

COMMUNITY GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK 2022-25



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection the Wurundjeri, Bunurong, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wadawurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin have to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

FOREWORD FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE AND COUNCILLOR



Community-led initiatives build and strengthen connections among Melbourne's diverse communities. We are proud of the important contribution that our Community Grants and Partnerships program makes to our communities, bringing a range of events and programs to life every year.

Melbourne is at its best when people of all cultures, backgrounds, genders, sexualities, ages and abilities are welcomed, celebrated and protected. To guide our vision for an inclusive Melbourne, our Community Grants and Partnerships Framework is designed to support the priorities in our Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-32.

The funding we provide recognises that the fabric of a city is made up of all the diverse organisations that bring people together – from groups for multicultural services, elderly refugees, young people and community events to neighbourhood houses and much more. Our grant streams range in size and focus to respond to different community needs and interests.

Funding delivered through the Community Grants and Partnerships program strengthens a sense of belonging for all who call Melbourne home. Importantly, it empowers individuals and communities to take local action; and advances equity and inclusion.

The Community Grants Framework guides Council's funding decisions under the Connected Communities Grants Program, ensuring funds are distributed equitably to projects that make our community more vibrant, equitable, cohesive and inclusive.

The framework also aligns with our Neighbourhood Model. This approach recognises that each part of Melbourne has a distinctive character. We want to hear the voices of local people choosing what's best for their community. When communities take action, together we can build a city of which we can all be proud.

We're confident this refreshed framework will provide opportunities for groups and projects of all sizes. We look forward to seeing new ideas realised through partnerships with, and funding for, diverse and inclusive communities right across our municipality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Capp".

Sally Capp
Lord Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Olivia Ball".

Olivia Ball
Councillor

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INTRODUCTION

Melbourne is a city of neighbourhoods that takes pride in being a gathering place for diverse communities. Our vision is for Melbourne to be a city where people of all cultures, backgrounds, genders, sexualities, ages and abilities are welcomed, celebrated and protected.

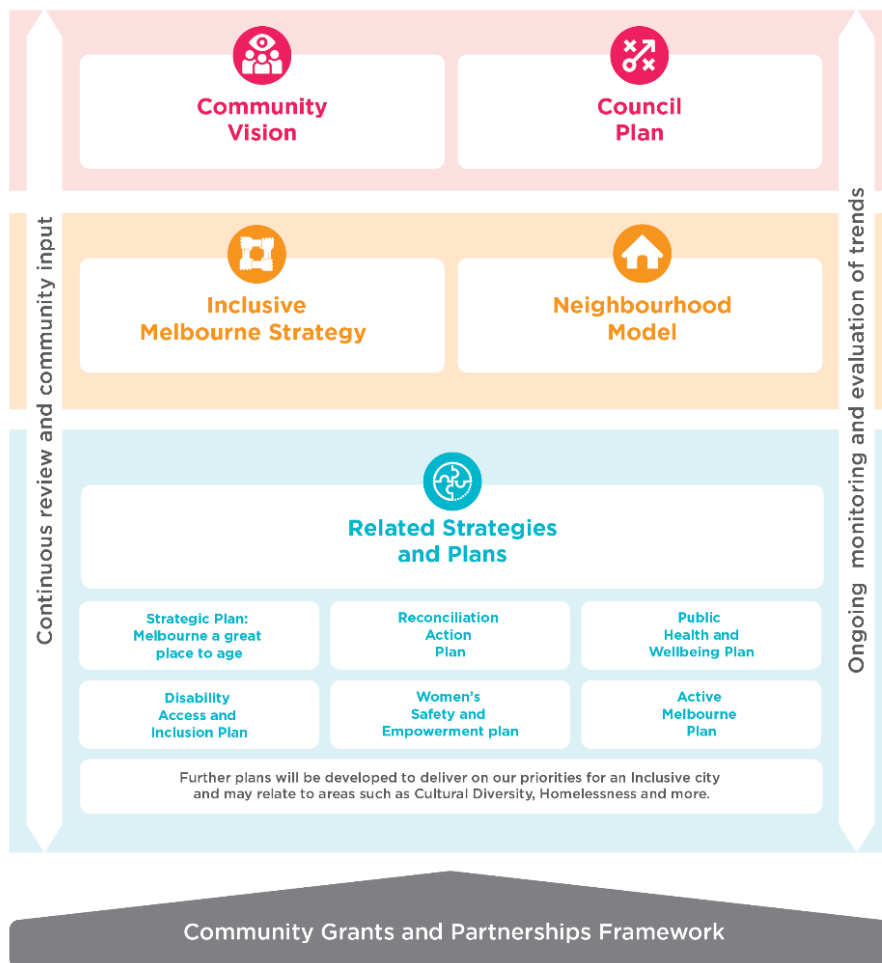
We recognise that we are all better off when everyone can thrive and contribute to the wellbeing of our neighbourhoods and the municipality as a whole. As part of this, the City of Melbourne is committed to empowering community groups and individuals to take action and respond to needs and opportunities where they live.

