

Hepburn

SHIRE COUNCIL

HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENT GRANTS
PROGRAM GUIDELINES
2024/2025



Purpose

Hepburn Shire Council's Local Community Event Grants Program supports community-based events that have a local audience and promote the culturally and artistically vibrant communities of Hepburn Shire.

Council has committed \$22,000 to support community driven events and days of celebration in 2024/2025. Successful applicants will need to demonstrate how their project aligns to the definition of Local Community Events within the [Hepburn Shire Events Strategy 2020-2025](#). Funding is available for projects that can demonstrate benefits to a local audience, the potential to generate intrastate visitation, and/or promote the arts and culture of Hepburn Shire.

Program Principles

Three principles guide the Hepburn Shire Council's Grants Programs, including how Council Officers work with, support, and respect the community and administer the program.

1. Transparency

Transparency is defined as the lack of hidden agendas or conditions and the availability of all information needed in order to collaborate, cooperate and make decisions effectively.

2. Equity

Equitable grant making is being conscious of the barriers and disadvantage being faced by some groups or individuals because of the inequitable distribution of power and resources.

3. Efficiency and Effectiveness

Every grant dollar should produce the maximum benefit for Hepburn Shire communities. Every grant should be both efficient and effective throughout the whole lifecycle of the Community Grant process, from promotion to evaluation.

Program Objectives

The Hepburn Shire Local Community Event Grants Program provides funding annually to community groups and organisations (\$22,000 in 2024/2025). The application period is open year-round to service events operating during various times of the year.

Applicants should note that due to the upcoming Council Election in 2024, the outcome of applications received after 17 September 2024, cannot be announced until after 26 November 2024 due to the requirements of Council's Election Period Policy and the Local Government Act 2020.

Organisations can apply for funding of up to \$2,500 to support the delivery of a new or established event. Events and days of celebration which align with one or more of the Tourism Brand Pillars outlined in the [Hepburn Shire Council Events Strategy](#) are encouraged.

Projects may include:

- Festivals or gatherings that highlight the food and drink production of Hepburn Shire.
- Days of celebration for national or cultural occasions.
- Events that highlight the regions rich and diverse history and culture
- Events or festivals that highlight the region's natural surroundings, mineral springs or accommodation venues.
- Festivals or events that celebrate the Shire's artisans and vibrant artistic culture.
- Events that drive community participation and engagement with local businesses.

Council invites community groups to submit applications for their event. Submissions will be assessed for their impact by a panel consisting of Council officers. Technical support will be provided to guide and refine the scope of potential projects, before and during the application stage. All potential applicants are advised to contact Council's Events Officer at events@hepburn.vic.gov.au or the Grants Specialist at grants@hepburn.vic.gov.au to ensure that the project meets the funding aims.

Non-financial Support

In some circumstances, the Events team can provide non-financial assistance to assist in the delivery of events. Applicants should indicate if they wish to be considered for non-financial support for their event during the application process. Delivery of non-financial support is determined by the Events team and is not contingent upon successful awarding of financial support through the grants program. Contact events team to discuss further.

Strategic Alignment

The Local Community Event Grants Program aligns with the principles and objectives outlined in the [Council Plan and Vision 2022-25](#) and the [Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2022-25](#) and directly aligns with the Events Framework outlined in the [Hepburn Shire Council Events Strategy 2020-25](#).

The applicant will need to identify how their project aligns with the Events Framework and meets the definition of Local Community Event as described within the strategy.

Who Can Apply?

Local **not-for-profit** and community groups in the Hepburn Shire, which are incorporated with an ABN, or have an auspicing agent, are encouraged to apply.

Application Process

1. It is strongly encouraged that all applicants contact Council's Grants Specialist or Events Officer to discuss their project, the application requirements and the online application process.
2. Applicants deemed eligible will be invited to apply by the Events Officer.
3. Visit: www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/residents/support/grants for more information.

