



# GRANTS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

2017 Georges River Community Grants Program  
Community Bus – one off procurement opportunity

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Georges River Community Grants Program is intended to provide a basis for Council to allocate its funds to address priority community needs under Section 356 of the Local Government Act in an effective and equitable manner, based on the individual merits of each request.

Community grants are designed to enable community groups to partner with Council to help meet community needs. The purpose of the grants is to assist in the development of projects that encourage community participation and inclusivity by offering alternative approaches to meeting community needs.

Georges River Council has allocated \$200,000 to the 2017 Community Grants Program. These funds will be made available to local community groups to apply for grants of up to \$10,000 each for projects in the areas of community development, arts and cultural development, environment and recreation, and sports and recreation. The projects can include equipment and capital works to buildings and facilities for community use.

## 2. COMMUNITY GRANTS AREAS AND PRIORITIES

Priorities for the 2017 community grants program have been identified through community consultation, Council's Operational Plan 2016-17 and information in the Community Strategic Plans of the former Councils. Council is currently working with the community to develop a draft Community Strategic Plan to be ready by September 2017.

Eligible community groups can apply for grants of up to \$10,000 under the Program's funding areas and priorities. Should an organisation seek funds for a project that does not fit under the priority areas listed below, the application needs to explain how the need for the project was identified.

**Community development** (Operational Plan: Community and Culture); priorities identified in this area are projects that:

- Assist older people in engaging in activities that promote health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation
- Increase opportunities for people with disability to participate in and contribute to social and economic life
- Build the capacity of multicultural communities, strengthen social cohesion and promote interfaith dialogue
- Provide assistance and/or education to young people in areas such as drugs and alcohol, healthy eating, bullying and respectful relationships.

**Arts and cultural development** (Operational Plan: Community and Culture); priorities identified in this area are projects that:

- Support skills development and capacity building for local arts and cultural organisations to enable groups to provide access, programs and opportunities for a wider range of community members
- Develop and celebrate identity, diversity and distinctiveness of the Georges River Local Government Area and encourage people to come together
- Support and connect cultural organisations, cultural industries and creative practitioners to build cultural vitality in the Georges River area
- Highlight local history in the Georges River area, including its Aboriginal and migrant heritage.

**Environment and conservation** (Operational Plan: Assets and Infrastructure and Community and Culture); priorities identified in this area are projects that:

- Involve the local community in natural resource voluntary field work
- Maximise recycling in the community, reduce illegal dumping and littering
- Encourage the community to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and to implement positive environmental initiatives
- Increase community awareness on issues relating to environmental sustainability and climate change.

**Sport and recreation** (Operational Plan: Assets and Infrastructure and Environment and Planning); priorities identified in this area are projects that:

- Address barriers to participation in sport or structured physical activity for community groups that would otherwise not engage in sport or physical activity
- Increase regular and on-going participation in sport or structured physical activity
- Provide recreational and skill development opportunities for young children, older people and people with disability
- Upgrade sporting facilities, open spaces and recreational facilities including watering systems, safety netting, lighting, sun protection shelters, change rooms, shower and toilet blocks.

### 3. SELECTION CRITERIA

Grants will be awarded to projects that demonstrate the greatest impact on the wellbeing of the community as determined by the Council Community Grants Advisory Panel. The following criteria will be used by the Panel to determine funding allocation:

- The project addresses an identified community priority and is well-defined
- The project has the potential to deliver social, cultural, economic or environmental benefits to the Georges River Council community
- The organisation demonstrates the capacity to manage funds and deliver the project successfully
- The project has a clear and realistic budget and demonstrates, where appropriate, that the project is sustainable.

Other elements the panel will consider are:

- Duplication, i.e., does the project duplicate similar or existing services or programs? If so, the application will need to address why the organisation has decided to create a new program rather than partner with and/or extend an existing program.
- The level of contribution from the organisation to the project; financially, in-kind or both.
- If the project is new and or innovative, does it respond to an emerging community need and or aspirations? If so, how has the need been identified?
- Is the project being delivered in a partnership? And/or, have relevant community organisations provided support for the project/program?
- The breadth of support that Council already provides to the organisation
- Development opportunities i.e., does the project provide opportunities to residents of the Georges River community for capacity building and/or skills development and/or increased participation in their communities?

### 4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants *must be* a registered not-for-profit organisation, and be able to provide evidence of their not-for-profit status. Organisations must demonstrate that they provide or have the capacity to provide the services, activities and/or programs that benefit the Georges River Council community.

To ensure that funding is allocated in the most equitable and effective way possible organisations are only able to submit one (1) application for the Georges River Council Community Grants Program.

Partnership applications can be submitted (and are encouraged) and will not negatively impact an individual application submitted by one of the partnership organisations.

Please note, where partnership applications are submitted, it is not sufficient to simply state the name of the partner organisations. Rather, supporting documentation briefly outlining the role of the partner organisations is considered a necessary part of the application. Similarly, should an organisation have the support or participation of a range of organisations, a letter stating the role of the partners is considered a necessary part of the application. A template letter is supplied to assist organisations applying as partners.