The Community Grants and Partnerships program supports this commitment by providing funding for community initiatives and events led by individuals, volunteer groups, not-for-profits and purpose-oriented for-profit organisations. The set of funding streams within the program is designed to enable a range of initiatives and activities that facilitate social inclusion, connection and community empowerment across Melbourne's neighbourhoods.

The Community Grants and Partnerships Framework 2022-25 outlines our approach to delivering this funding to meet community goals in line with Council strategies and objectives.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Community Grants and Partnerships Framework 2022–25 aligns with key strategic documents that inform City of Melbourne priorities.



The 10-year Community Vision, “City of Possibility,” describes the long-term aspirations that the community has for Melbourne.

Council Plan 2021–25 is the City of Melbourne’s response to the Community Vision. It outlines the Council’s four-year priorities for achieving this and incorporates the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan. It is organised under six strategic objectives:



The **Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-32** will help realise our vision of a truly inclusive Melbourne over the next 10 years. It outlines how the City of Melbourne will embrace the diversity of cultures, ages, genders, sexualities, backgrounds, religions and abilities of the people who live, work, study and visit the city.

The **Neighbourhood Model** has been developed to drive more meaningful connection with, and a better understanding of, our local communities so that shared priorities are realised in neighbourhoods across the municipality.

Related Strategies and Plans fall under the umbrella of the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy and inform work happening across our neighbourhoods. They include documents that reflect the City of Melbourne’s commitment to specific communities within our municipality and respond to legislative requirements in relation to certain cohorts.

The **Community Grants and Partnerships Framework 2022–25** translates the strategic direction and ambition of the above strategies and plans into operational detail required for everyday decision making and action. It demonstrates how the Community Grants and Partnerships program supports delivery of Council’s strategic objectives.

AN INCLUSIVE MELBOURNE AND A CITY OF NEIGHBOURHOODS - THE FRAMING FOR COMMUNITY GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Within the City of Melbourne strategic context, the Community Grants and Partnerships program is designed to directly support the objectives of the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy and the Neighbourhood Model.

INCLUSIVE MELBOURNE STRATEGY 2022-32

The ten-year Inclusive Melbourne Strategy recognises that groups of people within the community experience persistent barriers to equal participation. This strategy amplifies the voices of Aboriginal peoples, LGBTIQ+ communities, children and young people, older people, women, people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people, international students and people experiencing poverty and homelessness. As a Major Initiative in the Council Plan 2021-25, it responds to Council Plan objectives (particularly Safety and Wellbeing) and provides a framework for the City of Melbourne that progresses inclusion for our city.

The Inclusive Melbourne Strategy has three priorities that speak to how the City of Melbourne's own operations support our diverse communities:

1. **Organisation, services, programs and places for all** - A diverse and inclusive workforce underpins our delivery of services, programs and places that are accessible and meet the needs of our diverse communities.
2. **Sustainable and fair recovery** - The city's recovery and regeneration from COVID-19 provides an opportunity to build back better for all. A diverse and resilient community is at the centre of a liveable city.
3. **Empowered, participatory communities** - We want to encourage participation from all community members, ensuring that people feel heard, and their needs are addressed.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MODEL

Implementing the Neighbourhood Model is a Major Initiative in the Council Plan 2021-25 under the Access and Affordability strategic objective.

