



Greater
Shepparton
CITY COUNCIL

Community Matching Grants Program

2026/27 GUIDELINES

About this grant program

Greater Shepparton City Council is offering funding for projects and events which build or strengthen Greater Shepparton communities through its Community Matching Grant Program.

The intention of the funding is to facilitate projects which achieve some or all of the following objectives:

- build new social connections and partnerships within communities, or reinforce those that already exist
- encourage participation in community activities and organisations
- enable community members to acquire or develop a new skill
- create, renew or revitalise places and spaces within the community.

Council aims to work in partnership with groups to support their project. Applicants under the Community Matching Grant Program are required to match the grant amount requested by providing a financial or in-kind contribution (please see below for further details).

For Round 1 of the 2026/2027 financial year, there is a total funding pool of **\$50,000.00**. Individual grants of **up to \$5,000.00** are available for successful applicants to conduct activities during the timeframes below.

Council strongly advises you to make contact with the Community Wellbeing department prior to making an application to discuss your proposed activity and eligibility. You can contact Council's Community Development Officer via telephone on (03) 5832 9472 or via email communityadmin@shepparton.vic.gov.au

Expected timing for this grant program

Applications open: Monday 6 July 2026 at 9.00am
Applications close: Monday 10 August 2026 at 5.00pm
Notification of outcome: 30 September 2026

Activity timeframes: Activity cannot start until after 1 October 2026
Activity must be completed by 31 October 2027

Late applications and handwritten applications will **not** be accepted

How to apply

Applications for this grant program must be submitted via Greater Shepparton City Council's SmartyGrants online portal. You can access this portal via the following link: <https://greatershepparton.smartygrants.com.au/>

Who can and can't apply?

All applicants' activities must be based in Greater Shepparton.

APPLICANT TYPE	YES	NO
Not-for-profits, incorporated bodies, co-operatives or associations	X	
Registered charitable organisations (refer to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission)	X	
Unincorporated bodies with an auspice	X	
Schools and learning institutions – only for activities that are not curriculum based and the primary benefit is for the wider community	X	
Applicants that have received funding from this grant in the current financial year that are applying for more than one activity		X
Funding for project studies, business cases, or feasibility studies		X
Individual / Sole Traders without an ABN or entity type with Australian Business Register		X
For profits, commercial entities, registered businesses		X
Applicants with outstanding acquittals for grant funding from Greater Shepparton City Council (including auspices)		X
Applicants with outstanding debts or arrears to Greater Shepparton City Council or in legal proceedings with Council		X
An organisation involved in legal proceedings relating to winding up its operations or experiencing insolvency or bankruptcy (this includes any legal bankruptcy – related actions against the organisations directors or officers).		X

What if you are NOT incorporated?

If you are a not-for-profit organisation, you can still make an application by using an auspice. An auspice is an organisation that meets our eligibility criteria and agrees to support your application.

If you're successful, the auspice receives the grant money on your behalf so you can undertake the project work.

If you intend to make an application using an auspice you must obtain written approval from your proposed auspice before you submit your application and attach this to your application form.

Insurance

Applicants must have Public Liability Insurance with a minimum amount of \$20 million. The Certificate of Currency for this insurance will be required as part of the application process.

Applicants using an auspice should include a certificate from the auspice organisation. A policy statement or receipt of payment is not an acceptable substitute for the certificate of currency.

Permits and approvals

Activities may require permits and approvals.

These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying for the grant, however obtaining these approvals will be a condition of the funding.

You must also be able to demonstrate that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals in your application.

What if my activity does not proceed?

If you are successful in obtaining a grant and your activity does not proceed, you must contact the Community Wellbeing department on the details provided below in a timely manner to discuss the circumstances of the activity not proceeding and organise returning the grant funds provided.

Failure to notify Greater Shepparton City Council of your activity not proceeding will deem future applications for all grants available ineligible.

Linkages to the Council Plan 2025–2029

This grant program supports priorities in the Council Plan 2025–2029:

- Economy: Cultural & Community Identity
- Livability:
 - Community Safety & Social Justice
 - Access, Inclusion & Universal Design
 - Community Leadership & Volunteering
 - Health, wellbeing & Social Connection
 - Reconciliation
 - Children, Youth & families,
 - Arts, Culture & Lifelong Learning
 - Emergency management & Resilience

*** Infrastructure**

Sport, Recreation & Open Space
Energy Efficiency & Climate Resilience
Circular Economy & Waste Management

Applicants are encouraged to consider these priorities, though explicit alignment is not required. Alignment will be considered during assessment.

