Community Grants Policy

Purpose

The Community Grants Policy (the Policy) supports Moonee Valley City Council's (Council) vision of an inclusive city that respects the human rights of all its citizens, celebrates their diversity and promotes their participation in all aspects of community life.

The Policy provides a framework to ensure a planned, consistent, sustainable, transparent and equitable approach in consideration and provision of financial resources to the community, primarily through the Community Grants Program (the Program).

Scope

This Policy relates to all areas of Council involved in the promotion, management and assessment of financial or in-kind community support through the Program.

It governs the provision of funding to external bodies to deliver defined outcomes to the benefit of the community. Financial support may include grants and defined in-kind support.

Objectives

This Policy supports community organisations, groups, individuals and local businesses to seek funding in order to:

- contribute to the social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing of our local community
- foster and strengthen community involvement and participation
- address community need and make the most of unique local opportunities and strengths
- work with Council to achieve its strategic goals outlined in long term plans and strategies, including MV2040 and the Council Plan
- foster community led approaches which improve the quality of life and liveability of our neighbourhoods.

The Policy objectives are guided by the **MV2040 Strategy themes** that identify the key building blocks for our long-term vision for the city. In particular, through the funding of community-based initiatives and the operation of the Grants Advisory Committee, the Community Grants Program addresses the MV2040 Strategic Directions and Objectives outlined in Appendix A.

Our commitment to access, inclusion and equity

Council is strongly committed to **access**, **inclusion** and **equity**. This foundational principle underpins the MV2040 Strategy which guides the planning for policies and programs. Our commitment to social inclusion and equity seeks to advance a fair and just society and promote respect for every person.

Embedding access and equity into the Community Grants Program is an ongoing and active process. Council is committed to continuously reviewing and

implementing operational strategies to promote inclusion and accessibility for all to the Community Grants Program. These strategies will acknowledge the various intersectional barriers to accessing Council programs faced by members of our community and community groups.

We commit to working with applicants to support them through the grants process with a community development approach that values building the capacity of our community. We work collaboratively across Council to engage with community members participating in other community development programs to promote understanding and accessibility of grants. We understand that this includes, but is not limited to:

- providing accessible formats of communications and program materials;
- offering interpreters and translations where possible;
- adequately supporting applicants throughout the grants process; and
- striving for a simple process for applicants.

We assess funding applications based on the evidence of need and their connection and benefit to the local community, rather than assessing funding applications based on the quality of the written application. We commit to providing feedback and support to all applicants to reapply if their application is unsuccessful.

The MV2040 Strategy has identified **target populations** who may experience greater discrimination or face barriers to accessing to accessing services and facilities. Preference will be given to projects that meet the needs of these target populations.

These groups may include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Women and girls
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)
- People living on low and/or insufficient incomes
- Homeless people and/or those in housing stress
- Children of all ages, with specific attention to the first thousand days (pregnancy to two years old)
- Young people
- Older people
- People with disability or mental illness
- Carers
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and all other identities (LGBTIQA+)
- Socially, locally and technologically isolated people.

Policy Principles

The following principles apply to all Council community funding activities:

- Support an **inclusive** city that respects the human rights of all its citizens, celebrate their diversity and promote their participation in all aspects of community life.

- Promote **equitable** health and wellbeing outcomes
- Support organisations and projects to be **accessible** and socially inclusive
- Support and encourage **collaborative** and **innovative** partnerships
- Provide opportunities for the community to be **responsive** to local and emerging needs, issues and opportunities
- Builds the **capacity** of the community through a community development approach
- Support and promote social inclusion in line with principles of the *Victorian Charter of **Human Rights** and Responsibilities Act 2006.*
- Support and promote a **resilient city** that adapts to the impacts of **climate change.**
- Ensure a **transparent** and accountable process for awarding grant funds.

