

7.11. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE, ARTS AND WELLBEING COMMUNITY FUNDING PROGRAM 2026-2027 FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

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| REPORT AUTHOR | Disaster Resilience Officer |
| MANAGER | Manager Disaster Management Unit |
| DEPARTMENT | Disaster Management Unit |
| DATE | 26 May 2026 |

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

- 1. Approves the recommended grant funded projects under the North Queensland Resilience Program (NQRP), Community Resilience, Arts, and Wellbeing Program Funding 2026-2027.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise any matters relating to the grant administration.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Australian Government in partnership with Queensland Government under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements provides packages designed to help with long term needs of some of the most remote disaster-prone parts of the state through a range of disaster recovery and resilience activities.

Douglas Shire Council, Disaster Management Unit is administering the allocation of funds, for community resilience building projects as a one-off seeding opportunity in strengthening community resilience. Assessment and allocation of recommended funds align with North Queensland Resilience Program (NQRP), Community Resilience, Arts, and Wellbeing Program Funding Guidelines 2026-2027.

Following the release of the NQRP, Community Resilience, Arts, and Wellbeing Community Funding Program Guidelines 2026-2027, twenty-five (25) applications were submitted and assessed. During the assessment phase, two applicants request their project to be withdrawn, both due to changing circumstances.

The initial four stages of the assessment process in line with the Funding Program Guidelines have been undertaken, with thirteen (13) community initiatives recommended to receive funding, with a total allocation of \$297,300. Stage four process is for a Senior Council Officer (Manager, Recovery Project Manager or Disaster Resilience Officer), within the Disaster Management Unit to review and present to Council for final endorsement.

An additional two (2) Council initiatives were previously assessed and approved, allocating \$55,000 towards *Living Library Project*, led by Council's Library Services and *Desert Pea Media Video Production*, a collaboration with Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation.

See the attached table for an overview of recommended projects for funding with a total amount of \$297,300 towards new community resilience building initiatives.

The Applications recommended support a diverse range of initiatives across the shire, engaging people of all ages and abilities, whilst integrating local indigenous culture and diversity.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

Not applicable

REPORT/BACKGROUND

Following a series of Community Engagement Workshops across the shire, stage one of the application process commenced via the release of an online Expression of Interest (EOI) March 2026.

Stage two; following the submission of all applications, a preliminary review of applications was carried out by a Council Officer, to ensure eligibility and suitability under the funding priorities and Guidelines.

Stage three included applications assessed by an external voluntary Community Advisory Group (CAG) guided by Terms of Reference (ToR) and facilitated by a Council Officer. The CAG was established as an independent advisory panel to Council comprising of five community representatives reflecting the diverse communities of the Douglas Shire. The CAG assessment was based on a criteria matrix reflecting the funding program objectives and eligibility criteria.

Stage four; following the CAG recommendations, a senior Council Officer within the Disaster Management Unit undertook a further independent review of recommended projects for funding. All recommended projects for funding are now presented to Council.

In total, thirteen (13) new community initiatives are recommended to receive funding, with an allocation of funds of \$297,300.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The funding program is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Any costs associated with support or guidance towards funded initiatives from Council staff are within the scope of their positions and within the current budget.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Risks Mitigation

Unrealistic expectations from community on Council continuing to maintain projects beyond June 2027:

Incorporated within Program Guidelines and letter of Funding Agreement.

- Although Council is facilitating funding for community resilience building projects, the guidelines indicate Council will not accept any future financial or operational responsibilities associated with successful grant funded projects. Council may

consider some maintenance support, in partnership with community depending on the project scale and impact of the initiative.

Successful applicants are unable to proceed with or expend funds:

- Incorporated within Program Guidelines and funding agreement a clear process, to when and how funds will need to be returned.

Community Advisory Group members are part of an application/and or a conflict of interest:

- Conflict of interest requirements are outlined in the Community Advisory Group ToR, under the Code of Conduct.

Community members participating in funded initiatives experience heightened emotions based on previous experiences including weather events.

- Successful applicants are offered training and/or mentoring to support the delivery of their project(s) to ensure their approaches are trauma informed. Information on additional available support services will be provided for themselves and participants.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

In keeping with Douglas Shire Council's environmental priorities, all successful applicants must demonstrate a clear commitment to environmental stewardship throughout the planning, delivery, and evaluation of their funded activities. All projects supported under this program are expected to minimise negative environmental impacts and where possible contribute to positive environmental outcomes.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The allocation of funds to support locally led place-based resilience initiatives will have a significant positive impact across the shire. Social benefits include;

- Creation of positive strategies for disaster preparedness and recovery.
- Project ideas are based on community needs and interests driven from the community.
- Local voices in the design and delivery are key to the projects and enable the communities to strengthen their own resilience together.
- Connection with local custodians of the land and highlighting cultural diversity of community.
- Creation of legacies for long-term, sustainable opportunities that can continue to strengthen community connection and individual resilience.

CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Liveability To deliver community activities to promote safe, healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities with environmental conscious

Deliver community initiatives that support healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities.

Encourage and grow creative opportunities across the arts.

To partner with community to build resilience against natural disasters creating a strong sense

Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters. Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging. Undertake effective disaster management (planning, preparedness, response, recovery).

Operational Plan 2025-2026 Actions:

4.4.2 - Scope and prepare works under the North Queensland Resilience program funding for year one.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

This initiative is undertaken in accordance with the *QLD Disaster Management Act 2003*, *Disaster Management Regulation 2014*, and the *Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011*. Allocation of funds and acquittal is in alignment Council's Procurement Policy.

CONSULTATION

- Internal engagement has occurred across the; Community and Economic Development, Environment and Planning, Governance, Media and Communications Teams. Building Maintenance and Open Space.
- External community engagement undertaken through the delivery of seven (7) Community Connections Workshops, led by local facilitators and held on local venues across the Shire in; Cow Bay, Cape Tribulation, Oak Beach, Mossman, Port Douglas. Due to weather events planned workshops for Daintree Village were unable to proceed. A cross-border initiative for Degarra will be undertaken with residents and in partnership with Cook Shire Council, early July 2026.
- To date approximately one hundred community members have participated in the Community Connections Workshops, enabling local voices in the generation of project ideas and opportunities for community collaboration.
- The Community Advisory Group (CAG) was established via an expression of interest process to community. Five community members were engaged to assist in the assessment process and development of recommendations of projects to Council.

CONCLUSION

Significant impacts can be achieved through the allocation of funds to community-led resilience building initiatives across the shire. These resilience building initiatives provide an essential tool that helps communities be prepared for disasters and supports them to respond and recover better when they occur.

The allocation of funds through this funding program enables Council to partner with community to build resilience against extreme weather events and emergencies by creating a strong sense of social capital. These projects will deliver community activities that promote safe, healthy, inclusive, and socially engaged communities with environmental consciousness.

The Funding Program Guidelines provides a governing foundation to guide the dissemination of current and future funding, received from State and Federal Government, enabling the Disaster Management Unit to administer funds for community led disaster recovery and resilience projects.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Recommended Projects for endorsement NQRP Community Program Funding 2026 2027 [7.11.1 - 1 page]

Recommended Projects under the North Queensland Resilience Program (NQRP), Community Program Funding 2026-2027

| Project Name | Brief Description | Delivery location | Funding Recommended |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| <i>The Future Sounds Like This</i> | Music Concert/Workshops for emerging students, 12-17yrs. | Mossman (surrounds) | \$7,500 |
| <i>Rewire & Reset</i> | A Four-Week Community Recovery Program. | Mossman (surrounds) | \$10,000 |
| <i>Resonating Resilience</i> | Community Workshops/ performance event for adults and youth. | Shire Wide | \$34,200 |
| <i>Music in the Daintree 'Ngana Julaymba Dungay'</i> | Community Performance Queensland Symphony Orchestra (two members). | Cow Bay (surrounds) | \$6,100 |
| <i>Cultural Emergence Program</i> | A four session, Cultural Emergence Program for 12-15yrs students. | Mossman (surrounds) | \$15,500 |
| <i>Grow Connect Thrive</i> | Community garden project. Delivering a series of weekly, facilitated workshops over thirty weeks. | Port Douglas (surrounds) | \$19,000 |
| <i>Daintree Village Community Belonging Project</i> | Health & Wellbeing sessions. Community Mural and Traditional indigenous garden. | Daintree Village (surrounds) | \$30,000 |
| <i>Bare Foot Theatre Project</i> | Theatre production | Cape Tribulation (surrounds) | \$10,000 |
| <i>Wellness Festival/initiative</i> | Wellness Festival | Port Douglas (surrounds) | \$35,000 |
| <i>A moving and gathering community Building Together</i> | Wellness Festival | Daintree (surrounds) | \$35,000 |
| <i>Building Together</i> | Workshops to develop skills in the safe use of power tools, basic maintenance and renovation techniques. | Shire Wide (Mossman & Daintree Village) | \$30,000 |
| <i>Douglas Shire Arts Trail</i> | An artistic weekend (event) celebrating the diversity of arts, culture, environments, lifestyles, and personalities across the shire. | Shire Wide | \$25,000 |
| <i>Climate-Adaptive Community Garden Demonstration Site</i> | Community based demonstration garden. | Shire Wide | \$40,000 |
| | | | \$297,300 |