

7.15. NORTH QUEENSLAND RESILIENCE PROGRAM, COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BUILDING PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2026_2027

REPORT AUTHOR	Disaster Resilience Officer
MANAGER	Manager Disaster Management Unit
DEPARTMENT	Disaster Management Unit
DATE	31 March 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the North Queensland Resilience Program (NQRP), Community Resilience, Arts and Wellbeing Community Funding Program (Guidelines) 2026 - 2027.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North Queensland Resilience Program (NQRP) Community Resilience, Arts and Wellbeing Community Funding Guidelines 2026 - 2027 outlines the intent and decision-making processes in the allocation of funding.

The document provides a governing foundation to guide the dissemination of current and future funding, received by external government agencies in support of community-led disaster resilience and recovery initiatives within the Douglas Shire Council.

The Funding Guidelines describe the allocation of funds under the NQRP, more specifically the Community Resilience and Wellness Arts program incl. Indigenous interpretation program. A total of \$455,000 is available within this program, with the requirement to fully acquit funds by June 2027.

To date, two (2) Council led projects have been provided with funding to support disaster resilience building initiatives including, the Living Library initiative (coordinated through Council's Library Services) and the Mossman Youth Intervention Project (a partnership with Jabalbina and the QLD Mental Health Commission). A total of \$55,000 has been allocated from the overall available funds.

Evidence shows that arts, wellbeing and cultural programs have a unique capacity to build social capital. Social capital plays a vital role in disaster preparedness, response and recovery by fostering strong emotional and psychological bonds that help communities support one and other before during and after emergencies.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

Not applicable.

REPORT/BACKGROUND

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 proposed thirteen projects valued at \$4.5m to build disaster resilience which were endorsed by FNQROC, whose aim is to bolster disaster resilience in the Wet Tropics. The Community Resilience and Wellness Arts program incl. Indigenous interpretation is one of the thirteen projects identified.

Douglas Shire Council, Disaster Management Unit is administering the allocation of these funds to eligible community applicants as a one-off seeding opportunity in building community resilience. Although Council is administering funding for community resilience building projects, the guidelines outline that Council works on the principle that they will not accept any future financial or operational responsibilities associated with successful grant funded projects. Council may consider some maintenance and support, in partnership with community depending on the project scale and impact of the initiative which will be reviewed through the EOI phase in consultation with relevant Council departments.

The Funding Guidelines and implementation process is closely aligned to Councils existing grant programs, (Regional Arts Development Fund and Community Grants Program) and reflects the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, North Queensland Resilience Program 2024-2025 Guidelines.

The approach to the application, assessment and allocation of funds aims to ensure strong governance and meet procurement requirements whilst providing a clear, timely, and accessible process for applicants.

The Assessment Process commences with an initial review of applicants received against eligibility criteria, by a Council Officer, applications will then be assessed by a Community Advisory Group (CAG) guided by Terms of Reference (ToR) and facilitated by Council Officers.

The CAG is an independent advisory panel to Council comprising of five community representatives that reflect the diverse arts and creative communities of Douglas Shire.

The CAG will undertake an assessment based on a criteria matrix and identify recommended projects. Following the CAG recommendations, a senior Council Officer within the Disaster Management Unit will undertake a final independent review of recommended projects for funding allocation. All recommended projects for funding will be presented to Council, for final endorsement.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

A total of \$455,000 has been allocated towards; the Community Resilience and Wellness Arts program incl. Indigenous interpretation Funding Program June 2026 - June 2027. The funding program is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. There is no cost to Council.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Risks Mitigation

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

Incorporated within Funding Guidelines:

- *‘Although Council is administering funding for community resilience building projects, 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 and will be reviewed through the EOI phase.’*
- *‘If a proposal intends to include a building/wall, is an installation or structure on land, written consent from the owner(s) will be required and included as part of the EOI.’*

2. Community confusion regarding Council's other Grant Programs.

Internal engagement with Council's Community, Economic Development and Communications Teams will develop clear messaging and FAQs.

3. Successful applicants are unable to proceed with or expend funds.

Incorporate within Funding Guidelines:

- *‘If a project is not able to progress, funding must be returned within 14 days of notification.’*

4. Community Advisory Group members are part of an application/and or perceived conflict of interest.

Conflict of interest process to identify and mitigate is clearly outlined in the Community Advisory Group Terms of Reference (ToR).

5. Through the delivery of a range of initiatives; community members become distressed due to experiences of previous disaster event.

