

Rural Access Grants Policy

Policy – CP096

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Rural Access Worker	Manager Community Futures	Council	January 2015	2015/0010
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1. The purpose of this policy is

To provide a policy to govern grants provided to the community through the Rural Access Grants Program.

2. Policy Statement

Council provides assistance to the community through the Rural Access Grants to provide local, non-profit organisations and groups funding for locally based projects that meet the needs of people with a disability, their carers and families within the Mildura Rural City Council municipality.

The grants are to provide infrastructural responses to access barriers that affect people with a disability.

It is expected that such projects or services have measurable outcomes for the community or target group. Projects or services need to be targeted to areas in which Council has identified and acknowledged community need. Projects that align with the Community Access and Inclusion Plan and the current Council Plan are a requirement.

This policy operates in the context of and should be read in conjunction with Mildura Rural City Grants Policy CP021 and Rural Access Grant Guidelines.

Funding is up to a maximum of \$3,000.

3. Principles

In accordance with the Council Plan, Council assists eligible organisations and groups with grant funding to support and enhance and improve the quality of life of residents, by meeting identified community needs throughout the municipality.

It is a requirement that the infrastructure project:

- Extends, modifies or improves an existing facility so that it better caters for the needs of people with a disability in a physical way.
- Increases accessibility to assist the aged, people with a disability, parents with prams / children, etc to an *existing* facility.

Projects may include:

- Creation of accessible routes of travel
- Removal of steps to create level access
- Permanent hearing loops
- Accessible signage
- Accessible toilet facilities
- Installation of disabled parking
- Maintenance projects where these will increase participation and inclusion for people with a disability
- Fencing for safety
- Ramps
- Handrails
- Special projects may also be submitted for consideration, eg hall improvements, minor equipment.

The grants are funded through Council's Rural Access program, which is a Department of Human Services funded community development initiative for people with a disability. This grant relates to the Council's Community Access and Inclusion Plan and the Key Result Area relating to Community Development in the current Council Plan.

Eligibility

Eligibility criteria that apply to funding for organisations are as follows:

- Organisations must be a not-for-profit constituted body, or legal entity such as an Incorporated Association, or be sponsored or auspiced by one.
- Organisations must have public liability insurance to the amount required by Council.
- Organisations must be based within the municipality or provide services and activities within these boundaries.
- New groups proposing to establish themselves within the boundaries of the municipality are also eligible to apply.
- Details of eligibility and non-eligibility are to be outlined in the respective grants program documentation.
- If the organisation is not a legal entity, an eligible organisation can apply on their behalf, provided they have the necessary legal entity status to enter into a funding agreement with Council and administer funding on their behalf eg if a small voluntary committee is auspiced by a larger

parent organisation, the parent organisation may be able to apply for funding on behalf of the committee.

- Schools can only apply for grants that benefit the institution on a non-infrastructure basis and demonstrate that they are separate to the normal school curriculum eg a program that introduces behavioural change.
- Projects catering for a demonstrated community need will be given preference. Items will not be funded if there is funding available from other sources.

Ineligibility

Ineligibility criteria that apply to funding for organisations are as follows:

- If recurrent or ongoing funding from Council is needed.
- Organisations could fully fund the project from other sources (eg user fees, fundraising, other funding bodies, business or other sponsorship).
- The organisation has significant infrastructure and resources - unless the project is unique, not their core business and provides an additional service with demonstrated high community need.
- The service or project is the responsibility of another level of government or services abandoned by state or federal government (cost shifting).
- The applicant receives funding for the project from Council through other Council grant programs.
- Organisations that cannot demonstrate financial capacity to underwrite in-kind support as proposed in the application.
- Organisations that do not provide a clear statement of their financial position on request.
- Management or administrative support or ongoing operational costs such as annual rent, power or labour costs not directly associated with the implementation of the funded project.
- Computer products for administration use will not be funded unless it contributes directly to a beneficial outcome directly related to the grant program.
- Replacement of consumable items and/or equipment.
- The project/service is addressing a need that is not a priority of Council or is inconsistent with Council Plan.
- The purpose of the project is political or of a political nature / political agenda.
- The purpose of the grant is for religious groups or purpose unless the project is non-denominational and demonstrates a broader community benefit.
- Assistance to an individual person.
- Commercial enterprises.
- Contributions to salary costs of staff to an organisation.
- The manufacturing of products that create a direct commercial return that do not demonstrate a broader community benefit.
- Building maintenance and improvement works unless a demonstrated outcome related to the grant program or OHS risk is identified.
- Incomplete projects.

