - Provision of Financial Assistance under Section 356 of The Local Government Act - Developing a Financial Assistance Policy

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS AND COUNCIL POLICY**

- Cumberland City Council Community Strategic Plan
- Cumberland Delivery Program and Operational Plan including Fees and Charges
- Cumberland City Council Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines
- Cumberland Community Grants Program Guidelines
- Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines
- Australian National Audit Office, *Implementing Better Practice Grants Administration*, 2013