



Community Small Grants

Guidelines



Introduction

The Southern Midlands Council's Community Small Grants program has been established to support projects, programs and activities developed for the benefit of the residents of the Southern Midlands local government area.

The Community Small Grants provide assistance to community groups to, provide meaningful programs, improve safety, undertake minor capital works, facilitate small seminars, conferences and forums or purchase equipment.

The Southern Midlands Council recognises the immense community benefit provided to our residents and visitors by local community organisations through the provision of opportunity for involvement in activities in Southern Midlands.

The Community Small Grants Program is one method of Southern Midlands Council supporting and assisting local organisations in providing additional opportunities for the Southern Midlands community.

Purpose

To provide financial assistance in a regulated, transparent and equitable way to community groups catering for, and responding to, the needs of the residents and visitors to Southern Midlands.

The program provides assistance to organisations to conduct a wide range of activities. The following broad categories are designed to give applicants an idea as to the types of projects which Council seeks to support through this program:

- **Community Capacity Building**
Projects which aim to increase community participation & access to meaningful information, services & facilities while strengthening community and social well-being.
- **Minor Capital Works**
Projects which enhance our community facilities by aiding in the development of new facilities or improvements to any existing Community/Council owned facility. It will provide assistance for projects such as fencing, roofing, ground lighting, shade sails, building refurbishments, paving, etc.
- **Safety/Accessibility Upgrades/Equipment**
Projects that increase the capacity of local groups and clubs to cater for the needs of the community. These developments can be in the form of a construction project or the purchase of equipment.

Frequency

Council's grant program is currently held on an annual basis.

Important Dates:

The current round for assistance **opens at 8.30am on Monday 22nd June 2026** and **closes on Tuesday 4th August 2026 at 4:00pm**. Applications can be lodged at either the Oatlands or Kempton Office, or lodged electronically at mail@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au

Projects are able to start from Monday 31st August 2026 - full acquittal is required by 30th June 2027.

Level of Funding Available

An organisation can apply for assistance up to a maximum of \$3,000 per round per organisation - no minimum grant amount applies.

Eligibility

Financial Assistance WILL be considered for:

- Any not for profit community group or 'voluntary Community association' that is legally constituted as an incorporated body or if not legally constituted, under the auspice* of an incorporated body.

***What is auspicing?**

To 'auspice' means to provide support, sponsorship or guidance to a person or organisation.

The group or person requiring support is known as the 'auspicee' and the entity (usually an incorporated organisation) that auspices the group or person is known as the 'auspicator'.

When using an auspice arrangement, the relationship is often described as one where the auspicee will be carrying out the project 'under the auspices of' the incorporated organisation – the auspicator. It's the auspicator that receives the project funding and enters into relevant agreements for the auspicee.

An auspicing arrangement is a bit like a sub-contracting arrangement - the auspicator enters into an agreement, and then sub-contracts their obligations under the agreement to the auspicee. However, the auspicator will typically retain the obligations for delivery of the project for which the funds are being provided.

In practice, the auspicee would normally approach the auspicator first, and the auspicator may even charge a fee for making the relevant arrangements on behalf of the auspicee.

An auspice agreement entered into by the auspicator and the auspicee is a legally binding agreement such as a contract. It sets out the legal obligations regarding the roles and funding relations between the auspicator and auspicee.

- The group or organisation is located in the Southern Midlands municipal area or is proposing an activity or project which will take place in the Southern Midlands municipal area, for the benefit of those who live, visit or conduct business in the municipal area.
- The applicant is able to demonstrate financial viability and competence to deliver the project on time and within budget. This refers to both the applicant and also the auspicing body if an auspicing body is being used for this application.

- The applicant meets Council's insurance requirements. (holds a current Public Liability Insurance policy of either \$M10 or \$M20)
- Education providers are able to apply on the condition that the project/activity is open to all residents and has a broad community benefit.
- For equipment grants, applicants are required to contribute at least 50% towards the cost of equipment for items considered 'consumables' eg cricket bats / balls, footballs etc. Items of a longer term nature eg line marking machines, training equipment and the like would be eligible for up to 100% funding.

The following are important areas to address

- Any application which relates to works or projects on property not under the applicants direct ownership (land tenure) or control, must provide a letter of authorisation and approval for said works / projects from the land owner along with the grant application.
- In the case of applications from Schools in the district, where the facilities will be used by Community and school students alike, the application requires written commitment from the Department of Education, Children & Young People (DECYP) / Principal that the facilities (or improvements) will be accessible by the public and are appropriate for those purposes.
- The Applicant need not necessarily be based within the Southern Midlands area, but the service or activity must be must be provided within the Southern Midlands area., for the benefit of Southern Midlands residents.

