![Macedon Ranges Shire Council logo]

2023/24

Council Grants

Community Funding Scheme
Guidelines

Are you a community group or organisation interested in applying for funding?

mrsc.vic.gov.au/grants

Contents

Acknowledgment of Country

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

Overview

1. Program aims and objectives

The Community Funding Scheme grants public money to not-for-profit community groups for projects and initiatives that benefit residents of the Macedon Ranges.

The **objective** of the program is to support projects and activities that align with the priorities of the 2021-2031 Council Plan, specifically:

- Connecting communities; and
- Healthy environment, healthy people

The **aim** of the Community Funding Scheme is to support initiatives which:

- address local needs
- strengthen community relationships/partnerships
- encourage participation in civic life
- demonstrate a commitment to gender equity, accessibility, diversity, fairness and community wellbeing

It should be noted that Council offers other grants via a range of funding schemes. Before applying for the Community Funding Scheme, check if your project better fits these programs. Visit mrsc.vic.gov.au/About-Council/Find-A-Grant

2. Timeline

Information sessions	April/May 2023
Applications open	**1 May 2023 at 9am**
Applications close	**5 June 2023 at 5pm**
Applications assessed by panel	June 2023
Recommendations to Council	26 July 2023
Grant recipients advised	27 July 2023
Project delivery	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024
Grants acquitted	30 June 2024

3. How much is available?

The Community Funding Scheme grants budget for 2023/24 is a total of $160,000. There are three categories of grants that groups can apply for, these include:

Funding categories – Community Funding Scheme	Maximum funding/project
Community, Cultural and Environmental Projects Grants	Up to $10,000
Organisational Support Grants	Up to $5,000
Small Community Infrastructure Grants	Up to $12,000

Eligibility

4. Who can apply?

Incorporated and community-based not-for-profit groups operating or being established in the Macedon Ranges are eligible to apply for the Community Funding Scheme. Up to a maximum of two grants may be allocated per organisation per funding round.

5. Eligibility requirements

As part of the application process, applicants must discuss their application with a relevant Council officer, prior to submitting it. Please refer to section 13 of these guidelines. Applicants are strongly encouraged to <u>read these guidelines thoroughly</u> before contacting a Council officer.

Enquiries can be made at any time, and we encourage applicants to start conversations with Council officers as early as possible.

Schools/churches are eligible if they can show a demonstrated need, as well as broad community benefit and participation in a project. Projects that are entirely school or congregation focussed will not be funded.

The following are ineligible to apply to the Community Funding Scheme:

- Individuals
- Political organisations
- For profit/commercial organisations
- Government agencies/organisations
- Groups that are in debt to Council
- Groups that have not completed the acquittal and reporting requirements of previous Council grants

6. What will not be funded under the Community Funding Scheme?

Projects or activities which:

- have already commenced, are recurrent or have been completed

- are commercial, religious, political, discriminatory, sexist, racist or disrespectful
- are considered fundraising/asking for donations[1]
- intend to raise funds beyond what is needed to deliver the project and aim to boost general operating profits
- are the funding responsibility of state or federal government
- promote or involve gambling-related activities
- do not support responsible drinking
- involve capital works on private property
- are defined as facility maintenance on community and Council-owned buildings[2]
- fund capital expenditure (the purchase of land, buildings, vehicles)
- award monetary prizes
- are recreational excursions (camps, holidays, tours)
- duplicate services already operating or planned for in a targeted community
- have been previously funded by Council
- are not well supported by evidence of need and where alternative solutions have not been adequately considered
- do not have broad support amongst the community
- have not been adequately master planned or equivalent (for larger construction projects)
- do not have appropriate heritage sign-off, including Aboriginal cultural management (where required)
- are eligible for Council's Events and Festivals grants.

Core business/operational costs such as:
- salaries for ongoing positions
- rent, insurance, utility costs, debts
- conducting an annual general meeting

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[1] An application for donations/fundraising activities is regarded as a request for sponsorship and therefore ineligible for a Community Funding Scheme grant.