Ineligible activities are:

- Retrospective funds for projects
- Any organisation's operating and maintenance costs
- Any commercial projects for personal profit
- Uniforms, travel, subsistence costs, and production of newsletters
- Funding for organisations whose main purpose is fundraising
- Any unlawful or unethical purposes, or towards any political purposes.

Note: Schools or State Government Departments are not eligible for the Georges River Community Grants Program.

## 5. PROCEDURE

To be considered for funding organisations must complete a Georges River Community Grants application form in full ensuring that all required documentation is provided, including:

- Proof of not-for-profit status
- A copy of the organisation's latest audited financial statement, or where an organisation is not subject to audit requirements
- Other relevant supporting information as suggested in the application form.

Applicants who have received funding from the Georges River Community Grants Program in 2016, and who are considering applying to the 2017 round must have submitted an evaluation or progress report prior to or at the time of submitting their application. Failure to do so may render new applications ineligible.

Note: Where an organisation is registered for and required to pay GST on goods and or services then that amount needs to be included in the project budget. Note it is the responsibility of the funded organisation to pay GST, so the amount required must be included in the grant budget. Organisations are urged to be sure about their GST obligations as Council will not be able to pay any outstanding GST costs after the funding round has closed.

Advice on completing your application can be arranged by contacting Council staff on 9330 6400. Late applications will not be accepted.

## APPLICATION ASSESSMENT PROCESS

All applications will be considered on their individual merits. All information pertaining to the assessment, prioritisation and decisions about grant applications will remain confidential.

A panel will use the defined Selection Criteria for each category to assess and recommend projects for funding.

The Georges River Community Grant Assessment Panel for 2017 will include:

- General Manager or their delegate (Chair)
- An independent probity advisor
- One former Councillor from the former Hurstville City Council and one former Councillor from the former Kogarah City Council

Once the assessment by the Panel has been completed, a report with specific recommendations will be submitted to Council. Following a determination by Council, successful applicants will receive a letter of offer detailing funding conditions for the project.

Note: In some instances Council may offer an organisation a partial amount and not the full amount applied for. If this occurs Council will liaise with the organisation and re-negotiate the outcomes of the project based on the amount funded.

## 6. ACCOUNTABILITY AND ACQUITTAL OF FUNDS

Grant applications must provide a full and appropriate costing of all aspects of the proposed project. Applicants must demonstrate that grant funds can be expended within the timeframe as nominated in the grant application. Expenditure of funds will be monitored by Council to ensure compliance with the purpose of the grant and the conditions specified.

Grant funds must be expended within twelve months of receipt unless otherwise approved by Council, and all associated documentation must be completed and returned to Council within the agreed time frame.

Applicants must immediately advise Council of any changes from those detailed in the application to the:

- purpose or proposed use of grant funds
- project/program aims and objectives
- management structure of the applicant group or organisation.

To complete/finalise the grant process grant recipients are required to submit a final project evaluation report that includes a grant acquittal and financial statement.

Council will provide the form for the final report which will include a description of the benefits and outcomes achieved by the project and it will require a brief evaluation describing how effectively the project achieved the goals stated in the grant application.

Acquittals must show that funding was spent on/toward the items listed in the budget of the application. Any organisation that does not acquit funds or reports on outcomes correctly at the end of the funding round will not be eligible for any further funding from Council under this program. Any unexpended funds must be refunded to Council.

All grant allocations made by Council are made on the assumption of honest and full disclosure of information contained in the application. Evidence of any breach will render the grant null and void in which case any funds paid under the scheme must be returned to Council.

Successful applicants are required to acknowledge Council by using the following statement depending on the category of funding:

*'Supported by Georges River Council Community Grants Program'*

If your organisation would like to use Council's logo on publications, or on your website, please contact Council's Communications Department on 9330 6400 to seek permission.

## 7. COMMUNITY BUS

At the Council meeting held on 3 April 2017, Council's Administrator moved and declared carried that Council's community bus be awarded through a merit-based selection process through the next round of Georges River Community Grants Program.

By offering to award the community bus to a local not-for-profit organisation through a competitive, merit-based selection process, it will ensure that Council can deliver the asset to the section of the community with the greatest identified need within the local government area.

Council will award the community bus (2009 Mitsubishi Model BE6405A – 21 seating capacity) to a not-for-profit organisation with the condition of an agreement being signed that will ensure that the bus will continue to be used for community purposes for a period of at least three years.

Council's community bus is currently leased out and will be available from 1 January 2018. To apply for the community bus please complete the Community Bus Application Form, and submit your application by 25 June 2017.

Please note that applying for the community bus will not impact any organisation applying for projects through the Georges River Community Grants Program.

## 8. ADVERTISING OF COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

The availability of funds under the Community Grants Program will be advertised through the St George and Sutherland Leader and on Georges River Council's website.

## 9. GRANTS PROGRAM TIMETABLE

Applications open	Monday 15 May 2017
Applications Close	Sunday 25 June 2017
Recommendations to Council Meeting	7 August 2017
Notification to applicants	11 August 2017
Certificate presentation to successful applicants	August/September 2017
Submission of Acquittal for funded projects	August 2018

## 10. CONTACT

For any enquiries and assistance, please contact Council's Coordinator Community Development on 9330 6400.