Financial Assistance WILL NOT be able to be provided for:

- Activities by a private person that is not a formal representative of a *bone fide* organisation.
- Activities of For-Profit organisations.
- Applicant organisations who have previously failed to acquit Council assisted projects in line with the agreed terms.
- Projects that have previously received funding from this grant program.
- Working Capital or straight donation purposes.
- Programs/projects by local schools/education providers that are exclusive to student's core school curriculum with no availability to the general public.
- Retrospective request for a project already fully or partially completed

- Community Organisations who already receive Council funds to undertake a specific activity for which funding is being sought or community organisations wanting to do a specific activity that is already funded by Council.
- Facilities where little or no public access is available.
- Travel to sporting competitions or conferences for individual or community groups.
- Projects / programs that are not based in or focused on Southern Midlands residents

It should be noted that meeting the eligibility criteria is not a guarantee of funding.

The following conditions apply to all financial assistance allocated through the program

Project Management

Funds will only be spent on the project for which funds were applied and as approved by the Southern Midlands Council.

Successful applicants must finalise and acquit the project within the approved time frame and approved budget as per application form.

Any variation of this agreement, such as an extension of the project completion date, shall only be made in writing between the parties. Any request for extension of time must be received in writing prior to the relevant original acquittal completion date.

Successful applicants are required to maintain a copy of all receipts of project expenditure for the term of the grant program, including copies of any advertising, media, newsletters, etc. Council will require copies of expenditure invoices / receipts as part of its acquittal procedure.

If relevant, applicants must obtain and comply with all applicable Council Permit Regulations for example Planning, and/or Building Permit – including road closures, outdoor advertising and any health and safety programs (please ensure that costs for these permits, if required, are included in your application). Please ensure that you have allowed sufficient timeline for these approvals to be obtained and the project to be completed in a timely manner.

The Council strongly encourages that all equipment acquired through the program be insured against theft and fire or covered under your organisation's insurance policy.

Financial

Should a group not be able to fulfill the grant conditions as indicated on the application form or substantial savings have been made, any unspent funds shall be returned to the Southern Midlands Council. In special circumstances, surplus funds from savings made may be authorised for redirection to fund similar projects/ activities. Pre-approval in writing should be sought from Council prior to any additional funds being expended. Should the project exceed the amount estimated, groups will be required to meet the additional costs.

Promotion

The Council requests that successful applicants actively promote the support of the Southern Midlands Council. This may include (but not limited to) any of the following:

- Inclusion of the Southern Midlands Council logo in press advertising or any promotional material.
- Acknowledgement of the Southern Midlands Council in radio or television advertising, award presentation, etc.
- Opportunities for the Mayor or delegate to participate in any public relations activities, launches, or proceedings associated with the project. Sufficient notice should be given in the form of an official letter of invite addressed to the General Manager.
 - Attendance at any Council arranged event celebrating the provision of the grant funding, in particular providing a representative at Council's Australia Day ceremony.
 - Prominently displaying any certificates or plaques associated with the Council's provision of any grant funding

A version of Council's Logo is available and will be provided on request. The logo can only be used for a specific purpose to which it was requested and must be replicated in its existing form and not altered in any way.

If use of the Council logo is not practicable, the following wording should be incorporated in any material related to the funded project: *"Proudly supported by the Southern Midlands Council"*.

Evaluation / Acquittal Process

Once the project or equipment purchase has been completed, grant recipients must submit an evaluation and provide copies of any advertising, newsletters and media releases relating to the funded project. An evaluation form will be provided with the grant approval letter.

Evidence of expenditure of funds is required to accompany the evaluation. It is preferred that the evaluation / acquittal information be forwarded as soon as the project or purchase is complete ie not left until the final acquittal date

Unsatisfactory acquittal of the grant may lead to withdrawal of the grant approval and subsequent request for return of the allocated funding. Inability to apply for future grant funding may also apply in this circumstance. If you are having difficulties completing the acquittal obligations, please contact Council's grant staff to discuss possible solutions.