Funding Streams

Responsive Grants – monthly small grants	
Community	• Small community projects addressing current funding objectives, and relevant priorities
Business	• Small business projects addressing current funding objectives, and relevant priorities
Individual Participation	• Support for residents facing financial barriers to participate in select sports, arts, educational activities
Biannual Grants – two rounds per year	
Social Support	• Operational funding for small social support groups run by volunteers
Community	• One-off community projects and programs addressing current funding objectives, and relevant priorities • Small capital works (with matched funding)
Business	• One-off projects with benefits to the wider community addressing current funding objectives, and relevant priorities
Arts & Events	• Community arts projects addressing current funding objectives, and relevant priorities • Professional or community events and festivals in Moonee Valley
Climate Action	• Energy transition - reducing carbon footprint through energy efficiency measures • Climate resilience community projects addressing current funding objectives, and relevant priorities
Partnership Grants – multi-year funding open every two years	
Partnership Grants	• Multi-year funding for local community service organisations and community groups addressing current funding objectives, and relevant priorities
First Peoples Grant – annual funding developed in partnership with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders	

First Peoples Grant	• One-off community projects and programs addressing current funding objectives identified in the First Peoples Grant Application Guide
Extraordinary Community Support Grant – open year round	
Extraordinary Community Support Grant	• One-off grant to eligible essential community organisations, seeking financial support from Council for extraordinary circumstances that cannot be accommodated in ordinary Council business or through other grant streams.

Funding Priorities

Funding priorities and objectives for each of the streams noted above will be detailed in the Grants Guidelines and application guides. In addition to priorities identified in our strategic plans, emerging priorities will be identified annually, through consultation with the Moonee Valley community, Councillors and Council Officers.

Following an annual consultative process, the Grants Steering Group will review additional annual funding priorities that align with the Policy and recommend any changes for Council endorsement.

Eligibility principles

All applications received by the Community Grants Program will be assessed against predetermined eligibility criteria as outlined in the in the Community Grants Guidelines and application guides prior to undergoing assessment. Applications that are not able to meet the eligibility criteria will not proceed to assessment. Applicants will be supported by Council Officers, where possible, to alter their application to meet the eligibility criteria.

Depending on the stream, applicants eligible for funding may be:

- Not-for-profit organisations, community groups, businesses / sole traders and individuals located and /or providing the activity within Moonee Valley.

Each stream of funding have specific eligibility criteria provided in the Community Grants Guidelines and application guides.

To be eligible for Responsive, Biannual and Partnership funding:

- Community groups and not-for-profit organisations must be based in Moonee Valley and/or the outcome of the project must be delivered within the municipality.
- Businesses and Sole Traders must be located and operating within Moonee Valley.
- Individual Participation applicants must be residents of Moonee Valley.
- Arts and Events projects must be taking place within Moonee Valley.

To be eligible for First Peoples funding:

- First Peoples who live, work, or connect within Moonee Valley

- First People-led organisations or businesses with a demonstrated connection to Moonee Valley

To be eligible for Extraordinary Community Support funding:

- Essential community organisations, including organisations that provide critical food, welfare and emergency assistance; and
- Seeking financial support for urgent and unforeseen circumstances that cannot be accommodated in Council's ordinary business; and
- Not have received this grant type in the previous 12 months.

Assessment principles

All applications to the Community Grants Program are assessed against criteria that reflect the key priorities and commitments outlined in the Policy and the strategic goals and objectives identified in MV2040, including our commitment to access and equity.

The **Assessment Criteria** for all funding streams are informed by the following key principles:

- **Need**: Identifying why the project is needed, important and justified, including links to how it addresses identified funding priorities and MV2040 strategic goals and objectives
- **Benefit**: How the project will benefit the Moonee Valley community and intended participants, particularly target populations as identified in MV2040 with an intersectional lens applied.
- **Delivery**: Demonstrating skills, experience or potential to deliver the project (relative to the scale of the project) and sound financial management

Additional assessment criteria specific to the Extraordinary Community Support Grant include:

- **Urgency**: Demonstrating why the project is unforeseen and urgent, including why it cannot wait for submission into the next Community Grants round.
- **Extraordinary**: Demonstrating the situational need and why this reasonably cannot be accommodated through ordinary Council business.