Funded activities will:

- occur in Greater Shepparton between the timeframes stated above
- provide an inclusive, safe and accessible outcome for the community of Greater Shepparton
- demonstrate effective partnerships and show broad community support i.e. with other groups and/or across interest groups
- deliver value for money and show sustainability beyond Council's funding
- be well developed and have reasonable indicators of success for the outcomes expected
- acknowledge Greater Shepparton City Council as sponsors of the project receiving funding.
- invite relevant Council Officers and/or Councillors to any event, launch, or celebration of the funded project.

The following activities will NOT be funded:

- events and activities not held within the activity timeframes
- events and activities held outside the Greater Shepparton municipality
- applications received after the closing date
- applicants who have previously been funded by Council and have failed to comply with the financial, project monitoring and/or reporting requirements
- projects that are clearly a duplication of an existing service.
- fundraising activities
- ongoing project expenses, or for projects which have already commenced, or projects that have been completed.
- projects and activities that are discriminatory in any way or contravene any legislation.

Matched funding

Council aims to work in partnership with groups to support their project. Applicants are required to provide a matching contribution equivalent to the grant amount requested (50/50 or 1:1)

This funding match must include a **financial** contribution, although to meet the 1:1 matching component, “in-kind” contributions can be included. An in-kind contribution is part of the project that would normally be paid for but is given to the project at no cost, such as donated goods, services, or labour that would typically incur costs.

While a 1:1 funding match is preferred and will be assessed with higher regard, applications with lower matching contributions will still be considered through factors such as the value of the project to the community, the capacity of the group to deliver, available grant funds, and the sustainability of the project.

Example funding scenario:

Council will prioritise projects with a 1:1 matching component, however, for example, if an application requests \$5,000 from Council, although can only match this with \$3,000, Council will consider the projects Community benefit, readiness and sustainability.

Budget

The budget must include details on all income (all sources of funding which will be used to deliver the project, including the requested amount from this grant) and all expenditure (costs involved in the project). Income and expenditure must be equal. Following is an example of the budget table within the application form.

Please provide a copy of quotes with your application for expenses exceeding \$1,000.

Income	\$	Expenditure	\$
Council Event Grant	\$2,000.00	Face Painting	\$80.00
Market Stall	\$600.00	Community group payments	\$500.00
Cars and Public Entry	\$1,000.00	Bar	\$560.00
Bar	\$800.00	Canteen and BBQ	\$1,750.00
Canteen and BBQ	\$2,000.00	Jumping Castle	\$250.00
	\$	Musicians	\$500.00
	\$	Music equipment hire	\$250.00
	\$	Prizes for Colouring Competition	\$60.00
	\$	Prizes for Car Competition	\$550.00
	\$	Marque Hire	\$300.00
	\$	Craft Table	\$100.00
	\$	Flyers Printing	\$700.00
	\$	Folding of Flyers and distribution	\$100.00
	\$	Advertisement	\$700.00
	\$6,400.00		\$6,400.00

It is also necessary to detail the in-kind contributions, if any, that will be made to the activity in the in-kind section of the application form. Below is an example of this table within the application form.

If you have volunteers working on the project, include their contribution at the following values:

- \$25 per hour for unskilled labour
- \$40 per hour for qualified trades person
- \$65 per hour for machinery hire, including driver

In-Kind

Please include details of any contributions to the project that you would normally pay for, but are being received at no cost to the project.

If you have volunteers working on the project, include their contribution valued at:

- \$25 per hour for unskilled labour
- \$40 per hour qualified trades person
- \$65 per hour machinery hire including driver

Person or organisation*	Task	Hours/Rate	Amount In-Kind*
Committee	Labour set up and remove display	10 hrs/\$25	\$250
Recreation Reserve	Loan of tables and chairs		\$100
Joe Blough	Sound equipment and tech support	4 hrs/\$40	\$160
Mary's Newsagents	Photo copy flyers		\$100
			Total* \$610

[Add Row](#)

If your organisation is registered for GST, the budget should be filled in **exclusive of GST**. If your organisation is not registered for GST, you should fill in the budget **inclusive of GST**. Please refer to the www.ato.gov.au website for further details.

How will applications be assessed?