The Neighbourhood Model focuses on developing a deeper understanding of community needs, strengths and aspirations, enabling community-led action, and guides how the City of Melbourne connects with, understands and responds to its diverse communities. The model aligns strongly with the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy's ambition to deliver more inclusive and sustainable outcomes for our city through shared problem-solving, open dialogue and meaningful participation.

A neighbourhood approach to how we work with and for our communities

- We deeply understand community strengths and needs to drive our work and advocacy
- We work with communities to build a vision for their locality
- We activate communities to lead their own change
- We ensure participation for diverse voices, views and people
- We create safe spaces for community to connect and go to when they need support
- We identify the connections between neighbourhood needs and city-wide responses

SCOPE OF FRAMEWORK

The City of Melbourne invests \$2.35 million every year into community-led initiatives and events and community capacity-building through a range of grants streams, funded partnerships and related programs. This framework covers all these activities.

The 2022-25 framework replaces the existing Community Grants and Partnerships Framework, which was endorsed in 2018. It sets out a clear purpose and principles to guide our investment in community initiatives in Melbourne up to 2025. It will be reviewed and refreshed in 2025, and every four years after that, to align with each new Council Plan.

OUR ROLE

The City of Melbourne plays a critical role in making our diverse residential neighbourhoods, and the city as a whole, a great place to live. We are not a philanthropy or funding agency, but we provide grant funding to collaborate with community members and groups to achieve our shared vision for the city.

What is the role we play?

- We empower our communities to identify and respond to local areas of need.
- We activate community participation and connection.
- We partner with community organisations to deliver shared outcomes.
- We build capacity within the community sector.

OUR PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the City of Melbourne’s funding of Community Grants and Partnerships is:

To support and empower diverse people and communities to become engaged, to connect and to take local action

OUTCOMES WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

Our Community Grants and Partnerships program supports the strategic priorities in the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy and the Neighbourhood Model. The outcomes for the program represent the City of Melbourne’s objectives for both how we deliver grants and partnerships in an inclusive way, and what program funding can achieve for the communities we serve.

Neighbourhood Model Outcomes

- We deeply understand community strengths and needs to drive our work and advocacy
- We work with communities to build a vision for their locality
- We activate communities to lead their own change
- We ensure participation for diverse voices, views and people
- We create safe spaces for community to connect and go to when they need support
- We identify the connections between neighbourhood needs and city-wide responses

Inclusive Melbourne Strategy Priorities

- Organisation, services, programs and places for all
- Sustainable and fair recovery
- Empowered, participatory communities

Community Grants and Partnership Program Outcomes

Representative diversity

Programs are inclusive and accessible to all to ensure that participants represent Melbourne’s diverse communities

Connection

Social connection is facilitated within neighbourhoods and across the municipality

Capability-building

Community organisation capacity is built to enable them to take action locally

Empowerment

Participation, agency and collaboration among communities is enhanced in and across our neighbourhoods

KEY DELIVERABLES

Our program outcomes and funding stream deliverables make clear where the City of Melbourne wants to target its community funding to make the greatest impact in line with our strategic priorities. The principles and outcomes will be reflected in all of the City of Melbourne's Community Grants and Partnerships funding. The funding stream deliverables provide a high-level purpose for what we aim to facilitate through specific components of the program.

Community Grants and Partnership Program Outcomes

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Funding Stream Deliverables

Community organisations able to run their core operations

Community and neighbourhood-specific initiatives and activities

Inclusive events that celebrate the City of Melbourne's diversity

Diverse individuals and teams able to participate in sporting events and competitions

Social connection through meals provision for older people

Accessibility of City of Melbourne civic spaces for community benefit

Empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to take action locally

Partnerships with Neighbourhood Houses and others to deliver agreed community outcomes

Upskilling of organisations to build their capacity to achieve their goals

PRINCIPLES

We will use our principles to guide the strategic choices we need to make about who and what we fund.

Principles

- 1 **Impact** – We take a purposeful and strategic approach to funding projects that deliver meaningful social impact in line with municipal priorities.
- 2 **Partnership** – We know we can't solve tough problems alone. We use our funding to establish partnerships with organisations and individuals who share our ambitions for our communities.
- 3 **Innovation** – We discover new solutions to changing community needs and foster innovative approaches to addressing our social challenges.
- 4 **Transparency** – We are transparent in our funding priorities, processes and decisions.
- 5 **Responsiveness** – We listen to our communities and adapt our funding focus areas and processes to be relevant, timely and proportionate.

FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

The framework seeks to align funding streams with community needs and council priorities. It also includes two new funding streams: Neighbourhood Grants is a new stream to support neighbourhood-specific initiatives led by individuals or local organisations; Community Events combines previous Community Grants and Partnerships funding for events with City of Melbourne's broader events funding for events up to 5,000 people.

PROGRAM STREAMS

Funding Streams	Annual Budget Target	Value and Duration	Application Cycle	Focus area
Inclusive Community Grants Grants to support community connection, social inclusion, access and participation				
Operational Support Grants	\$1.35M	Up to \$2,000 per year for two years	Every six months	Grants to support general operations and core activities of volunteer-run groups.
Community Inclusion Grants		Up to \$20,000 for one year	Every six months	Grants to support not-for-profit and volunteer-run community initiatives aligned with Council priorities.
Social Investment Partnerships		\$25,000 - \$80,000 per year for two years	Every two years	Partnership-based funding to tackle City of Melbourne's inclusion priorities and facilitate sustained social change. Guidelines may specify themes for each round. Eligibility extends to social enterprises and B Corporations.
Connected Neighbourhood Grants	\$100,000	Up to \$2,000 for one year	Monthly	Grants to support individuals and organisations to facilitate social connection and take action at a neighbourhood level, in line with priorities emerging from the Neighbourhood Model.
Aboriginal Melbourne Grants	\$40,000	Up to \$10,000 for one year	Monthly	Grants to support and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations to engage, connect and take local action within the City of Melbourne.
Community Meals Subsidy	\$161,650	Up to \$10,000 for use in one year	Annual	Funding for groups and organisations based in the City of Melbourne that provide social connection through meals for older people. Funding is based on a per-person subsidy of \$5.00 for up to 175 people over the age of 55, for up to 12 sessions per year.

Funding Streams	Annual Budget Target	Value and Duration	Application Cycle	Focus area
Inclusive Sport and Recreation Grants Grants to increase diverse participation in local, national and international sports and recreation activities				
Inclusion Support Grants	\$20,000	Up to \$500 for use in one year	Monthly	Support for children and young people who reside in the City of Melbourne to participate in community sport.
Individual Participation Grants		\$300 for individual for national competition \$500 for team for national competition \$500 for individual for international competition \$700 for team for international competition	Monthly	Support for promising individuals and teams to achieve their sporting goals.
Inclusive Events Grants Grants to celebrate diversity and facilitate community connection through large and small events				
Community Events Grants	\$50,000	Up to \$10,000 per event	Every six months	Grants to facilitate delivery of community events of up to 5,000 people.
Community Use of Town Hall Scheme (CUTHS)	\$200,000	Up to \$7,000 per event	Monthly	Grants to enable community groups to affordably access civic spaces to run events.
Community Funding Agreements Collaborative partnerships with Neighbourhood Houses to deliver community development outcomes				
Neighbourhood House Agreements	\$400,000	\$100,000	Every four years	Long-term collaborative partnerships to support the delivery of community development outcomes at a neighbourhood level. Individual agreements are negotiated with each Neighbourhood House to align funded activities with Council priorities.
Community Capacity Building and Education Resources to provide community organisations with opportunities to build skills and knowledge to enhance community outcomes				

Funding Streams	Annual Budget Target	Value and Duration	Application Cycle	Focus area
Capability Building and Community Education	\$30,000	Upon application	Monthly	Support for community groups to build capacity through education and professional development.
Total annual budget \$2.35M				

FUNDING BY FREQUENCY

The Community Grants and Partnerships Framework seeks to ensure that funding streams are flexible and responsive to community needs. This includes aligning frequency of funding rounds for each funding stream with its purpose to enable groups and individuals to apply for grants as opportunities or needs arise. A summary of grant funding streams by application cycle is below.