For all grant streams, assessors will also consider the following when assessing grant applications:

- Council funding provided to the applicant over the past two years. This will be a consideration of the Committee to ensure fair allocation of funding across applicants but does not preclude applicants from receiving more than one grant within two years.
- The spread of funding across the municipality to ensure all geographical and demographic areas are represented.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for development, reporting and evaluation of this Policy and its associated guidelines, is accommodated within the Service Delivery Directorate.

In ensuring a whole of council approach, Council and its officers are responsible for adherence to this Policy.

The following Council departments and business units have direct and / or supporting responsibilities associated with this policy:

Role	Responsibilities
Audit and Risk Committee	Provides an oversight function regarding: • Council's policies • Risk management system • Compliance controls • Audit functions
Community Grants Advisory Committee	Assess and provide objective advice and recommendations on the allocation of the Biannual and Partnership Grants streams of the Community Grants Program (excluding Social Support Grants).
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	The CEO, or their delegate, may provide approval to award funding to organisations under the Extraordinary Community Support Grant Stream during a declared state of emergency and up to a value of $10,000. To inform decision making during a declared state of emergency, the Director Service Delivery will provide the CEO with funding recommendations based on assessments conducted by relevant Managers or Senior leadership.
Community Grants Lead	Deliver the Community Grants Program, including preparing grant rounds, eligibility checks, supporting assessment processes, grant payments, reviewing acquittals and preparing reports and strategic documents.
Councillors	Councillors set strategic direction and endorse relevant Policy documents, including Funding Streams and Funding Priorities related to the annual community grants program. Endorse funding recommendations provided by the Grants Advisory Committee. Councillors are requested to refer to the Community Grants Lead via Councillor Liaison processes for any applicant that may require assistance. This

Role	Responsibilities
	assists with avoiding any potential conflicts of interest. Extraordinary Community Support Grant Stream: Councillors provide decision making of applications under this stream, unless during times of a declared state of emergency where the CEO (or delegate) may award applications up to $10,000. Receive Council Reports noting the outcomes of funding awarded under this Policy during times of a declared state of emergency. Refer any requests for extraordinary community support to Councillor Liaison for processing in accordance with this Policy, or relevant policies. This assists with avoiding any potential conflicts of interest.
Director Service Delivery	Lead the strategic directions of the Community Grants Program to ensure it is aligned with the Council Plan and MV2040. Extraordinary Community Support Grant Stream: Provide oversight of funding recommendations to be presented to the Council for decision or in the event of a declared state emergency to the CEO for approval.
Grants Steering Group	Review the outcomes from the annual funding priority consultation and recommend to Council any additional funding priorities to apply to relevant program streams annually. The Grants Steering Group includes: Community Grants Lead; Senior Coordinator Umarkoo Wayi Equity, Access & Youth; Manager Young, Inclusive and Ageing Communities; and Director Service Delivery or their delegates.
Manager Young, Inclusive and Ageing Communities	Provide leadership and strategic guidance to deliver the program, as well as approve operational decisions including eligibility of applications and approving Social Support and Responsive Grant funding decisions. Extraordinary Community Support Grant Stream: Assess funding requests according to the assessment criteria and provide objective advice and recommendations on the allocation of funding under the Policy.

