

Community Grants and Partnerships Framework

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# Context

Grant making is changing rapidly, particularly in Victoria where the majority of Australian philanthropic and other charities are historically headquartered. Grant makers are increasingly looking to adopt best practice: becoming more deliberate in their intent; recognising the need to be nimble and harness innovation; streamlining processes to improve responsiveness; and placing ever more value on partnerships and leveraged funds.

Whilst the community grant programs consistently achieve high quality outcomes, Council recognises the need to continuously improve and is well positioned to adopt these emerging best practice principles.

# Purpose

Council is committed to ensuring our communities thrive. Through the Community Grants and Partnerships Framework we provide funding, expertise and support to not-for-profit organisations that deliver outcomes aligned to Council Plans. The Community Grants and Partnerships Framework enables Council to:

* empower our communities to identify and respond to local areas of need
* partner with community organisations to deliver shared outcomes
* activate community participation amongst residents
* build capacity within the community sector

Council encourages our communities to take an active role in identifying and responding to social issues. The Community Grants and Partnerships Framework outlines how Council supports community activities and guides our decision making regarding which initiatives and priorities will receive this support.

To be eligible for funding under the Community Grants and Partnerships Framework, an organisation must be either a:

* not-for-profit organisation (including sporting organisations)
* school
* social enterprise (for Social Innovation Partnerships only)
* body corporate (for community gardens only)

Annual program guidelines for all programs will detail: eligibility criteria, application processes, key dates, assessment criteria, and the assessment process.

# Principles and Practices

The following best practice principles and practices underpin the new Community Grants and Partnerships Framework and inform the priorities for funding:

| **Principle** | **Practice** |
| --- | --- |
| Impact | We take a purposeful and strategic approach to funding projects that deliver meaningful social impact. |
| Inclusion | Inclusion, access and participation are the hallmarks of healthy, thriving, prosperous, self-reliant, inclusive and resilient communities. |
| Connection | We connect meaningfully with our communities and stakeholders and we foster more connected communities for our residents. |
| Partnership | We know we can’t solve tough problems alone. Through collaborative partnerships we work with others to deliver exceptional outcomes. |
| Innovation | Our communities experience constant change. We discover new solutions to changing needs and foster innovation in addressing our social challenges. |
| Transparency | We are transparent in our funding priorities, processes and decisions. All of which are published on our website. |

# Program streams

The Community Grants and Partnerships Framework supports community connection, social inclusion, and access and participation through the annual Connected Communities grant stream. This stream includes small grants, impact grants, the Community Use of Town Hall Scheme (CUTHS), Aboriginal grants and Inclusive Sport and Recreation grants. In order to improve community responsiveness and facilitate timely impact, this grant program balances access to low-scale community funding and stream-lined administrative processes, with clearer grant objectives and a focus on local residents.

The Social Innovation Partnerships program will direct funding to tackle Council’s big social issues. Funding is provided for two years to support innovative projects and social enterprises that address Council’s priority focus areas. Eligibility to apply for a second round of two funding will be limited to projects that demonstrate outcomes and incorporate a growth or replication strategy. These measures will facilitate the piloting of well-developed program ideas and improve access to substantive Council support for more groups.

Neighbourhood Houses partner with Council to deliver critical lifelong learning, community development and social capital outcomes across the municipality. Neighbourhood Houses are a focal point for communities and are sophisticated operations, however funding streams available often do not consider the fixed costs of program delivery. Community Funding Agreements recognise the importance of Council’s long term collaboration with our local Neighbourhood Houses and our ongoing commitment to their success.

The Community Grants and Partnerships Framework consolidates Council’s commitment to Partnerships with and the Professional Development of stakeholders investing in our communities, including corporate and philanthropic Melbourne. Council’s capacity building initiatives go beyond program funding and aim to build capability across the sector by being responsive and flexible to need. By showcasing what works and acting as an interlocker, Council is uniquely positioned to leverage funds and broker connection between social issues, community need, groups capable of responding, and those with means to provide support.

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# Community Grants and Partnerships Programs

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| Connected Communities GrantsGrants to support community connection, social inclusion, access and participation. |
| **Community grants and Partnerships Program** | **Value** | **Annual Budget (2018/19)** | **Application Round** | **Focus area** |
| Connected Communities Small Grants(Includes Residents Groups Operational Funding)Connected Communities Impact Grants | Up to $1550$1551 to $20,000 | $500,000 | Annual | Funding may prioritise, but is not limited to supporting vulnerable or high need communities.Streamlined processes promote responsiveness and reduce the administrative burden on small groups focussed on participation.Improved accountability measures ensure substantive funding delivers outcomes and informs the work of Council and our partners. |
| Community Use of Town Hall Scheme (CUTHS) | Up to $7000 | $300,000 | Monthly | Grants to enable community groups affordable access to civic spaces. |
| Aboriginal Melbourne Grants | Up to $10,000 | $40,000 | Monthly | Grants to support and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to engage, connect and take local action within City of Melbourne. |
| Inclusive Sport and Recreation GrantsCategory 1: Inclusion Support Grants (ISG)Category 2: Individual Participation Grants (IPG) | ISG up to $500 IPG:up to $300 individual for national competition; up to $500 per team for national competition up to $500 individual for international competition; up to $700 per team for international competition. | $20,000 | Quarterly | Support for children and young people who reside in the City of Melbourne to participate in community sport (ISG) and for promising individuals to achieve their sporting goals (IPG). |