Community Grants and Partnerships Funding Stream	Value and duration
Monthly	
Connected Neighbourhood Grants	Up to \$2,000 for one year
Aboriginal Melbourne Grants	Up to \$10,000 for one year
Individual Sport and Recreation Grants	\$300 for individual for national competition \$500 for individual for international competition \$500 for team for national competition \$700 for team for international competition
Inclusion Sport and Recreation Support Grants	Up to \$500 for one year
Community Use of Town Hall Scheme (CUTHS)	Up to \$7,000
Capability Building and Community Education	Determined on application
Every six months	
Operational Support Grants	Up to \$2,000 per year for up to two years
Community Inclusion Grants	Up to \$20,000 for one year
Community Events Grants	Up to \$10,000
Annual	
Community Meals Subsidy	Up to \$10,000 for one year
Every two years	
Social Investment Partnerships	\$25,000 - \$80,000 per year for up to two years
Every four years	
Neighbourhood House Agreements	\$100,000 per year for four years

ELIGIBILITY

All funded projects, events and initiatives, with the exception of the Inclusive Sport and Recreation Grants, must result in a public outcome within City of Melbourne boundaries. Applicants from outside of City of Melbourne may be eligible, but funded activities must benefit communities within the municipality.

More specific eligibility and assessment criteria are provided in the guidelines for each program stream.