Applications not meeting the eligibility guidelines will not be invited to apply.

Key Dates

Applications open	1 August 2024
Applications close	1 June 2025
Assessment Panel convenes	Within 4 weeks of submission
Applicants notified of assessment outcomes	Within 6 weeks of submission
COUNCIL ELECTION PERIOD: For applications received during Council Election Period (17 September 2024 – 27 November 2024).	Notification of assessment outcomes will occur after 27 November 2024 at conclusion of Caretaker Period and appointment of elected Councillors.
All projects completed and acquitted	Events must be completed with 12 months of signing the funding agreement and must be acquitted within 3-months of the conclusion of the funded event

Eligible Projects for All Categories

To be eligible for assessment events/applicants must:

- Have read and understood the Events Strategy and the Local Community Event Grant Program Guidelines.
- Meet the definition of Local Community Event outlined in the Events Strategy.
- Be a not-for-profit¹ community group

- Complete their event, within 12-months of signing the funding agreement
- Complete the event Acquittal within 3 months of the completion of the event.
- Be conducted solely within Hepburn Shire to the benefit of its residents.
- Have an organisation that is a legal entity with an Australian Business Number (ABN). For example, an incorporated body, co-op, trust, or, be auspiced by a suitable group.²
- Have all permits, permissions and approvals for the project.³
- Have valid public liability insurance for AUD\$20 million, or can demonstrate the ability to obtain such insurance before the project commences.
- Be willing to participate in public relations for the project, including a potential media release and photo with members of the applicants' organisation and funding representatives.
- Involve community in its planning and implementation.

¹ Your organisation meets the requirements of being a not-for-profit by having specific statements in its governing rules; the not-for-profit and / or dissolution clause <https://www.ato.gov.au/non-profit/getting-started/is-your-organisation-not-for-profit/> d.

² An Auspicing Agent is another organisation that is a legal entity with an ABN. A letter signed by two committee members from the auspice agent confirming they will auspice the application must be provided when the grant application is submitted. Auspicing agents retaining a fee for this service will not be considered

³ If the project is to undertake works on Council owned / managed land or property, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, or Parks Victoria land, you must provide written approval from the relevant land manager.

Ineligible Projects for All Categories

- Individual applicants, profit-making organisations and political parties
- A regular activity like a weekly or monthly market or fun run.
- A private party like a wedding or birthday party
- Regular user group activity like a sporting grand final
- Activities associated with filming – (see [Hepburn Shire Council Film Policy](#))
- An event that already receives or has received monetary funding from other sources within Hepburn Shire Council, i.e., funding agreements or sponsorship arrangements. (In-kind support can be provided by Council to support events irrespective of a financial grant, for details please discuss with the Events Officer)

- Applicants that have an outstanding Council grant acquittal or unpaid invoice from Council.
- Projects that have already commenced or have been completed.
- Organisations based outside the Shire, unless the event is of benefit to Hepburn Shire residents.
- Applications completed by a third party on behalf of an applicant will not be considered.
- Events or festivals that are not working towards becoming self-sustainable and financially independent – Council will prefer applications that assist in the start-up of a new initiative to those events already established and delivered previously.
- Applicants that do not demonstrate the need for Council funding to deliver the event will not be considered. Other avenues of funding should be explored by the applicant and a project funding plan should be included with your application. Events that meet the criteria of Regional or Signature Events as described in the Hepburn Shire Events Strategy.

Assessment

- Applicants should contact the Events Officer or Grants Specialist to discuss their application and event. Those applications deemed eligible will be invited to apply by the Events Officer.
- Technical and grant writing support will be made available to applicants before and during the application stage.
- Once submitted, applications are reviewed to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria. Those not meeting the criteria will be notified and will not progress to assessment.
- Eligible applications will be assessed by a panel consisting of Council Officers against the assessment criteria.
- Applications are assessed against the assessment criteria and alignment with the Council Plan and Events Strategy.
- Applications are ranked by average overall score and funding will be awarded to suitable applicants until the funding is exhausted.
- Funding decisions are final with no appeal process.