[2] Please refer to the terms of your maintenance schedule in your lease/licence agreement.

Funding categories and assessment criteria

7. Category 1: Community, Cultural and Environmental Projects Grants

These projects will contribute to the enhancement or development of local community strength, wellbeing and culture, or address local environmental priorities, critical social challenges or encourage all people to participate in community life or expressions of culture. Council has the following existing strategies available on Council's website, which applicants are encouraged to read when developing their idea.

Examples of projects in this category include:

- Community initiatives/activities that:
    - respond to social equity issues (improving accessibility and safety, supporting diversity and fairness)
    - projects that respond to community health and wellbeing priorities
    - activities/initiatives that support positive ageing
    - activities/initiatives that support young people
    - activities/initiatives that support families with young children.
  - Cultural activities (that are not eligible for the Events and Festivals grants) that:
    - explore and share local Indigenous culture and history, in partnership with local Traditional Owners and local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples
    - deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation outcomes
    - deliver artistic workshops for local practitioners
    - explore community histories (such as heritage trails, recorded histories, exhibitions)
    - celebrate our diversity
    - activate public places through arts/cultural performance.
- Environmental projects that:
    - reduce waste to landfill, such as community composting, food redistribution schemes, repurposing of waste products, projects that reduce use of plastic
    - support new edible or indigenous gardens or enhancements to existing community or public gardens
    - support activities/initiatives/workshops (not events) that raise awareness about sustainable living, sustainable land and waterways management, waste reduction and biodiversity, including citizen science projects and projects that increase access to nature
    - protect and enhance biodiversity through ecological restoration of public land (weed control, revegetation, masterplans and environmental management plans)
    - support sustainable transport initiatives (e.g. car or bike share schemes)
    - facilitate reduced greenhouse gas emissions across different sectors of the community or assist them to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Assessment criteria

Weighting	Criteria	What we are looking for
20%	Evidence of need	• Research (as proof of evidence) • Letters of support
20%	Alignment to Council priorities	• Demonstrated relationship to Council priorities
30%	Community benefit	• Number of people participating in project • Number of people benefiting from project • Impact of the community benefit • Inclusive outcomes
30%	Ability to deliver project	• Demonstrate sound budget • $$ contribution from group • Volunteer hours contribution from group • Demonstrate good project planning • Demonstrate good risk management • Demonstrate organisational capacity[3]

8. Category 2: Organisational Support Grants

These projects will directly support the operations of local not-for-profit organisations and community groups and fund enhancements to how committees and groups coordinate their local work and activities.

Examples of projects in this category include:

- Governance enhancement projects that:
  - o create a strategic plan
  - o prepare a feasibility study
  - o develop a policy and procedure manual
- Training and development initiatives that:
  - o provide skills training for members and/or volunteers
  - o enable groups to conduct information days and/or community forums
  - o fund the costs of food handling and responsible handling of alcohol courses for group members
  - o fund the costs of purchasing educational material for volunteers

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[3] Organisational capacity is demonstrated by minutes and financial statement from most recent AGM

- o fund member attendance at leadership courses
- Purchasing small equipment to assist volunteers such as:
  - o digital cameras, projectors, portable computers
  - o barbeques, kitchen appliances, furniture for public spaces
  - o public address systems
  - o first aid and sporting coaches kits
  - o safety and injury prevention items for sporting clubs (e.g. goal post padding, high visibility vests)
  - o updated or replacement of sporting or other essential equipment
  - o upgrades to storage
- Developing promotional material for community groups such as:
  - o portable signage, flags and banners
  - o brochures, booklets and website development
  - o branding and logo design.

Assessment criteria

Weighting	Criteria	What we are looking for
30%	Evidence of need	- Statement of need - Letters of support
20%	Alignment to Council priorities	- Demonstrated relationship to Council priorities
30%	Community benefit	- Number of people participating in project - Number of people benefiting from project - Impact of the community benefit
20%	Ability to deliver project	- Demonstrate sound budget - Demonstrate good project planning - Demonstrate good risk management

9. Category 3: Small Community Infrastructure Grants

These projects (which must incorporate universal design principles) aim to improve the community outcomes we get from community places like public buildings, open space, reserves or streetscapes. Improved access, increasing useability, tailoring places to community needs and updating features are a way of achieving community outcomes in public places. More information about universal design can be found here. Please speak with the relevant Council officer to ensure you have incorporated universal design principles in your project.

