

BLAND SHIRE COUNCIL
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES GRANT
FUNDING GUIDELINES



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Introduction

The Strengthening Communities Grant Program provides funding to increase community participation and access to information, services or facilities that strengthen the social fabric of communities within the Bland Shire.

Funding is also offered to assist with undertaking new or to build upon existing projects and events.

While Bland Shire Council supports community groups and local initiatives in a range of ways through various structured grant programs, Council also receives a number of unsolicited requests for donations throughout the year.

Unsolicited requests for donations which do not fall under one of Council's other structured grants programs or are urgent in nature can be considered under the Strengthening Communities Funding program and will be covered by these guidelines.

This document has been prepared to set the guidelines for the allocation of Strengthening Communities Funding.

1.0 Eligibility

Applicants must be non profit community groups or organisations located within the Bland Shire and primarily benefiting the residents of the Bland Shire or, if situated outside the Bland Shire, provide a service that will primarily impact upon residents of Bland Shire. Commercial organisations and private individuals are not eligible for a donation under this program.

For the purpose of applying under these guidelines, the definition of a *Non Profit Community Group or Organisation* is one that provides services that benefit the broader community. Any profit made goes back into the operation of the group or organisation to carry out its purposes and is not distributed to any of its members.

The *Non Profit Community Group or Organisation* must:

- Be non-profit;
- Have an ABN;
- Be incorporated or be auspiced by an organisation that has an ABN and incorporation status; and
- Have insurance, including public liability cover.

Funding will NOT be provided for:

- Ongoing operational costs (e.g. rent, salaries, maintenance and administration);
- Requests from commercial organisations;
- Requests from individuals or groups for private functions;
- Fundraising purposes;
- Food and catering;
- Prize money;
- Debutante Balls;
- Events organised by political parties or lobby groups;

- Educational facilities;
- Non purpose cash donations to groups;
- Projects and/or organisations that have not successfully acquitted any previous grant or donation from Bland Shire Council;
- Reimbursement of expenditure already incurred;
- Projects where the purpose is considered the responsibility of state or federal government; or
- Projects that are clearly a duplication of an existing service.

Each organisation is limited to one Council Grant or Donation per financial year.

Applicants will usually be required to provide matching funding on a \$1:\$1 basis (this can include in kind volunteer contributions etc). There will clearly be cases where groups may wish to contribute more to the project.

2.0 Assessment Process

All requests must be lodged using a Bland Shire Council Multipurpose Grant Application Form with all relevant areas completed.

Applications can be submitted to Council at any time. Applications received prior to the first Tuesday of each month may be considered at the Council meeting of that month.

The application is reviewed against the criteria and if it is deemed to meet the guidelines and sufficient funds are available a report is compiled for consideration at the monthly Council meeting.

Where funding is requested for annual events or activities priority will be given to organisations that can demonstrate a level of self sustainability.

Funding will be provided for a maximum of four (4) consecutive years reducing on a sliding scale of 25% per annum to assist the project/event to become fully self sustainable.

All Strengthening Communities Funding must be as part of a specific project, initiative or activity.

Council officers may contact applicants after receiving an application seeking further information or clarification.

All projects should align with the strategies and objectives set out in Council's Community Strategic Plan.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposal with Council officers prior to lodging an application to ensure that all necessary information is provided and eligibility criteria is met.

Where appropriate, applicants requesting Strengthening Communities Funding may be advised by staff to instead apply for assistance through one of Council's other structured grant programs.

Assessment Criteria

To assist in prioritising, requests will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Demonstration that a donation is necessary for the project to be able to proceed;
- Demonstration that other funding sources have been investigated;
- The financial and in-kind commitment of the applicant to the project;

- Indication of plans to assist program to become self sufficient and sustainable;
- Ability to clearly address Council's strategic priorities and/or areas of need within the community, as identified in the Community Strategic Plan;
- Long-term benefits for the community;
- Opportunities created for local businesses;
- Level of innovation;
- Encourage community participation;
- Number of people who will benefit, and the
- Number of Bland Shire community groups involved. Council encourages community groups to form partnerships.

3.0 Conditions of Approval

If the application submitted is successful, grant conditions will apply.

Successful applicants will be required to submit a signed acceptance form provided by Council, agreeing to conditions applicable to the approved project, within six (6) weeks of notification.

Strengthening Communities Funding will be paid on tax invoice only, unless otherwise approved by council.