

5.3. COUNCIL GRANTS PROGRAM 2019-2020

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DEPARTMENT	People and Community Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes revisions to the Council Grants Program for 2019-2020;**
- 2. Delegates authority under Section 259 of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer to delegate power to the Manager of People and Community Services and the Chief Financial Officer to approve eligible Council Grants Program applications for financial and non-financial assistance up to \$2,000 (GST Exc) after consultation with the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer; and**
- 3. Delegates authority under Section 257 of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise any and all matters associated with the above.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Further to the 18 June 2019 Council Resolution adopting the revised Grants, Sponsorships and Donations Policy, this report is for formal noting of the revisions to the Council Grants Program for 2019-20 and to delegate power from the Chief Executive Officer to the Manager of People and Community Services and the Chief Financial Officer to approve financial and non-financial requests up to \$2,000 (GST Exc) to streamline processes and improve efficiencies.

Council Officers have updated all documentation associated with the existing grants program including application forms, guidelines and frequently asked questions to streamline the customer's experience of applying for a Council grant. Several new grant program streams have been developed in 2019-2020 to facilitate local initiatives and provide opportunity to enhance social capital in the community. The Business, Community Support and Event Funding have been revised into a Major Grant Category, Placemaking and Micro Grants are a new category and the RADF grant has remained unchanged.

Table1.

Original Streams		Revised Streams	
Business Development	\$20,000	Major Grant	\$60,000
Community Support	\$20,000	Placemaking	\$5,000
Event Funding	\$20,000	Micro Grant	\$10,000
RADF	\$45,000	RADF	\$45,000

BACKGROUND

The Council Grants Program previously comprised the Community Support Program, Industry Development Fund and Event Funding Program. Each program had separate guidelines, application forms, eligibility and assessment criteria and administrators.

Council has considered comments from a grants review by Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) in December 2018 and formal and informal feedback from previous rounds of the grants programs; the main reforms set out to achieve simplification and clarity for applicants and assessors, while supporting Council priorities and responding to community needs.

COMMENT

Under the Local Government Regulation 2012, a community organisation means -
(a) an entity that carries on activities for a public purpose; or
(b) another entity whose primary object is not directed at making a profit.

With the above definition in mind the range of grant applicants has been extended to include community and commercial organisations as well as individuals on the basis the primary object is not directed at making a profit.

Furthermore, projects must address a community need, align with Council plans and strategies, benefit the community or be in the public interest and provide community, economic, social or environmental outcomes.

An overview of the revised Council Grants Program is included in the attachment to this report.

With the streamlined approval process for the smaller grants, Councillors will be kept informed of funding decisions through weekly Councillor FYIs, quarterly Chief Executive Officer Reports and the Annual Report.

The revised Grants Program will be launched when the Major Grant round opens in early September, with information sessions to be held for potential applicants.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for Council to:

1. Note revisions to the Council Grants Program for 2019-2020;
2. Delegate authority under Section 259 of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer to delegate power to the Manager of People and Community Services and the Chief Financial Officer to approve eligible Council Grants Program applications for financial and non-financial assistance up to \$2,000 (GST Exc) after consultation with the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer;
3. Delegate authority under Section 257 of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise any and all matters associated with the above.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Funding for the Council Grants Program is provided for in the 2019-20 financial year budget. Council officers are responsible for administering and assessing applications and reporting to Council.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

All applicants and proposed projects must meet all eligibility criteria listed in the Eligibility Checklist and Program Guidelines. Risks in relation to allocating public funds through Council's funding programs (including the Council Grants Program, Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) and Resource and Performance Agreements) include disputes and failure to acquit funds. Officers will apply the below principles when applying risk to the grants program;

Resolving disputes

Disputes over the management of Council's funding program are resolved locally with applicants encouraged to contact Council Officers about any disagreement or conflict with an application and to obtain feedback on their application.

The Local Government Association (LGAQ) may be able to recommend trained mediators to assist in resolving conflict between stakeholders if required.

Providing feedback

All funding assessment panels will contain accurate records of assessment meetings so Council can account for funding decisions using public money.

Applicants have the right to request feedback on their grant applications, whether successful or not; over the phone, in person or in writing. To assist in providing feedback assessment panels must have an agreed position as to why a grant applicant was successful or not, based on the criteria of the funding program.

This agreed position must be accurately recorded as documents are subject to the *Judicial Review Act 1991*, *Right to Information Act 2009* and *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

Risk Management Principles

Each successful applicant must acquit their funding application.

To ensure accountability, the following Risk Management Framework supports Council Officers in ensuring funds awarded through Council Grants Program, Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) and Resource and Performance Agreements are acquitted.

- Recommending applicants review the Outcome Report at the application stage to ensure applicants are aware of requirements should application be successful.
- Attaching an Outcome Report to the Funding Letter of Offer
- Releasing funds in increments against a schedule of deliverables for larger grants
- Releasing funds, no earlier than a month before the start of an activity
- Withdrawing funds if an activity is unduly delayed and inviting the recipient to resubmit their application the next round
- Maintaining contact with recipients and following progress where possible
- Setting tight time frames for the return of the Outcome Report (eight weeks)