This category of funding is designed to enhance public places that serve an important role in encouraging community participation. This category funds projects at a variety of locations to reflect a mixture of public ownership and management models. Projects that propose changes to community places score higher if they benefit Council owned and local community managed facilities or spaces. Improvement projects may focus on one or more of the various stages of improving a place; the planning, design, construction or renovation phases.

This grant category is not designed to fund maintenance that is cyclical or otherwise.

Council has the following existing strategies available on its website, which applicants are encouraged to read when developing their application:

- Open Space Strategy 2013
- Walking and Cycling Strategy 2014
- Sports and Active Recreation Strategy 2018 - 2028

Examples of projects in this category include those that:

- upgrade shared community spaces such as meeting places and public halls that benefit a broad audience of users
- improve accessibility to community facilities and encourage greater inclusiveness for users
- improve open space areas, village greens/commons, or public streetscapes to benefit a broad audience of users
- create public art that enhances community spaces
- establish or upgrade interpretive signage and visitor infrastructure
- support the creation of masterplans for mechanic institutes, community halls, parks, commons, recreational facilities to ensure a planned approach to facility improvements
- support the completion of feasibility studies or business cases to create an evidence base to support future infrastructure proposals
- improve the environmental performance of community facilities through works that reduce demand for energy and water use (e.g. solar panels, insulation, LED lighting, double glazing, water tanks, environmental audits).

Assessment criteria

Weighting	Criteria	What we are looking for
25%	Evidence of need	- Photographs - Professional reports - Letters of support - Master plans
20%	Alignment to Council priorities	Demonstrated relationship to Council priorities

25%	Community benefit	• Number of people participating in project
		• Number of people benefiting from project
		• Inclusive outcomes
		• Incorporate universal design principles
30%	Ability to deliver project	• Demonstrate sound budget
		• $$ contribution from group
		• Volunteer hours contribution from group
		• Demonstrate good project planning
		• Demonstrate good risk management
		• Demonstrate organisational capacity
		• All permissions in place

Community building improvements

For projects that involve upgrades/minor capital works on Council buildings or spaces, please contact the Coordinator Facility Projects on 5421 9633.

Seeking approvals/permissions/permits

It is your responsibility to obtain any permits/approvals/permissions that may be required.

Copies to Council must be provided. You must also factor in application and permit costs, and the time required into your applications. You can discuss these requirements with the Coordinator Facility Projects.

Council acknowledges that not all permits/approvals will be obtained until after your funding is confirmed. It is expected that your application outlines which approvals you will be seeking and in the event you are successful, your plan for their obtainment.

When proposing construction work projects, it is advantageous to submit working drawings of any construction works you are proposing with your application. These can be formalised into specifications and designs/plans after you have obtained the grant funds.

It is mandatory for infrastructure projects to be managed by a Council project manager. This cost will need to be factored into the project funding being applied for to deliver a project at a rate of 10% of the total project cost.

Applications

10. Legal requirements

a. Incorporation status

Applicants must be registered as an incorporated body or arrange for a legally constituted not-for-profit organisation to manage (auspice) the funds.

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[4] Organisational capacity is demonstrated by minutes and financial statement from most recent AGM

Council does not auspice applicants.

For more information on auspice arrangements visit the Not-for-profit Law Information Hub.

b. Child safe standards

Macedon Ranges Shire Council is committed to a zero tolerance approach to child abuse, through actively promoting child safety and ensuring compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Victorian organisations that provide services to children are required, under the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005, to ensure that they implement compulsory child safe standards to protect children from harm.

