Operational Support Grants guidelines

Contents

Inclusive Community grants provide funding for organisations and ongoing activities that support diverse communities through increased community connection, access and participation building on principles of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Council Plan 2021-25 outlines six strategic objectives for the City of Melbourne to build on its strong foundations to be a city that thrives as a place that benefits all.

Purpose of Operational Support grants

The City of Melbourne is committed to creating connected and inclusive communities. We provide Operational Support grants for volunteer run community organisations to support community connection, social inclusion, access and participation for City of Melbourne residents.

Operational Support grants are provided for two years to support organisations to cover operational costs and costs of ongoing projects. This current round is for the two-year period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026.

Costs could include but are not limited to;

- insurance

- venue hire

- incorporation fees

- printing

- bus hire

- supplies for activities

Objectives/Outcomes of Operational Support grants

Inclusive Community Operational Support Grants allow the City of Melbourne to progress community development outcomes in the communities and neighbourhoods that make up our municipality.

- increase community participation, connection, equity diversity and inclusion
- empower community to identify and respond to local issues and priorities

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for funding through Operational Support Grants, applications must meet the following criteria:

- Applicant organisations must be a not-for-profit constituted body. Auspiced applications are not permitted in this program.

- Applicants must be fully volunteer run and not employ staff.

- Applicants must create opportunities for community members to experience greater connection to their community through opportunities that improve access and participation.

- Applicants must be located within, or demonstrate clear evidence of operating within, the City of Melbourne municipality with benefits for local people.

Funding will not be considered for:

- applicants who have already received Operational Support funding through the

  - 2023-25 Operational Support Grants program, which covers the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2025; or

  - 2024-2025 Operational Support Grants program, which covers the period 1 January 2024 to 30 December 2025.

- organisations and activities with a religious focus. For example, organisations whose core activities are faith-based, such as religious service, preaching or proselytizing, or organisations that exclude community members of different faiths of joining.

- organisations with a political focus. For example, party political organisations.

- activities that denigrate or exclude parts of the community or that breach Commonwealth and State anti-vilification laws

- capital works

- commercial activities and/or organisations

- fundraising activities, competitions, prizes or award events

- interstate and international travel costs including travel costs for facilitators/consultants

- activities that have already commenced or occurred

- activities that are being, or have already been, funded through other City of Melbourne grant or sponsorship programs

- activities run by the City of Melbourne

- organisations with outstanding acquittals or debts owing to the City of Melbourne

- incomplete applications

- late submissions.

Funding level

Applications for Operational Support Grants funding can be made for any value up to $2000.

Key dates

These grants are for the two-year period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026.

- Applications open 9am on Monday 15 January 2024.

- Applications close 11.59pm on Monday 12 February 2024.

- Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by late-May.

- First instalment of grant payments will be paid in mid-July 2024.

- Activities must start after 1 July 2024.

- Activities must be completed by 30 June 2026.

Assessment process

After the application period has closed and we have received your application:

- You will receive an email confirming receipt of your application.

- Your application will be assessed against the eligibility and assessment criteria. Ineligible applicants will be notified that their application is ineligible.

- Funding recommendations will be advised to the General Manager City and Community Services who will make the final decision on the outcome of all eligible applications.

- All applicants will receive a notification via email with the result of their application by late May 2024.

- Information about grant decisions will not be given over the phone.

- The list of successful applicants will be published on the City of Melbourne's website approximately a month after all applicants have been notified of the outcome of their application.

Assessment criteria

Operational Support Grant applications are assessed against the assessment criteria below. Only applications that adequately respond to the assessment criteria will be considered.

1. **Alignment to the purpose and objectives of Operational Support Grants**

    - Does the activity/organisation support and increase community connection and community participation building on access, equity and diversity to progress inclusion for City of Melbourne residents?

    - How many City of Melbourne residents are likely to participate and benefit?

    - Does the activity/organisation target groups or individuals that face barriers to participation?

2. **Community need**

    - Is there a clearly identified need for the services delivered by this organisation?

3. **Budget**

    - Does the budget accurately reflect the scope and scale of the activity/organisation?

    - Does the total revenue match the total expenses?

    - Have quotes been provided to support capital purchases (if applicable)?

Additional assessment notes

City of Melbourne reserves the right to:

- not consider applications that do not meet the eligibility or assessment criteria

- not consider applications that do not align with Council's strategic priorities

- request further information to inform our assessment

- require normal permits for all projects. If relevant, these should be outlined in the application (refer to the City of Melbourne website[1] for permits required within the City of Melbourne)

---

[1] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/pages/permits.aspx

- request a declaration in the application if quotes and/or other proposed services are provided by family, friends or committee members.