All applications received will go through the following assessment process:

- Pre-eligibility checks against criteria for the funding of this program
- Panel Assessment with broad representation from Council Departments
- Final review and approval under delegation of the Department Director

The Assessment Panel will consider the following:

- Does the activity meet the objectives of the program
- Does the activity have a broad community benefit
- Is the activity well planned and feasible within the timeframes provided and show sustainability beyond Council's funding
- Evidence that the activity will be well supported by the community
- Evidence that the activity will be inclusive and accessible for the whole community
- The matching component of the application
- Does the intended activity align with the following strategic documents:
 - Greater Shepparton City Councils Plan 2025 - 2029
 - Other Master Plan or other Council Strategy.

The Council Plan and other Strategies can be accessed via www.greatershepparton.com.au

Eligibility assessment stage

This stage involves checking the submitted application against all mandatory assessment criteria as outlined in the relevant categories and includes the following:

- The applicant is an eligible organisation or entity and/or has secured an auspice arrangement.
- A current Certificate of Currency for \$20M public liability insurance is attached to the application.
- Quotations for all eligible expenditure items valued at \$1,000 or above have been provided.
- The proposed activity will take place within the Greater Shepparton municipality and within the specified timeframes.
- The budget table has been completed, with income and expenditure balanced.
- The applicant has no outstanding acquittals at the time of submission.
- The applicant meets the minimum objectives of the Community Matching Grant and has appropriately matched their requested funding amount.

Applications that do not meet all mandatory requirements outlined above will not progress to the next stage of the assessment process.

Panel assessment stage

At this stage, applications are reviewed by an assessment panel comprising of representatives from relevant Council departments.

In addition to the assessment criteria outlined below, the panel will consider the following:

- Whether the activity aligns with the objectives of the program stream.
- The extent to which the activity demonstrates broad community support and delivers community benefit.
- Whether the activity is well-planned and feasible within the specified timeframes.
- Evidence that the activity will be inclusive and accessible to the whole community.
- If the matched requirement has been appropriately fulfilled.
- Alignment of the proposed activity with strategic documents such as the Council Plan, master plans, or other Council strategies.

These documents can be accessed at www.greatershepparton.com.au.

Assessment criteria

Weighting	Criteria	Measure/ Key Considerations
20%	<p>Demonstrated need for the project and anticipated community benefit.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has clearly identified the need for the project and what it will achieve • Evidence of how it will benefit the local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength and clarity of the rationale for the project, supported by relevant data, community feedback, or demonstrated gaps in services. • The extent to which the anticipated benefits are significant, inclusive, and aligned with community priorities.
10%	<p>Evidence of effective consultation, networking and partnering.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application includes evidence of consultation and/or partnering with other local organisations and community groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and depth of engagement demonstrated through letters of support, partnership agreements, or documented consultation processes. • Extent to which collaboration strengthens the project's outcomes and ensures community involvement.
30%	<p>Ability to contribute to one or more of the four objectives of the program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build new social connections and partnerships within communities, or reinforce those that already exist • Encourage participation in community activities and organisations • Enable community members to acquire or develop a new skill • Create, renew or revitalise places and spaces within the community <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well the project aligns with one or more of the four objectives of the program • How successfully has the applicant/project identified each objective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the project meaningfully contributes to the stated objectives, supported by a clear plan and anticipated outcomes. • Evidence of practical strategies or activities that will achieve these objectives and deliver measurable community impact.

10%	<p>Project Capacity Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was a Project Plan completed? • Project resources allocated • Is the project realistic? • Evaluation method included • Does the application link to the Council Plan 2025-2029 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the capability to successfully deliver the project, supported by clear planning, resource allocation, and evaluation strategies. • Linkage to the relevant Council Plan strategic objectives
10%	<p>Evidence of inclusiveness to all members of the community</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the event/activity open to the public • Consideration taken in relation to cultural diversity • Access and inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which the project demonstrates inclusivity, ensuring participation opportunities for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and cultures. • Evidence of practical strategies to remove barriers and promote equitable access for the whole community.
20%	<p>Extent to which the budget is realistic and provides a matching component</p> <p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the budget add up • Amount of cash contribution provided • Amount of in-kind contribution provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which the budget is comprehensive, realistic, and demonstrates financial commitment through cash or in-kind contributions. • Evidence that the matching component strengthens project viability and aligns with funding requirements.

Notification of outcome

All applicants will be notified as to the outcome of their application via the email address provided in the application. Please refer to the timetable on page 2 to confirm the date we aim to notify you of the outcome of your application. Multiple applications from one Organisation will not be funded under this program.

Grant amounts offered to successful applicants are based on outcomes determined during the assessment process and are in line with the program budget. Applicants maybe offered partial funding to run a reduced or modified project.