All successful applicants will be offered training and/or mentoring to support the delivery of their project(s) to ensure their approaches are trauma informed. Information on additional 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 including:

- Creation of positive strategies for disaster preparedness and recovery.
- Project ideas based on community needs and interests driven by the community.
- Local voices elevated during the empowering communities to become more resilient.
- Connection with local custodians of the land and highlighting our cultural diversity creates new 'bridging' connections.

- Creation of legacies for long-term 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 consciousness.

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

1.2 - Encourage and grow creative opportunities across the arts.

Theme 4 - Recovery and Resilience

To partner with community to build resilience against natural disasters creating a strong sense of social capital.

4.1 - Support our community's journey of recovery and rebuilding after natural disasters.

4.3 - Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

4.5 - 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*. Aligns with Council's Procurement Policy.

CONSULTATION

Internal engagement has occurred across Community and Economic Development Team, Sustainability (Environment and Planning), Governance, Media, Communications and Engagement Teams.

Community engagement has occurred through the delivery of eight (8) Community Connections Workshops, led by local facilitators; across the Shire in; Cow Bay, Cape Tribulation, Oak Beach, Mossman, Port Douglas and Daintree Village.

A cross-border workshop for Degarra residents is planned, in partnership with Cook Shire and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire.

To date up to 100 community members have participated in the 'Community Connections Workshops' to share funding availability, and to generate local ideas and opportunities for community collaboration.

CONCLUSION

- Significant impacts can be achieved through the allocation of funds to community-led resilience building initiatives across the Shire.
- 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 Funding Guidelines presented provides a governing foundation to guide the dissemination of current and future funding received by external government agencies for Community Led Recovery projects.

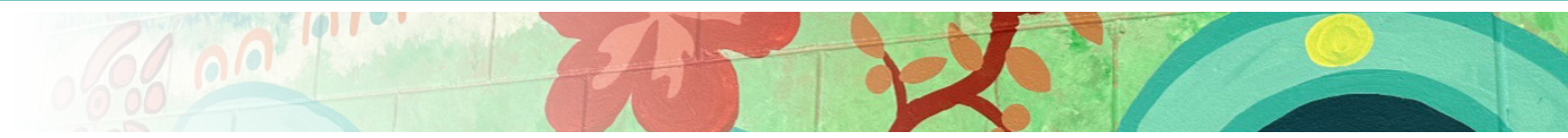
ATTACHMENTS

1. Community Resilience, Arts and Wellbeing Community Funding Program 2026 2027
[7.15.1 - 7 pages]

DOUGLAS SHIRE COUNCIL

North Queensland Resilience Program (NQRP) Community Resilience, Arts and Wellbeing Community Funding Program Guidelines

JUNE 2026 – JUNE 2027



Australian Government



Queensland
Government

DOUGLAS

Ordinary Council Meeting - 31 March 2026



**DOUGLAS DISASTER
MANAGEMENT UNIT**

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Overview

This document outlines the intent and decision-making processes in the allocation of funding under the North Queensland Resilience Program (NQRP), more specifically, funding available under the *Community Resilience, Arts and Wellbeing*, including *Indigenous Interpretation Project*.

This project initiative is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Douglas Shire Council's Disaster Management Unit is administering the allocation of these funds to eligible community projects as a one-off seeding opportunity in building community resilience.

“Arts, wellbeing and cultural programs have a unique capacity to build social cohesion – an essential tool that helps communities be prepared for disasters and supports them to respond and recover better when they occur, by strengthening emotional and psychological bonds.....”

Community Recovery Network

Funding Program Guidelines aim to ensure an accessible, inclusive and equitable allocation of funds throughout Douglas Shire communities. Supporting projects that have high levels of impact within community, engage a diverse range of participants, foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, and create long term sustainable outcomes, will be prioritised.

The aim is to support communities to create locally owned initiatives, that capture local voices, build on local strengths and promotes collaboration across individuals and organisations. Funds available are to provide a seeding opportunity for new initiatives.

Allocation of funding to projects will be guided by the following 5 priorities:

1. Ideas are based on community needs and interests
2. Promotes positive strategies for disaster recovery and preparedness
3. Demonstrates participatory processes whereby community members are included, so diverse voices are considered
4. Celebrates local custodians of the land and the cultural diversity of community
5. Creates legacies for long-term, sustainable opportunities that strengthen community connection and individual resilience



Who Can Apply?

1. Eligible groups or organisations based in and operating in the Douglas Shire.
2. An individual, a not-for-profit organisation, businesses or collective/artist/wellness run initiative with an active Australian Business Number (ABN).