Role	Responsibilities
Managers, various departments	Identify staff within their team to provide support to relevant applicants to develop projects that align with Council priorities and to support grants assessment processes.
Officers, various departments	As identified by Managers, Officers will provide support to relevant applicants to develop projects that align with Council priorities and to support grants assessment processes. This includes assessing applications from the Responsive and Social Support Grants streams and providing Officer Advise for Biannual and Partnership Grant applications. Extraordinary Community Support Grant Stream: As identified by Managers, Officers will provide Officer Advice for funding requests relevant to their area of expertise and provide advice as to capacity for support through Council ordinary business.
Senior Coordinator Umarkoo Wayi (Equity, Access & Youth)	Supervise the Community Grants Lead and ensure grants processes are in line with Council policies and procedures.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Access	Access refers to the right, opportunity, and means of finding, using or retrieving information.
Business	Businesses or Sole Traders operating for profit, located or intending to start in the City of Moonee Valley with an Australian Business Number (ABN).
Capacity building	The process of strengthening the skills, competencies, knowledge and abilities of people, communities and organisations to achieve their objectives.
Collaboration	Encouraging networks and partnerships to deliver exceptional strategic outcomes together.
Community Grants Advisory Committee	The Community Grants Advisory Committee is governed by the Community Grants Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (see Related Documents)
Community Organisations	Not for profit organisations that provide services and programs to support the functioning of individuals, families and groups to

Term	Definition
	maximise their potential and enhance community wellbeing (Australian Council of Social Service 2009).
Council	Moonee Valley City Council.
Equity	Consciously addressing the barriers faced by disadvantaged groups and individuals.
Essential Community Organisation	Organisations that are registered as a not-for-profit entity (i.e. incorporated association or registered charity) that deliver services to enhance the wellbeing of the Moonee Valley community, including: • provision of critical food and essential items • welfare support and social services emergency assistance
Extraordinary	Extraordinary circumstances refer to situations that are unusual or unexpected and cannot be predicted or prepared for with normal measures. In the context of this Policy, extraordinary financial requests are those that are urgent and unforeseen and cannot be met through ordinary Council business.
Grant	Competitively applied for conditional sum of funds provided to a recipient for an agreed specified purpose with agreement that there will be a defined outcome that directly benefits the community.
Groups	Not for profit collectives of individuals that encompass a wide range of activities, programs and services aimed at improving people's quality of life. Groups can be either formal with some structure, rules or legal entity or informal association.
Guidelines	Publicly available information on the application and assessment process for all streams of the Community Funding Program.
Guiding principle	A concept or value that is a guide for behaviour or evaluation.
Impact	The longer-term sustained social, economic, and/or environmental effects or consequences of a program. Council's activities, outputs and services may contribute to impacts in combination with others.
Inclusion	Providing opportunities for individuals and groups to meaningfully take part in community life.

Term	Definition
In-kind support	Includes the non-financial support provided by Council to an applicant to assist with the delivery of successful grant projects. For example, provision of traffic management support, waste removal or promotion.
Intersectionality	Refers to the structural inequality and discrimination experienced by diverse communities and individuals, and the impact of these creating barriers to service access and further marginalisation. Intersectionality is the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of identity-based structural inequality and discrimination (for example; racism, sexism, ableism and classism) combine, compound, overlap or intersect in the experiences of individuals or communities. Aspects of identity can include gender, ethnicity and cultural background, language, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, geographic location or visa status.
Local	Community organisations and groups either located within the municipality or providing services or programs within the Moonee Valley municipality that are accessible for Moonee Valley residents.
Ordinary Council business	Ordinary Council business includes the functions and services Council provides to the community through its normal operations. In the context of this Policy, this includes: • The operations of the Community Grants Program, directed by the Community Grants Policy. • Council Budget submission process as per Section 96 of the Local government Act 2020. • In-kind support provided, such as officers time providing advice, promotional support, provision of certain services and assets, etc.
Partnership	Relationship between parties that is characterised by mutual cooperation and responsibility for the achievement of a specific and identified purpose or goal.
Transparency	A lack of hidden agendas or conditions, and the availability of all information needed in order to collaborate, cooperate and make decisions effectively. Transparency is also human rights issue: the right to have the opportunity, without discrimination, to participate in public affairs as per the *Local Government Act 2020* s.58.
Unforeseen	An issue that could not be reasonably predicted or planned for in the course of normal operations.