If your application is successful

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Enter into a funding agreement and adhere to the conditions of the agreement.
- Spend the grant money in accordance with the conditions stated in the funding agreement and provided for in the application.
- Return any unspent funds at the completion of the activity, or at the end of the agreement unless prior written approval has been obtained to expend the funds in another way.
- Complete in full detail an acquittal form to the satisfaction of Council.

If your application is NOT successful

If your application is not successful you will be notified in writing and provided with an opportunity to discuss the outcome with the Program Coordinator and Grants Coordinator.

In some cases, the assessment panel may consider your application more suited to one of Council's other grant programs. If your application is more aligned with another funding program, Council will contact you and let you know.

If an application is made to an alternative funding stream within Council, only one funding application may be considered per financial year for the same activity.

If there are funds remaining in the grant pool, Council may choose to offer a second round of funding. Whilst unsuccessful applicants are eligible to reapply, we would recommend revising the application prior to ensure it fits the objectives of the program and assessment criteria before doing so.

Diversity and Inclusion

Council acknowledges, celebrates and supports the diversity of the Greater Shepparton community, as a tool to ensure activities and programs are inclusive of all. It is therefore important applicants demonstrate a range of diversity strategies within their application.

Below are examples of ways in which you may demonstrate inclusion of all in your program/activities. Please note, these are examples ONLY and we encourage your group to develop a range of inclusion practices unique to your application.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- migrant and refugee communities
- people with a disability
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer, Asexual communities (LGBTIQA+)
- Women, young people and seniors
- provision of accessible facilities such as parking, toilets, ramp access and accessible seating
- gender inclusion
- information available in accessible formats, such as large print, alternative language, plain English, the use of interpreters, such as Auslan for people who are Deaf

- availability of a broad range of foods
- ensuring all published materials avoids acronyms and jargon
- take religious and cultural occasions into consideration when planning events.

Council Officers are available to support you with identifying, capturing and reflecting diversity within your application.

Please contact Customer Service on (03) 5832 9700 and ask to speak to a member of the Community Wellbeing department. Alternatively, you can make contact via council@shepparton.vic.gov.au.

Gender equality

Council has a duty to promote gender equality through the Gender Equality Act 2020.

Applicants of Council's grant programs are encouraged to demonstrate evidence of how their organisation considers and promotes gender equality within their policies, programs and services.

Sustainability and environment

Applicants of Council's grant programs are encouraged to consider sustainability outcomes and the impact of their project on carbon emissions and minimise carbon emissions. Examples could include using recycled products, reducing or eliminating waste, using local products or using renewable energy.

Applications that support communities to thrive under a changing climate will be highly regarded.

You are encouraged to visit the Greater Shepparton City Council website for more information on Council's commitment to the environment:

<https://greatershepparton.com.au/animals-environment-and-waste/environment>

Advertising and promotion

All media, promotional and social media assets will require approval from Council's Communications and Engagement department prior to distribution. Ensure all promotional materials are submitted for approval at least three weeks prior to the event.

This will include providing logo recognition of Greater Shepparton City Council on all your promotional material relating to the event including, but not limited to posters, apparel, event programs and any other reasonably requested intellectual property.

To access the current branding guidelines, please contact the Community Development Officer on (03) 5832 9472.

Council also requires the opportunity to provide signage to be displayed at high profile locations at the event. This could include fence banners and/or tear drop flags. Event organisers will be responsible for the collection of items from Council, installation at the

event and then return to Council.

Event organisers are strongly encouraged to promote their events on Council's calendar of events page and Shepparton & Goulburn Valley. This can be completed via the following links:

<https://greater-shepparton.com.au/whats-happening/suggest-event> and
<https://sheppandgv.com.au/events/promote-your-event>

Final acquittal

You will be required to report back to Council when your project is completed. The Acquittal process is important because it enables Council to continuously evaluate the success of the program.

You must report back to Council within the timeframe provided in your funding agreement. The financial acquittal is an income and expenditure statement for the grant confirming that funding has been spent on the activity in accordance with the funding agreement.

Council officers may request meetings with you to check the progress or undertake an independent audit of the records of the applicant as they relate directly to the grant.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to maintain accurate financial records for the grant and make them available in the event of an audit by the Council into the use of the grant.

An organisation which fails to submit their acquittal documents is deemed ineligible to apply or any future funding from Council, until their acquittal is completed and approved by Council.

Contact Details

Greater Shepparton City Council
Community Wellbeing Department
Phone: (03) 5832 9472
[Email: communityadmin@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:communityadmin@shepparton.vic.gov.au)
Website: greater-shepparton.com.au