A not-for-profit organisation is generally an organisation that does not operate for the profit, or personal gain. For further information please refer to [Not-for-profit | ACNC](#).

An individual can apply, under the auspice of a not-for-profit organisation. To 'auspice' means to provide support, sponsorship or guidance to a person or organisation. The auspicee will be carrying out the project 'under the auspices of' the incorporated organisation. It's the auspicee that receives the project funding and enters into relevant agreements for the auspicee.

[Auspicing | Not-for-profit Law](#).

If applying as an individual, be over 18 years of age or have their application co-signed by their legal guardian confirming they will take responsibility for managing the grant.

All applicants will be required to have a valid public liability certificate of currency with a minimum \$20 million coverage.

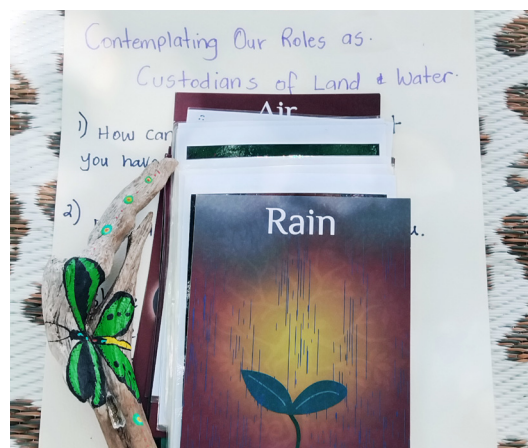
Project Management and Financial Responsibility

It is important that applicants have considered how they will manage and deliver the project within the required time-frames (all projects will need to be fully acquitted by end of May 2027).

To ensure success of the delivery of projects, applicants will be assessed on their capacity to demonstrate their project management capability, sound financial planning and partnership capacity.

Recommended rates of pay on the [National Association for the Visual Arts \(NAVA\)](#) website is a useful guide when considering artists' fees in your project budget.

Where a project engages with children and young people up to 18 years, *Working with Children* checks will need to be provided.



Funding Guidelines

The allocation of funding is for community resilience projects/initiatives within the Douglas Shire, carried out by and for the Douglas Shire community by May 2027.

- Funding is intended for new or enhanced community resilience arts and wellbeing initiatives.
- There are no funding caps under this program nor a requirement to provide a funding percentage (%) contribution, although it is encouraged to demonstrate any in-kind or financial support towards the project where possible.
- The full amount may not be provided/or available for projects, so please consider the scope of your project and what eligible resources are needed for its success.
- Multiple individual applications for the same overall project may be considered together for maximum funding levels. We encourage local community members to connect and communicate your ideas with others to maximise collaborative opportunities.
- Although Council is administering funding for community resilience building projects, 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, and will be reviewed through the EOI phase.
- If a project is not able to progress, funding must be returned within 14 days of notification.
- Other funding for the project must be declared, even if it has been applied for but not yet awarded.
- Funding will not be given for aspects of a project already funded by other means.
- The proposed project must be feasible, with the applicant able to successfully complete the planned activities by May 2027.
- Project plans and realistic milestones will be developed with successful applicants to ensure projects succeed and are delivered on time.
- If a proposal intends to include a building/wall, is an installation or structure on land, written consent from the owner(s) will be required and included as part of the EOI.



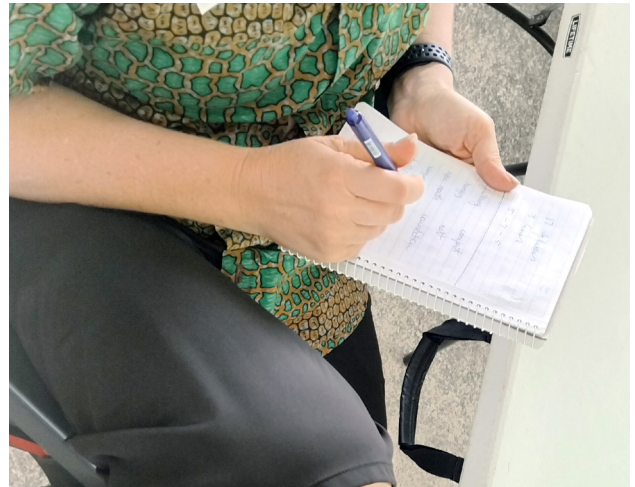
What you will need to provide:

- ✓ A brief **outcome report and financial acquittal** will be required at the conclusion of the project, giving evidence of how the funding was spent. The outcome report should also give a brief description of community participation, its effects, any works produced and participant feedback. Photographic images for use by the Douglas Shire Council will be appreciated, as they help to show the successes of the funded projects to the funding bodies and the wider community. Any images of people will require written media consent.
- ✓ Grant funding is intended to facilitate community resilience, arts and wellbeing projects, and therefore, arts and wellbeing practitioners at a demonstrated professional level may be paid a fee for planning and facilitating activities and workshops that are open to interested members of the Douglas Shire community, not only a specific group. The funding proposal (EOI) **must demonstrate a standard industry rate, the hours to be worked and a description of the work to be done**. Suggested standard industry rates (for artists) are available online from organisations such as The National Association for Visual Arts (NAVA) and the Australian Society of Authors (ASA).
- ✓ All facilitators/artists paid for their work will **need to hold an ABN and appropriate professional indemnity/public liability insurance**.
- ✓ Successful applicants will **need to recognise the funding bodies on correspondence, signage and publicity materials**. A kit with the appropriate logos and text will be provided if funding is awarded.
- ✓ Events and other public activities may require **pre-approvals from Douglas Shire Council departments**, such as Environmental Health, Sustainability, Property, Planning, Customer Service, Open Spaces, and Community Services/events. This process will occur in the assessment phase, once an applicant has submitted their EOI.
- ✓ Successful applicants are strongly encouraged to **support local businesses wherever possible by procuring goods and services locally/regionally**. Items purchased from overseas suppliers are ineligible (unless it is impossible to source them from Australian businesses).
- ✓ Environmental responsibility and impact – in keeping with the Douglas Shire Council's environmental priorities, project management and activities should **follow environmental sustainability best practice, minimise environmental harm and maximise environmental benefits**.



Projects and costs not supported by this funding:

- ✗ Projects that do not meet eligibility criteria and/or unable to adequately respond to the assessment criteria.
- ✗ Projects proposed already supported through other funding sources and/or the organisation has the financial capacity to fund the project through their existing funds.
- ✗ Projects started or costs incurred before the application for funding is approved.
- ✗ Core business of educational, medical, religious and political organisations.
- ✗ Activities exclusive to group members only and not open to broader community.
- ✗ Prizes, giveaways, trophies, gifts, merchandising.
- ✗ Repayment of debts.
- ✗ Hospitality, catering, food and beverages.
- ✗ Travel and accommodation unless for a facilitator delivering activities within the Douglas Shire.
- ✗ Infrastructure projects. New or extensions, for example; buildings, shade structures, community meeting spaces, fences or solar panels.
- ✗ Purchase of equipment, except if it is integral to the project and will remain available for community use*. (*The hiring of equipment could be considered under the guidelines).
- ✗ Any costs associated with insurance or compliance requirements.



Funding Application Process

Support will be available during the application process (EOI) through Council's Disaster Resilience Officer, Paula Clancy. E: recovery@douglas.qld.gov.au or M: **0419 867 280**.

For assistance with proposals for community events or festivals, contact Council's Events Officer. E: events@douglas.qld.gov.au.

Stage 1 – March 2026

A formal Expression of Interest (EOI) through submission of an online form and supporting documents. A paper-based form is available upon request.

Stage 2 – April 2026

A preliminary review of applications will be carried out by a Council Officer to ensure the application's eligibility and suitability under the funding Priorities and Guidelines. Also ensuring there is no conflict with other Douglas Shire Council protocols, priorities, local laws and regulations, or with Federal and State laws. If there are any concerns about an application, feedback will be given to the applicant and an opportunity will be given to provide further information to the application within an agreed timeframe.

Stage 3 – May 2026

Community Advisory Group reviews EOI applications, facilitated by Council Officer(s). Recommended applicants will be invited to submit detailed planning and budget. This documentation may vary, depending on the type and complexity of the project.

Stage 4 – June 2026

Final assessment of recommended applicants will be undertaken by a senior Council Officer, Disaster Management Unit and presented to Council for final endorsement.

Stage 5 – June 2026

Once recommendations have been endorsed, a formal letter/package of information will be provided to successful applicants, including an invitation extended to all for an introduction/orientation workshop from the Disaster Management Unit.

Stage 6 – June/July 2026

Upon signing Funding Agreement, projects to commence. A final report must be prepared at the conclusion of the project including an acquittal form detailing receipts for all expenditure incurred and/if any the return of unused grants.

For further information, please contact Council's Disaster Resilience Officer, Paula Clancy at recovery@douglas.qld.gov.au or 0419 867 280.

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