

COMMUNITY SUPPORT POLICY



Directorate:	Community Wellbeing
Responsible Manager:	General Manager Community Wellbeing
Review Due:	May 2025
Adoption:	Council
Date Adopted:	02/05/2023

Acknowledgement

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung people, and we offer our respects to their elders' past, present and emerging.

1. Purpose

Central Goldfields Shire Council is committed to working in partnership with the community to encourage, develop and support community-based organisations and the wide range of local quality recreational, cultural, social and community support and business group initiatives which they undertake. These make a positive contribution to the Central Goldfields Shire community and strengthen the development of a supported and cohesive community, living a full and healthy life.

Each financial year, Council provides financial assistance to community-based organisations to support the provision of programs and services which benefit the Central Goldfields Shire community and are in accordance with Council's plans and strategies.

The Community Support Policy provides a consistent, accountable, and transparent process to determine the nature and level of support provided to the community through:

- Community Grants;
- In kind support; and
- Planning and Building fee waivers.

2. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to:

- Council staff including assessment panel members;
- Councillors;
- Community Grant applicants and recipients; and

- Community Grant processes and decision-making.

This Policy also applies to all statutory planning fees and charges and Council building application fees (but not the State Building levy) and can apply in these circumstances to all legal entities. This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation. State government regulations within the Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016; the Subdivision (Fees) Regulations 2016 and the Building Regulations 2018 provide the power for a Responsible Authority (usually Council) to waive or rebate the payment of fees.

3. Definitions

Community Based Organisation Definition

Typically, a community-based organisation is an organisation that is a recognised not-for-profit group or organisation that carries out one or more of the following activities:

- Providing services to the community such as positive ageing, childcare, health services, charity services or services of a similar type;
- Reinvests or applies the revenue it receives predominately for public interest services or activities;
- Principally provides social or junior sporting or recreational activities;
- Supports public events or information of an historical, cultural or community arts focus.
- Typically, a community-based organisation would not include:
 - A political organisation;
 - A profit-making organisation;
 - Schools or tertiary institutions (excluding parents and friend's groups);
 - State or Federal government agencies and departments;
 - Any organisation where more than 50% of its income is derived from any State or Federal government program.

4. General Provisions

All applications must be for projects that are:

- Based in the Central Goldfields Shire; and
- Benefit the Central Goldfields Shire community.

Community Grants

Community Grants provide financial support to projects and events that provide community benefit to the Shire. Grants from \$500 are available to a wide range of community-based organisations to run projects and events. Individuals are not eligible to apply for Community Grants.

In Kind Support

In kind support is available to a wide range of community-based organisations to run projects and events that provide benefit to the Shire. In kind support is when Council provides services to a group or organisation, rather than providing them with purely financial support. In kind support can include items like traffic management, waste management and event set up.

Fee Waivers

Circumstances can arise where it is appropriate and in the public interest for consideration to be given to waiving, reducing, or refunding fees and charges associated with applications for planning and building permits. Council can, upon application, consider a request to waive or reduce the statutory planning and/or building fee for the delivery of projects, activities or service that provides a community benefit and which align with Council’s policies, strategies, or activities.

Council can consider and agree to a waiver, reduction, or rebate of a statutory planning fee for an application to use or develop land which will result in resolving difficult planning application issues that may have a potential risk or liability for the Council.

Personal, commercial, or family circumstances including financial hardship will not ordinarily be considered appropriate for application of this policy.

If an applicant withdraws an application for a permit before it is approved or refused, Council may refund the fees or charges it has received in accordance with this Policy if they have not already been expended for the relevant purpose.

Refunds may be applied to planning fees and charges as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is determined that no planning permit is required 	100% fee refunded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application received, lodged, entered into the information management system, and allocated to a Planner 	75% fee refunded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application received, lodged, entered into the information management system, and allocated to a Planner; and Application initially assessed and referrals to authorities or internal departments commenced, additional information received 	50% fee refunded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application received, lodged, entered into the information management system, and allocated to a Planner; and Application initially assessed and referrals to authorities or internal departments commenced, additional information received; and Further assessment undertaken 	25% fee refunded

Where an application has progressed to the final stages of a decision no refund will be given.

No refunds will be provided if an application is lapsed, and fees will not be waived for subsequent applications.