As a Child Safe organisation, Council requires that all grant applicants demonstrate their compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and read/understand Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct, available from Council's website. Within the application form, applicants will be required to identify whether their project involves direct or incidental contact with children and young people and complete either a Child Safe Statement of Commitment or submit their Child Safe Policy and a Child Safe Direct Contact Checklist. These questions are contained within the eligibility section of the application form and must be completed by all applicants.

Please note: If your organisation is being auspiced for the purpose of this grant, the auspicing organisation will also need to meet the Child Safe Standards.

More details on the Child Safe Standards can be found on the Commission for Children and Young People website.

c. Public liability insurance

Public liability insurance covers incidents that occur during an activity being conducted by a group. All groups must be covered by public liability insurance and be able to provide a valid certificate of currency if they are involved in activities in public open space, using Council facilities or sporting events. Other activities may also require public liability insurance.

It is the responsibility of the applicant or recipient to arrange appropriate insurance, including collecting appropriate insurance from a contractor or tradesperson. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their insurance requirements with their insurance company or a professional advisor.

Groups without public liability insurance can contact Local Community Insurance which offers an affordable public liability scheme for not-for-profit community groups.

11.   Budget

The budget you submit needs to include all income and expenditure related to the activity/project (including permit fees) for which you are requesting funding. It is the costing of your project plan. The application form on SmartyGrants provides applicants with guidance on the information and level of detail required in your budget. We strongly encourage you to take note of any hints provided, as these will support you to improve your project budget score.

a. GST

For groups who are registered for GST - all pricing in your budget must exclude GST. (GST will be added to the amount requested).

For groups who are not registered for GST - all pricing in your budget must include GST. (Grants will be made exclusive of GST).

For information about GST and ABNs contact the Australian Taxation Office.

b. In-kind support

This covers contributions by volunteers and suppliers in terms of time, goods or professional services donated to the project and should be clearly identified in your project budget. The value of in-kind support should be reflected in both your income and expenditure.

Estimating the work required will help you determine the level of community contribution required and helps to demonstrate the true value of your project.

It is good practice to also supply a breakdown of estimated in-kind support to show how the figure in your budget total was reached. i.e.:

- General committee/community member contribution (e.g. planning, coordination, etc.) @ $40 per hour.
- Specialist/expert contribution (e.g. tradesperson, professional service) @$80/hr.

See a sample budget below:

Income

Grant from Council (this application)	$ 5000
Cash contribution from group	$ 1000
In-kind contribution from group (total)	$ 1000
Contributions from other sources (please specify): Department of Health and Human Services grant	$ 2000
Other (please specify) Bendigo Bank	$ 1000
Total income (please calculate)	$ 10,000

Expenditure

Facilitator costs	$ 2000
Delivering consultation	$ 1000
In-kind contribution from group	$1000
Venue hire	$ 500
Workshop materials	$ 500
Permit approvals	$ 1500
Costs of registered contractor	$ 1000
Catering	$ 500
Marketing and promotional activities	$ 1000
Printing of promotional materials	$ 350
Administrative overheads	$ 650
Total expenditure (please calculate)	$ 10,000

Make sure your total income and total expenditure are the same figure

List all expenditure items on separate lines

12.   Assessment

a. How are applications assessed?

Eligible applications are assessed by an evaluation panel of officers from across the organisation. The assessment is based on responses provided in the application form within each of the sections of the application using the **scoring matrix** for each category.

Responses are scored and the weighting is then applied to create an overall score. Eligibility does not guarantee funding.

Funding recommendations are presented to Council for consideration at a Scheduled Council Meeting. Scheduled Council Meetings are open to the public and streamed live online.

Council decisions are final, applicants who wish to discuss the outcome of their application are encouraged to contact the Community Development team for advice as soon as possible on 5422 0216 or via grants@mrsc.vic.gov.au.

b. What will strengthen my application?

- Applications that address Council's wellbeing and environmental priorities will score more highly than those that do not. Please refer to page 12 of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and page 3 of the Environment Strategy. Your application should clearly state how your project or initiative will support/contribute to this priority.