Term	Definition
Urgent	An issue that requires immediate action or attention that would otherwise result in a negative impact and cannot be addressed through ordinary Council business.

Related legislation and reference sources

- *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic)
- *Gender Equality Act 2020* (Vic)

Related Council documents

- Community Grants Guidelines
- Community Grants Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
- First Peoples Grant Applicant Guide
- Moonee Valley Council Plan and Health Plan 2021-25
- MV2040 Strategy
- Bagarru Bagarru Djerring Reconciliation Plan 2022-2025
- Igniting Creativity in Moonee Valley Strategy 2023-2027

Document Type	Council Policy	**Classification**	External	**Status**	Approved
Document Suite	Diversity, Access and Equity Suite				
Author	Manager Communications, Advocacy & Engagement			**Owner**	CEO Office
Approved by	Council			**Version**	2.0
Approved	22 July 2024	**Last Reviewed**	23 July 2024	**Next Review**	23 July 2027
Major Changes	Addition of Extraordinary Community Support Grant information				

Document control disclaimer

Minor amendments to this document may be required from time to time. Where amendments don't materially alter a document, they will be made administratively, without a requirement for formal approval. Printed copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.

Acknowledgement of Country

Moonee Valley City Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land – the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, their spirits, ancestors, elders and community members past and present.

Appendix A

Community Grants Program links to MV2040 Themes and Objectives	
FAIR *QEENTE BOORDUP*	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: A city that celebrates diversity: • 1.1 Celebrate Wurundjeri heritage and culture • 1.2 Support social justice for Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander Peoples • 1.3 Foster respect and diversity • 1.4 Celebrate our history and acknowledge our changing community STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: A city where people are healthy and safe: • 3.1 Promote positive mental health • 3.2 Protect population health and respond to emerging health issues • 3.3 Support increased access to healthy food • 3.4 Promote safety and community confidence STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: A city where residents can engage, participate and influence change: • 4.1 Provide opportunities for the community to participate in Council's decision-making processes • 4.2 Foster community leadership and advocacy • 4.3 Resource the community to innovate, create and problem solve
THRIVING *BANDINGITH*	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 6: A city with opportunities to learn and work: • 6.1 Support residents to gain meaningful employment • 6.2 Support residents to learn throughout their life course STRATEGIC DIRECTION 7: A city that responds to a changing economic landscape: • 7.2 Provide business support and remove obstacles to growth • 7.3 Leverage and expand on current business opportunities STRATEGIC DIRECTION 8: A city with things to see and do: • 8.1 Celebrate our local assets and identity • 8.3 Support and extend the reach of our arts sector • 8.4 Support a network of leisure, recreation and sporting opportunities for all
CONNECTED *YANONINON MAGGOLEE*	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 10: A city where sustainable transport is the easy option: • 10.2 Reduce the real and perceived impediments to sustainable travel

Community Grants Program links to MV2040 Themes and Objectives	
GREEN *WUNWARREN*	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 13: A city that is low carbon: • 13.1 Support renewable energy • 13.4 Engage the community in low carbon living • STRATEGIC DIRECTION 14: A city that is green- and water-sensitive: • 14.3 Enhance our ecological values • 14.5 Support our community to connect with nature STRATEGIC DIRECTION 15: A city that rethinks waste: • 15.1 Engage residents, businesses, early years' services and schools around waste avoidance, reuse and recycling STRATEGIC DIRECTION 16: A city that is cool and climate-adapted: • 16.3 Foster community resilience to climate impacts
BEAUTIFUL *NGA-ANGO GUNGA*	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 17: A city that fosters local identity: • 17.2 Celebrate the heritage of our city STRATEGIC DIRECTION 19: A city with vibrant and safe public spaces: • 19.2 Provide welcoming and safe public environments STRATEGIC DIRECTION 20: A city in a beautiful landscape setting: • 20.1 Provide open spaces to meet the needs of the community