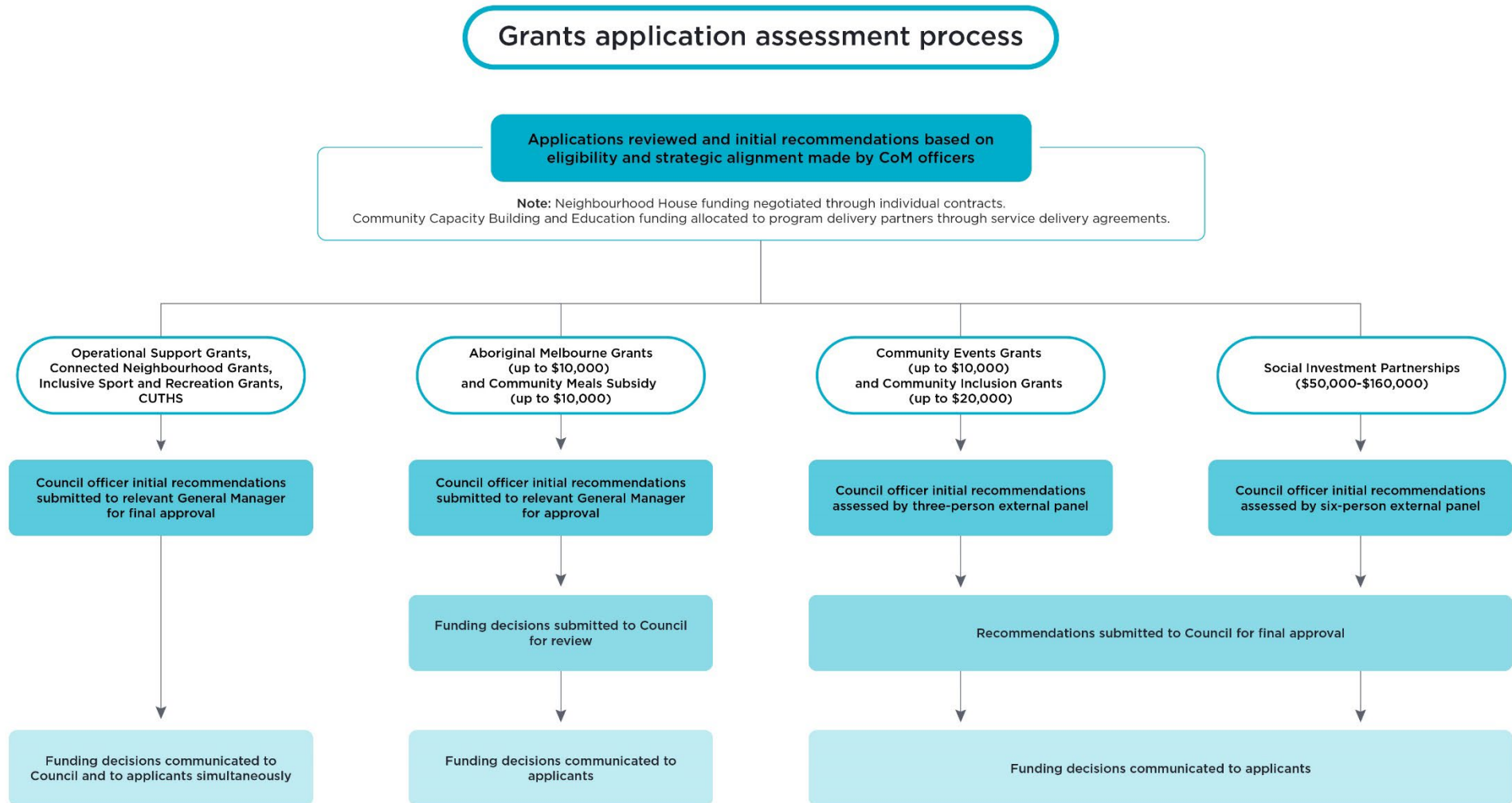
DECISION TREE FOR FUNDING

Each application will go through a decision-making process that supports proportionate and timely assessment relative to the scale of funding. Applications will be assessed based on eligibility and strategic alignment with Council goals.

Applications for six-monthly or bi-annual larger grants will be reviewed by an external Assessment Panel of independent community members. The purpose of the Assessment Panel is to review, assess and provide objective, independent recommendations to Council in relation to funding for grants and sponsorship programs, and to ensure that guidelines and assessment criteria endorsed by Council have been applied consistently and equitably for all applications. Panel members are identified through an Expression of Interest process, with selection criteria focused on merit, skills and expertise, taking into account diversity principles. Details on the role of the Assessment Panel can be found on the [Grants and sponsorships page on the City of Melbourne Website](#).

The names of successful applicants under all grants streams will be published on the City of Melbourne website within one week of approval.

DECISION TREE FOR FUNDING



UNDERSTANDING SUCCESS

We want to measure the direct impact of Community Grants and Partnerships on the outcomes and deliverables we have set for ourselves, in line with Council's strategic priorities.

HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

The measures outlined here are not funding criteria, but will help us to understand whether our principles and outcomes are being met. This includes identifying opportunities for us to improve our delivery of the Community Grants and Partnerships program.

Additional success measures for each funding stream, as well as funding criteria, are outlined in each stream's specific guidelines.

Community Grants and Partnerships Program outcomes	What we will measure
Representative diversity Programs are inclusive and accessible to all to ensure that participants represent Melbourne's diverse communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grants applicants and recipients are representative of our diverse communities within and across neighbourhoods• Participants in funded initiatives represent our diverse communities within and across neighbourhoods• Diverse applicants report positive experiences in accessing information and navigating the application and acquittal processes• Feedback from diverse community members informs updates or changes to program operations• Information is presented in line with the latest accessibility and universal design standards
Connection Social connection is facilitated with neighbourhoods and across the municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants in funded activities report positive experiences that contribute to a stronger sense of connection to their neighbourhood and / or community
Empowerment Participation, agency and collaboration among communities is enhanced in and across our neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Groups and individuals apply for funding to run community-led initiatives to enable delivery of priorities identified through the Neighbourhood Planning Portals• Funded initiatives demonstrate collaborative approaches to achieving outcomes aligned with Council and community-identified priorities
Capability-building Community organisation capacity is built to enable them to take action locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community groups participating in capacity-building activities report improvements in skills and knowledge in line with activities' focus areas and objectives• Small organisations increasingly participate in capacity-building activities• Grant recipients effectively make use of funding provided to deliver programs within agreed timelines and parameters

REPORTING ON PROGRESS

Data will be collected for all program-wide and funding stream-specific measures each year. This will enable program outcomes to be measured and evaluated in relation to the priorities of the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy and the Neighbourhood Model.

We will report publicly on what and who we fund and how our grants and partnerships are benefiting our communities and contributing to City of Melbourne's strategic ambitions.

How to contact us

Online:

melbourne.vic.gov.au

In person:

Melbourne Town Hall - Administration Building
120 Swanston Street, Melbourne
Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Telephone:

03 9658 9658
Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Fax:

03 9654 4854

In writing:

City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
Melbourne VIC 3001
Australia



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CITY OF MELBOURNE