Project Priority Criteria

Due to the limited amount of funds available, priority will be given to projects that:

1. Demonstrate considerable benefit to the Southern Midlands community;
2. Raise the awareness of or access to a service, program, group or issue or maximize the participation or use of a facility;
3. Demonstrate coordination with other groups in the community;
4. Address local issues by attempting to meet a community need or gap;
5. Show evidence of community support for the project;
6. Enhance the lifestyle options for residents and visitors in the community;
7. Demonstrate an ability to manage the project through resource allocation including financial resources, effective planning, clear goals and evaluation processes;
8. Demonstrate the ability to be ongoing [if applicable]
9. Is the project reliant on other funds, if so has other funding been approved (evidence of the other funding is required to accompany the application);
10. Includes the ability for broad Community access – Land Tenure [in the ownership of the applicant or in other ownership]
11. Grant funds applied for as a % of the total amount to complete the project [inc. in kind contribution] i.e. A financial contribution by the applicant/s would be favorably looked upon
12. The Project shall be one that has not received any previous funding for the same purpose by Council or any other funding body (i.e. no 'double dipping')

13. Demonstrate that a Risk Assessment of the project is deemed within acceptable limits
14. Has the Applicant received funding over the last five years (if the organisation has received funding over the last five years through this program, then a weighting will be included to provide a higher ranking for Applicants that have not received funding over the last five years)

Final funding decisions are made on the merit of each application against the stated eligibility criteria, guidelines and an assessment against the aforementioned criteria.

Assessment

The application process and assessment is as follows:

The application forms can be accessed from the Council Chambers, Oatlands and Kempton or via the Council Website: www.southernmidlands.tas.gov.au

Applicants are encouraged to contact Council's Deputy General Manager, Andrew Benson on 62545050 or abenson@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au with any questions relating to completion of the forms or require information in regard to how your project meets the guidelines of the program.

The completed applications, once received within timeline parameters, will be assessed and prioritised by the assessment panel consisting of Council Officers and Councillors. Late Applications that are received after the closing date will not be able to be considered. The Panel's decision is final and no further correspondence shall be entered into.

The Assessment Panel will then make their recommendations to the next scheduled Council Meeting for adoption.

Once adopted by Council the Applicants will be informed of their success or otherwise in gaining funding. Successful applicants will need to supply Council with a tax invoice [on their own letterhead preferably] for the approved grant amount to allow funding of grant monies to be processed **This should be done as soon as the approved grant funding letter has been received.**

Further Information & Assistance

For further information or assistance with your application please contact Council's Deputy General Manager, Andrew Benson on 62545050 or email: abenson@southernmidlands.tas.gov.au



Tips for completing the Application Form

Please use the following as a guide to help you to complete the application form.

Section 1: General Information

1 – 5 As directed by the form, please provide as many details as possible about your group / organisation / club.

Section 2: Details of the Project

Tell us about your project, what you are planning and what you want to achieve.

6. Select the category that your project best fits under.
7. Give your project a name which represents what your project/activity is about.
8. Indicate where the project/activity is to be held or carried out (e.g. Hall, park, or facility).
9. When answering this question think about the following:
 - What does your group want to achieve? (e.g. raise awareness of a service program, group or local issue, improve access to and use of a community facility, maximize participation in your group or a particular activity, improve safety).
 - What steps are you planning to take to make sure your project/activity runs smoothly?
 - Who might you involve; (e.g.) young persons, older persons, people with different abilities, people from different cultural backgrounds).
 - Why is this project/activity important for your group/organisation and the wider community?

10 When answering this question think about the following?

- How things will be different for your group and/or the wider community?
- What might it allow them to do that they can't at present?
- How might it improve access to or participation in activities?
- Who will benefit most from your project/activity?

Keep in mind concepts such as community pride, attracting people to the region and spending money in the community, forming new community links, etc.

11 Tell us how your group identified a need in the community (e.g. community consultation, public meeting, and suggestion box).

- Why do you think the need exists?
- Why is it a problem/issue for your group and/or the wider community?
- Who have you spoken to about this need?
- Why has your group chosen this way to tackle the problem and/or improve the situation?

To answer these questions think about:

- Can you draw on volunteers from within your group or organisation? If yes, what sort of work will they be asked to do or in what way can they help?
- What equipment, machinery, etc. you have?
- What sort of skills or abilities do the individuals involved in the project/activity have? (e.g. financial management, organisational, trade skills – e.g. plumber, builder etc).
- What type of outside assistance will you seek to complete the project or run the event?

For example:

- Increased participation/membership
- A well attended event or activity
- Peoples comments and thoughts (how will you get these?)
- Media coverage (e.g. newspaper, community newsletter)

You may wish to identify the main aims of your project which you can go back and review to see whether you were successful.

Please provide approximate start date, completion date, and a contact person for the project.

Section 3: Budget

Please complete this section as accurately as possible and attach more pages if necessary.

Clearly list the expenses for your project/activity and indicate which expenses you intend to use Council's contribution for.

Please provide details of the confirmed and anticipated sources of funding for your project. If available please provide with your application any documents confirming the availability of these funds (e.g. bank statements, loan details, letters, etc).

Good luck with your Application