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| Social Innovation PartnershipsProject partnerships to tackle Melbourne’s social priorities through innovation grants and social enterprise. |
| **Community grants and Partnerships Program** | **Value** | **Annual Budget (2018/19)** | **Application Round** | **Focus area** |
| **Round 1:** 2018/19 and 2019/20**Round 2:** 2020/21 and 2021/22 | $15,000 to $80,000 | $600,000 | 2 years | Project funding to tackle City of Melbourne’s social priorities and create sustained social change.Includes grants to support social enterprises build their capability and improve their business models.Annual guidelines will specify social priority areas. |

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| Community Funding AgreementsCollaborative partnerships with neighbourhood houses to deliver community development outcomes for our communities. |
| **Community grants and Partnerships Program** | **Value** | **Annual Budget (2018/19)** | **Application Round** | **Focus area** |
| Neighbourhood Houses | $100,000 | $400,000 | 4 years | Long term collaborative partnerships with Neighbourhood Houses to support the delivery of community development outcomes for our communities. |

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| Partnership & Professional DevelopmentProviding community organisations with opportunities to develop skills and knowledge to enhance community outcomes  |
| **Program** | **Value** | **Annual Budget (2018/19)** | **Application Round** | **Focus area** |
| Corporate and Philanthropic Melbourne Partnerships |  |  |  | Brokering funding, expertise and relationships across sectors to enhance social outcomes for the City of Melbourne. |
| Community Education & Professional Development | Upon application | $35,000 | Monthly | Support for community groups to build organisational capacity through workshops or sector conferences. |
| City of Melbourne Networking and Learning events |  | $5000 | Annual | City of Melbourne will host an annual cross-sector networking and learning event, showcasing inspiring case studies and guest speakers, possibly with an award. |

# What has changed?

The table below outlines the key changes between the Community Funding Policy 2013-2017 and the Community Grants and Partnerships Framework 2018.

| **Program** | **Previous**Community Funding Policy 2013-17 | **Replacement**Community Grants and Partnerships Framework | **Detail of proposed changes** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Annual grants | Funding categories1. Up to $3,000
2. $3001 - $10,000
3. $10,001 - $20,000
 | Connected Communities Small Grants (up to $1,550)Connected Communities Impact Grants ($1,551 - $20,000) | * The re-brand of Annual Grants to a more outcome-focused approach that funds community led activities that increase community connection, social inclusion and participation.
* Connected Communities Small Grants will move to a simpler, lower resource model with only a basic application and reporting structure. They will not be externally assessed but be assessed against transparent criteria. This program includes Residents Groups operational funding and will pick up Seniors Groups activities and other small projects.
* Connected Communities Impact Grants will run the same as the current Annual Grants.
 |
| Community Use of Town Halls | Venues:* Melbourne Town Hall
* Meat Market

Sponsorship up to $6000 org/year | Venues:* Melbourne Town Hall
* Meat Market
* Kensington Town Hall

Sponsorship up to $7000 org/year | * Inclusion of Kensington Town Hall to enhance utilisation of facility and provide a more affordable offering for small community groups.
* Enhanced transparency of CUTHS through clearer assessment criteria provided online; and the online publishing of successful applications.
* Increased annual cap by $1000 to cover costs associated with new compulsory security requirements for events held in the Melbourne Town Hall.
 |
| Aboriginal Melbourne grants | Grants up to $10,000 processed monthly via Community Grants Briefing paper. | Grants up to $10,000 processed monthly via Community Grants Briefing Paper.  | No change to Aboriginal Melbourne grants. |
| Sports and Recreation Grants | Individual Athlete GrantsFunding up to $2000Monthly rounds | **Inclusive Sport and Recreation Grants**Category 1: Inclusive Support Grants (up to $500)Category 2: Individual Participation Grants:* up to $300 individual/national
* up to $500 team/national
* up to $500 individual/international
* up to $700 team/international