- Issuing and recording in the database reminders via email, letter and phone
- Promoting public recognition phase of the program at the outcome stage of the activity when project can be celebrated with the community
- Requests for extension of project timelines and/or Outcome Report deadlines are to be submitted in writing to appropriate Council officer.
- Council grants extensions of project timelines and/or Outcome Report deadlines on a case by case basis when such requests are deemed to be justified.
- Council officer contacts grantees who have obtained extensions on projects on a regular basis to monitor progress.
- At times grantees may face circumstances beyond their control which impact on project timelines so Council officers will try to support applicants in such situations to achieve the original outcomes of awarded projects.
- If the Outcome Report is still not returned after the third reminder notice the recipient is no longer eligible for future Council grants
 - a note is recorded in the Council Grants Program /RADF workbook
 - a letter is sent to the applicant advising that the grant recipient is ineligible for further funding

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: Funding streams include assisting eligible applicants develop programs, projects or activities that provide economic and industry development opportunities and benefits to the Shire. Grant-funded programs may build financial and resource capacity of clubs through increased membership and volunteer numbers and skills development. Grant-funded programs which encourage increased visitation to the Shire and/or require local goods and services provide economic flow-on benefits to local businesses and the community.

Environmental: Funding categories also include Environment/Sustainability for programs, projects and activities. In order to align with Council's Events Strategy and general policy, applicants should consider measures and practical examples of how their potentially grant-funded events/activities will minimally impact the environment (eg use of recycle bins, minimising single-use plastic).

Social: The objective of the Council Grants Program is to support eligible organisations, groups and individuals with financial (grants, sponsorship, partnerships) and non-financial (in-kind) assistance to help develop and deliver community programs, activities and events which provide artistic, cultural, sporting, recreational, environmental outcomes and enable social participation and interaction.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Celebrating Our Communities

Goal 1 - *We will celebrate the diversity of our community and ensure that all infrastructure, programs, and services are underpinned with inclusiveness and accessibility.*

Goal 2 - *We will deliver programs and services that protect and enhance the liveability of our beautiful Shire.*

Goal 3 - *We will develop programs that promote health, well-being and safety in the community.*

Goal 4 - *We will promote arts and cultural programs and events that bring vibrancy to the community and compliment the tourist experience.*

Theme 5 - Robust Governance and Efficient Service Delivery

Goal 1 - *We will conduct Council business in an open and transparent manner with strong oversight and open reporting.*

Goal 2 - *We will put the customer at the centre of our service delivery and process improvement as we deliver efficient and appropriate services based on community expectations.*

Goal 3 - *We will make sound financial decisions by ensuring robust strategic planning, financial management and reporting.*

Operational Plan 2019-2020 Actions:

5.1.3 - *Introduce new grant themes in 2019/20.*

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

Custodian	Council owns and manages infrastructure, facilities, reserves, resources and natural areas. In fulfilling its role as custodian, Council will be mindful of the community, the economy, the environment, and good governance.
Funder	Council often partly funds services, events or community organisations through grants, donations, subsidies and in-kind support. Council will apply robust governance to ensure that such funding is fair and appropriate.

Information Provider Council provides the community with important information on services, events, policies, rules, strategies, and any other relevant data that helps the community to stay informed. In performing this role, Council seeks to be open and transparent.

CONSULTATION

Internal: The proposed revisions to the Council Grants Program were presented at a Workshop on 30 July 2019, for input and feedback.

The Workshop was attended by Councillors, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Manager Infrastructure, Chief Financial Officer, Manager Governance and Manager People and Community Services.

External: Nil

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Comments from a review of the Community Support Program by Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) and formal and informal feedback from previous rounds of the various grants programs were taken into consideration when reviewing Council's 2019-20 Grants Program.

Feedback forms will be used to obtain feedback from people attending future information sessions and/or applying to the program to help Council refine processes, presentation tools and other practices to improve the program.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Grants Program 2019-20 Overview [5.3.1 - 12 pages]

Council Grants Program Overview

1

2019-20

Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 August 2019

Revisions

2

- Guidelines and FAQs
- Application Forms
- Funding Streams
- Eligibility Checklist
- Round/s
- Assessment Checklist
- Administration, monitoring and reporting

Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 August 2019

Applications

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- Align with themes and goals in Council's Plans and Strategies
- Address an identified need (if a grant)
- Benefit the community / be in the public interest
- Meet additional eligibility criteria in Guidelines

Applicants

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- Community organisations
- Commercial organisations
- Groups
- Individuals
- Reside or primarily provide services in Shire; or
- If outside the Shire, project in public interest /of community benefit to the Shire

Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 August 2019

Community organisation

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- an entity that carries on activities for a public purpose; or
- another entity whose primary object is not directed at making a profit

(Local Government Regulation 2012)

Community Benefit

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- Social
- Economic
- Environment

Projects / Events Categories

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- Arts and Cultural
- Community Events
- Environment/Sustainability
- Placemaking*
- Sport and Recreation#
- Community Development
- Economic / Industry Development

* New inclusion #Proposing a “Marquee round”

Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 August 2019

Place making

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- Reimage public spaces
- Activates public spaces and encourages urban design
- Uses principles of social, image, access/linkages and activities in design

Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 August 2019

Local Place making



Port Douglas Sugar Wharf Projections
Front St Mossman Banners

Ordinary Council Meeting - 20 August 2019

Streams and Rounds

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Assistance Stream	Open	Close	Notification	Council Contribution (GST Exc)
In-kind Assistance	Open all year		4 weeks after application received	\$250 to \$2,000
Sponsorship				
Partnership				
Micro Grant				
Major Grant	First Monday Sept	Last Friday Oct	8 weeks after round closes	\$2,001 to \$10,000

Assessment Process

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Ordinary Council Meeting – 20 August 2019

Assessment Process (Above delegation)