Excluded fees, charges and levies means any other prescribed fees, charges, or levies that Council is required to collect by legislation on behalf of the State Government or another government entity, e.g. building permits.

Application Process

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for Community Support you must be a community-based organisation and submit a completed Application Form to Council in accordance with the relevant timeframes.

The following are not eligible:

- Applications from individuals;
- Applications where funding for projects is being requested retrospectively;
- Applicants with an overdue acquittal for Central Goldfields Shire Council funding;
- Applicants receiving funding from Central Goldfields Shire Council for the same project.
- Applicants who do not support diversity, tolerance, and inclusion within the community.

What will not be funded

- Applications seeking funding to cover ongoing operational costs (e.g. insurance, utilities, rent, salaries);
- Projects or activities that:
 - Do not reflect widely held community standards;
 - Are the responsibility of the State or Federal Government; or
 - Are already underway or have been completed.

Applications for Community Grants

Application dates will be released annually, and applications must be made using the online submission form indicated. Workshops and officer assistance will be offered to support organisations to complete applications. Late Applications will not be accepted.

Applications for In Kind Support

Applications for in kind support must be received at least 1 month prior to the date of the project or event. Council may refuse late applications.

Applications must be made using the Community Support Application Form.

Applications for Fee Waivers

Fee Waiver Applications are to be lodged in conjunction with your planning or building permit application using the Fee Waiver Application Form.

Assessment of Applications

Assessment of Community Grant Applications

Eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- How the project aligns with the strategic objectives of the Council Plan 2021-2025 and other relevant Council strategies
- How the project benefits the Central Goldfields Shire community – including social, economic, and environmental benefits
- Demonstrated capacity of the project to succeed
- The level of financial and in-kind contribution to the project from the applicant organisation

The weighting of each criterion will be detailed within the Community Support Grant Guidelines.

Assessment of Community Grant Applications will occur via the following process:

- A panel of Council officers will assess all applications for both eligibility and against the assessment criteria.
- The panel will present recommendations to Council for approval, based on the ranking of those applications against the assessment criteria.
- Council will give final approval to all successful applications at a Council meeting.

Assessment of In-Kind Support Applications

Assessment of in-kind support will be made by the relevant General Manager.

Assessment of Fee Waiver Applications

Assessment of Applications for fee waivers or reductions will be made by the delegated staff members – the Manager Statutory Services and the General Manager Infrastructure, Assets and Planning.

Outcome Notification

Successful applicants will be notified in writing.

Applicants for grants will be sent a funding agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the funding being provided by Council.

Funding agreements must be signed and returned by the due date. An invoice for the grant amount must also be provided with the funding agreement to receive funding.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing of their unsuccessful application and provided with feedback as to the reason/s behind the decision.

Applicants may also request to speak with a Council officer about their unsuccessful application if they would like further feedback.

Community Grant Financials and Acquittals

- Projects must be completed, and the acquittal process finalised within 12 months of receiving a grant.
- Successful applicants will be accountable to Council for the disbursement of grant monies.
- Grant recipients are required to submit a financial statement at the conclusion of the funding period relating to the project or event.
- Funds not expended for the intended purpose must be returned to Council.
- Any variations to the original Grant Application must be lodged in writing and approved by Council.
This includes an extension of acquittal process deadlines of no more than 12 months for extenuating circumstances.
- An assessment of the key outcomes of the project must be provided detailing the key achievements, including photographic evidence.

Acknowledgment

Central Goldfields Shire Council must be acknowledged in any promotional material relating to the project and evidence of this acknowledgement is to be provided as part of the acquittal process.

Roles and Responsibilities

Person/s responsible	Accountability
Councillors	Final approval of successful grant recipients
Officer/Manager/General Manager/CEO	Ensure all approaches and applications comply with this policy and give reason to those that are non-compliant.
Officer/Manager/	Ensure where necessary acquittals and/or reviews/evaluations are received and recorded.

5. Review

This Policy must be reviewed a minimum of once every 4 years.

6. Human Rights Statement

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006). Central Goldfields Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees.

7. Relevant Legislation and Council Policies

- Central Goldfields Shire Council Plan 2021-2025
- Central Goldfields Shire Council Action Plan 2022-23
- Building Act 1993
- Building Regulations 2018
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Local Government Act 2020
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Planning and Environment (Fees) Regulations 2016
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Subdivision (Fees) Regulations 2016
- Australian Tax Legislation