Quarterly rounds | * Increased focus on providing assistance to financially disadvantaged young people to engage with sport. Applicants to the Inclusion Support Grants must hold a Health Care Card.
* To be eligible, applicants in both categories need to be a resident of the City of Melbourne.
 |
| Long Term Funding | Long Term FundingMinimum $20,000No maximum amount4 years | Social Innovation PartnershipsFunding from $15,000 to $80,000)2 years discrete project funding Option to re-apply for second round only if aligned to a growth or replication strategy.  | * Two year project funding for innovative projects addressing City of Melbourne’s social priorities and create sustained social change.
* The Guidelines will specify social priority areas and may include, but are not limited to: gender equality and preventing violence against women and children; African Australian youth engagement; pathways out of homelessness; and embracing diversity within our communities.
* Social enterprises are also eligible to apply for Social Innovation Partnerships.
 |
| Strategic Partnerships | Non-competitive 4 year funding in accordance with Neighbourhood House Policy 2013.* North Melbourne Language and Learning $83,984
* Kensington Neighborhood House $87,573
* Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre $80,181
* The Centre $100,758
 | Community Funding Agreements (Neighbourhood Houses)4 years funding conditional on achieving annual shared and agreed community development outcomes.Funding of $100,000 each | * Retirement of stand-alone Neighbourhood House Policy 2013; funding to be managed within the community Grants and Partnerships Framework.
* Equal funding for all four Neighbourhood Houses.
* The focus of the funding will shift from program funding to the delivery of agreed and shared community development outcomes.
 |
| Community Capacity Building Program | City of Melbourne managed delivery of a series of capacity building workshops for community groups. | Partnership and Professional Development | * Address low engagement in workshop offering through community groups applying for financial support to attend sector conferences or workshops.
* Develop relationships across corporate and philanthropic Melbourne to increase engagement with, and leverage of, our programs and create more impact for our communities.
* City of Melbourne to host an annual cross-sector learning and networking event.
 |
| Governance(Management and monitoring of the community grants) | Grant Manager role under-utilised and inconsistent in level of support provided to grant recipients | Increase formalisation and effectiveness of Grant Manager role | Formalise the Grant Manager role and provide guidelines, training and forums to increase effectiveness of role. |

# Community Consultation

**Participate Melbourne community feedback – key themes**

A key part of the consultation process for developing the new Community Grants and Partnership Framework was to better understand community expectations of our grant programs. A Participate Melbourne survey was open from 9 - 22 October 2017. The survey attracted 69 public submissions. Emails were sent to community stakeholder groups and previous grant applicants to alert them to the survey. The survey comprised five questions designed to ascertain community expectations and perceptions of City of Melbourne’s community grant programs.

Responses have been collated into key themes, where applicable, and are summarised here under each question.

**Q1. Which CoM community grant programs are you aware of?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Annual Community Grants | 52 | 75% |
| Long Term Funding | 14 | 20% |
| Aboriginal Grants | 10 | 14% |
| CUTHS | 31 | 45% |
| Individual Athletes Grants | 3 | 4% |
| None of the above | 5 | 7% |

**Q2: Do you think council community grant programs are important for communities?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 69 | 100% |
| No | 0 | 0% |
| Not sure | 0 | 0% |

**Q3: Why grants are important for communities**

|  | Number of mentions |
| --- | --- |
| Vital funding for small community groups/projects that couldn’t exist otherwise | 16 |
| Support community engagement and participation / self-determining action | 12 |
| Create sense of community / connectedness / cohesion / trust / thrive | 6 |
| Access to Council’s assets such as Town Halls / support for events | 6 |
| Wellbeing of seniors | 5 |
| Grants connect Council to communities / Council’s role is to support communities  | 4 |
| Responsiveness to local need / vulnerable and marginalised groups | 3 |
| Cultural inclusion / integrate diverse communities | 2 |

**Q4: Types of projects that should be funded** (The following summarises responses according to best fit descriptions)

| Participation and engagement programs | Social cohesion and inclusion programs |
| --- | --- |
| Programs engaging people with disabilities  | Programs engaging people who are disadvantaged / vulnerable  |
| Cultural diversity projects and events | Health, recreation and wellbeing programs |
| Creativity, craft and performance programs | Volunteer programs |
| Women and youth programs | Social Enterprises |
| Community gardens | Local interest and local history projects |
| Sustainable living and environmental projects | Programs and activities for seniors |
| Children’s programs and toy libraries | Family-based programs |
| Community safety and crime prevention | Cooking, food and meals programs |

**Q5: Types of projects that should not be funded** (The following summarises responses according to best fit descriptions)

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| --- | --- |
| Programs with negative social impacts (gambling, discrimination, gender bias) | Projects that restrict democracy and engagement |
| Political projects | Religious programs |
| Programs that focus on one minority group as these are divisive and not inclusive | Programs lacking social or cultural benefits or lacking a practical outcome |
| Organisations that don’t rely on the funding | Programs that are already being funded |
| Capital works and infrastructure | Programs replicating already available services  |
| Projects that are individual-based or exist for personal gain | Commercial, government, private or profitable projects |
| Programs outside of the municipality  | Controversial or divisive projects |
| Individual athletes grants | Large sporting club programs |