Essential attachments for all applications

Applicants must provide a certificate of currency for public liability or other relevant insurance. If applicants do not hold public liability insurance they must provide a risk assessment document identifying risks associated with their application and explaining how these risks will be managed. Council may determine that the risk assessment document is inadequate and require appropriate insurance coverage prior to releasing funding.

Lobbying

Canvassing or lobbying in relation to an application is strictly prohibited during the application process.

No further consideration will be given to an application submitted by an applicant that canvasses or lobbies the Lord Mayor, City of Melbourne councillors or employees of the City of Melbourne.

Grant terms and conditions

If your application is successful, you will be required to:

- sign a funding agreement with the City of Melbourne that provides details about the terms and conditions of funding. The funding agreement will outline reporting and acquittal requirements specific to your application

- supply all requested information prior to any funding being released

- submit paperwork within the allocated timeframes. Funding is allocated from specific financial year budgets and if paperwork is not submitted within the allocated timeframe, then funding is forfeited by the funded organisation

- use the funding allocated for the purposes specified in the application. Grants may not be used for any purpose other than for which it is granted, without the written permission of the City of Melbourne. Unspent funds must be returned to City of Melbourne

- deliver the activity within the allocated budget. City of Melbourne will not be responsible for shortfalls in budgets if the applicant is unable to meet costs

- if the funded project includes contact with children aged 0-18, ensure that all relevant staff, contractors, volunteers and committee members hold a valid Working with Children Check and provide copies of these if requested by Council

- acknowledge the City of Melbourne in all promotional materials relating to the successful application, including use of the logo

- provide a tax invoice and complete an acquittal of funds expended so far by 31 July 2025 in order to receive the second year of funding

- complete the activity by 30 June 2026. No extensions will be provided

- complete a final acquittal report by 31 July 2026.

- invite the Lord Mayor and Councillors to attend any significant launches or events associated with the activity

- acquit the grant and provide receipts for any purchases over $200.

Completing your application

Applications will be submitted and managed online via SmartyGrants. Application forms can be accessed from the City of Melbourne website.

Applications will automatically be closed by the SmartyGrants system at 11.59pm on Monday 12 February 2024.

Please avoid submitting your application at the last minute. If there is heavy use of the system with others submitting last-minute applications, there may be delays which will affect your ability to lodge your application before the deadline and it will be deemed ineligible.

When your application is fully submitted you will receive an automated email containing a PDF copy of your application and confirmation that it has been received.

If you experience technical issues with the SmartyGrants system, please contact SmartyGrants directly (contact information below).

Contacts

General enquiries

Please contact the City of Melbourne Community Grants Officer via email commstrength@melbourne.vic.gov.au or phone 9658 9901

SmartyGrants technical assistance

If you experience technical issues with the SmartyGrants system please contact them directly on email[2] or by phone: (03) 9320 6888.

Application assistance

If you are unable to complete the application form online due to access issues or you difficulty using technology please contact us at commstrength@melbourne.vic.gov.au or phone 9658 9901 and we will discuss how we can assist you to complete the forms.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can my organisation submit more than one application?

A: No, we will only accept one application per organisation for Operational Support grants. If you apply for operational funding in the Operational Support grants program, you can still apply for a project in the Community Inclusion Grants program.

Q: We already have Operational support funding from the City of Melbourne can we apply again now?

A: Not at this time.

Q: My organisation is located outside the City of Melbourne, can I apply?

---

[2] service@smartygrants.com.au

A: No, to be eligible organisations must be located within the City of Melbourne municipality. In addition, the program has a focus on local and / or vulnerable communities. City of Melbourne suburbs include: Carlton, Central Business District (Melbourne), Docklands, East Melbourne, Fisherman's Bend, Kensington, North Melbourne, Parkville, part of Port Melbourne, Southbank, parts of South Yarra and West Melbourne. You can view a map of the boundaries at the [City of Melbourne website](#)[3].

Q: My group is not incorporated, can I apply?

A: No, to be eligible applications must come from a not for profit community organisation that is a registered legal entity

Q: How long can the project be funded for?

A: There is no maximum number of years that an organisation can received Operational Support grants. The grant is for a two year period and when this is completed you can then apply again for another two years funding.

Q: Can I ask for funding for operational costs?

A: Yes, the Operational Support grants program is open to applications for operational costs.

---

[3] http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/cityofmelbourne_boundarymap.pdf