- Applications that consider gender equity and accessibility for diverse community groups will score more highly than those that do not. Applications that advance reconciliation and/or celebrate First Nations Peoples will also be highly regarded.

Table 1: Summary of Council priority areas.

Priority area	Council priorities
Environment	• climate emergency • sustainable transport • waterway health • biolinks and habitat links • waste minimisation • community engagement and partnerships
Wellbeing	• promoting mental health • social connection and inclusion • encouraging gender equity and respectful relationships free from violence • promoting healthy eating and active living • preventing harm from tobacco, alcohol and other drugs • tackling climate change and its impact on health, • supporting the community to respond to and recover from emergencies • preventing harm from gambling • supporting a dementia friendly community • increasing access to affordable housing
Reconciliation	• Initiatives that advance reconciliation and/or celebrate First Nations Peoples will also be highly regarded.

- Your application will be strengthened and will score higher if you can refer to specific actions from at least one of these strategic documents.
  - Council Plan 2021-2031
  - Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
  - Environment Strategy
  - Disability Action Plan 2021-2025
  - Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2028
  - Macedon Ranges Heritage Strategy 2014-2018
  - Youth Strategy 2018-2028
  - Municipal Early Years Plan 2021-2025: CREATE
  - Positive Ageing Plan 2020-2025
  - Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023
  - 2019 Healthy Heart of Victoria Active Living Census

Conditions of funding

13. Funding agreement

Successful applicants will abide by the terms and conditions of a funding agreement. Your funding agreement may have additional requirements that must be met in order for funding to be released. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions as set out by Council may result in future ineligibility for all Council grants.

Activities/projects must be completed by 30 June 2024.

Funds must be spent on the activity/project described in the application.

14. Project variations/extensions

Any variation, including extensions to an activity/project, must be applied through SmartyGrants and be approved by Council. If you are encountering unexpected challenges in your project delivery, please contact the Community Development team for advice as soon as possible on 5422 0216 or via grants@mrsc.vic.gov.au.

15. Reporting/acquittals

Successful applicants are required to submit an acquittal report by 30 June 2024. This report relating to funding from Council must include:

- confirmation that objectives for the project were achieved;
- a financial statement, detailing expenditure signed and authorised by the treasurer; and
- two photographs which may be used for promotional purposes.

Groups who do not submit an acquittal will not be eligible to apply for further funding from Council until the activity/project has been acquitted.

16.   Incomplete projects and unspent funds

If a project is unable to be completed, the grant recipient must contact the Community Development team for advice as soon as possible on 5422 0216 or via grants@mrsc.vic.gov.au. Any unspent funds are to be returned to Council.

17.   Permits, insurance and authorisations

The applicant is responsible for any regulatory and statutory requirements associated with the project, such as planning and building permits and public liability insurance.

18.   Auditing of funded projects

Council reserves the right to undertake a spot financial and programmatic audit of a funded project. This may include a detailed examination of all financial records pertaining to the project.

19.   Privacy

The collection and handling of personal information is in accordance with Council's Privacy Policy, which is displayed on Council's website and available for inspection at, or collection from, Council's customer service centres.

Contact officers

Contact	Title	Phone
Arts and Culture		
Simon Clarke	Coordinator Arts and Culture	03 5422 0319
Terry Moore	Cultural Development Officer *Community Halls liaison*	03 5422 0383
Community Development		
Julius Peiker	Coordinator Community Development	03 5422 0286
Melissa Telford	Community Projects Officer	03 5422 0216
Maria Loriente	Community Partnerships Officer	0472 902 287
Economic Development and Visitor Economy		
Alexis Owen	Business Liaison Officer	03 5421 9654
Environment		
Krista Patterson-Majoor	Coordinator Environment	03 5421 9503
Facility Projects		
Stuart Gunnell	Acting Coordinator Facility Projects	03 5421 9633 or 0417 168 142
Sport and Recreation		
Steve Williams	Recreation Development Officer	0437 843 031

If you are unable to reach one of the above contacts in relation to your application, please call Customer Service on 03 5422 0333.