Assessment Criteria

All Council Grant Programs are assessed against the following assessment criteria.

- Addresses an evidence-based community need or opportunity.

- Demonstrates alignment with the Hepburn Shire Council Plan and relevant Strategy (Events Strategy 2020-25)
- Demonstrates a clear benefit to Hepburn Shire Council residents.
- Demonstrates a clear ability to carry out and undertake the event through to completion.
- Provides supporting documentation including quotations.
- Demonstrates no ethical or other conflict of interest.

Funding

Applicants will be notified of the assessment panel outcomes within 6 weeks from submission date (with the exception of during the Council Election Period). Once notified, successful applicants are required to sign a funding agreement and submit a tax invoice to Council using the Smartygrants platform.

In-kind support may be offered by Council to support the event, irrespective of grant funding. For details, please discuss with the Events Officer.

The assessment panel may, in some circumstances, only offer partial funding or less funding than the applicant has requested. In the event of an application being part-funded, Council will provide an explanation for this decision. Applicants have the right to accept partial funding or withdraw their application.

Acquittal Process

An online acquittal must be completed through the SmartyGrants portal within 3 months from the conclusion of the funded event. Successful applicants are required to keep records of all items used and purchased in facilitating the grant project/activity/event and upload these records to our grants portal as part of the acquittal process.

Funding Conditions and Requirements

- All planning and building permits and other applicable authorisations remain the responsibility of the applicant. Evidence of permits / permissions must be provided where relevant.
- Public Liability Insurance to the value of \$20 million AUD is the responsibility of the applicant and must be obtained prior to commencing any works that has been funded.

- The event organiser will ensure all activities conform to relevant industry standards, with all permits and approvals in place before the event begins (Inc: Victorian Public Events Framework).
- The applicant must provide evidence of having obtained a Work cover insurance certificate.
- The event organiser must ensure (where possible) adequate measures are in place to support accessibility and inclusion for all.
- An offer of a grant does **not** mean an ongoing funding commitment or obligation by Council.
- Where appropriate, the event organiser must include an acknowledgement of country or welcome to country at the commencement of the event.
- Hepburn Shire must be acknowledged on any promotional material related to the event. This must be approved by Council's Communications Officer prior to distribution.
- The event organiser is required to formally invite the Hepburn Shire council Mayor and CEO via the [invite portal](#) located on the Hepburn Shire Council web page.
- The event organiser is required to provide the Events Officer with the event marketing material to enable Council to promote the event across its various channels.
- Successful applicants, or their Auspicing Agent, are required to enter into a formal funding agreement with Council. If the event does not adhere to the conditions of the agreement, Council may require grant funds to be returned.
- All funded events must complete an Evaluation and Acquittal including evidence of expenditure, e.g., receipts, within 3months from the conclusion of the event.
- Ongoing maintenance and repair costs for equipment purchased with grant funds are the responsibility of the applicant.

For applicants who are seeking funding from external grant sources, you are required to advise Council as soon as possible on the status of this external grant funding.

If your application includes grant funds from Council and another source of funding; if the external funding source becomes unavailable, you will be required to submit an alternative proposal and budget within 30 days of the external funding decision date.

Applications are submitted online only. Council officers can assist with this process where required, e.g., if you have an impairment that prevents you using the online process.

How to Apply

Visit www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/grants to view the Local Community Events Support page. All grant applications are made through the SmartyGrants portal – [Hepburn Shire Council Grants Portal](#).

Key Council Contacts:

Events Officer

Email: events@hepburn.vic.gov.au

Phone: (03) 5348 2306

Grants Specialist

Email: grants@hepburn.vic.gov.au

Phone: (03) 5348 2306

Please get in touch if you would like additional information, or if you require assistance to complete your application.