- General fundraising campaigns, activities and appeals.
- Government entities.
- Organisations that support or project ideas whereby their intended purpose promotes alcohol, drugs or tobacco use.
- Organisations that support or project ideas whereby their intended purpose promotes gambling.
- Study or conferences (including feasibility studies).
- Organisations where a previous grant has not been satisfactorily acquitted.
- Projects that replicate services or programs that already exist within the community. Projects that complement or expand the capability of existing programs will be considered.
- Projects which have been completed or will be completed before the grant funding is announced.
- Costs associated with preparing a grant application including the sourcing of quotes.
- Projects on Council owned/managed land or facilities that do not have approved land managers consent prior to the closing date for applications.
- Projects on Council owned/managed land or facilities where the contractors proposed to deliver the project are not on Council's pre-qualified contractor list.
- Projects not located on municipal property, a Crown reserve, land owned by a public authority or land held by an individual or group for public purposes.

Advertisement of Grants

Rural Access grants will be advertised once per year. Council will use all media (including radio, television, print, internet and social media) and its service networks to advertise grant funding opportunities, including opening and closing dates for applications.

Staff will be made available to assist with application enquiries.

Application and Assessment Process

- Applicants are encouraged to read and follow the grant guidelines, and address all relevant criteria outlined in the application.
- Applicants should also discuss projects with relevant Council staff prior to submitting a grant application.
- Applications shall be submitted on the appropriate on-line grant application form accessed through Council's website.
- Any individual items purchased over \$1,000 will need to be evidenced with at least two quotations prior to being submitted.
- Where a grant is sought for infrastructure development, applicants must ensure that any design plans utilised meet the Australian Standards for Access (AS1428). Council will not fund projects where compliance is not

clear. Applicants must ensure that any infrastructure development does not give rise to a complaint under the Disability Discrimination Act (1992). Applicants should consult with a building practitioner prior to submitting a grant application.

- Council will establish an appropriate Grants Assessment Team who will individually score applications received, based on meeting the agreed assessment criteria.
- The Grants Assessment Team will consist of two Council Officers and one member of the Disability Access Advisory Committee who have not been involved in the grant process, who will individually score applications received, based on meeting the agreed assessment criteria.
- To ensure probity and fairness, each member of the Grants Assessment Team will complete a Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Declaration prior to the grant assessment process. Advice or information given to one application will be made available to all of the applicants. To ensure impartiality, Council officers who have assisted with an application, should not be involved in the assessment process.
- Applications will then be ranked accordingly, based on defined scoring protocols.
- A committee consisting of a member of Council's Disability Access Advisory Committee, General Manager Community, Manager Community Futures and Portfolio Councillor will make final recommendations based on the assessment, applications and program objectives.
- A report will be then be forwarded to Council for adoption regarding the distribution of grants funding.
- Council may propose an alternative form of assistance to meet the stated objectives of the application.
- Once grants have been allocated, a funding agreement will be drawn up and signed by both Council and the successful organisation. Upon signing of the agreement by both parties, payment of the total amount applied for will be made.
- Successful organisations will need to seek approval from Council before undertaking projects on Council owned or managed land. This includes any necessary permits such as planning or building permits.
- Upon the completion of a project, the successful organisation will submit to the Mildura Rural City Council details of expenditure to indicate the funds were utilised for the intended project along with an evaluation report.

This evaluation report will include:

- Overview of the progress of the project/service.
- Outcomes, outputs, performance measures.
- Copies of publicity, media reports, printed materials relating to the specific project.
- The provision of supporting documents and receipts and an indication of how objectives have been met.
- An on-site inspection of your project (if required).

Frequency of grants - There will be one Rural Access Grants round per calendar year subject to funding availability from the Rural Access program.

Assessment Criteria

There is a clearly defined Assessment Criteria that all applications must address.

- Clearly outlines project management team who will deliver project.
- Clearly defined accountability and governance structures and delegations.
- Contribute to the achievement of the objectives outlined in the Community Access Plan section of the current Council Plan.
- Has a focus on access and ongoing benefits to the community
- Has the opportunity to offer new or extended range of opportunities for participation by local people with a disability, their families or carers.
- Has an innovative focus.
- An overall description of the objectives and aims of the project.
- Clearly defined community consultation and engagement process.
- Ensure all other potential funding sources have been explored.
- Partnerships have been explored with other local agencies to deliver the project as part of a wider community project.
- Demonstrate how the project will develop and benefit the community.
- Ability to achieve and demonstrate outcomes.
- Social and environmental considerations associated with any procurement of goods and services.
- The project is primarily a self-help project.
- There will be a clear benefit from assisting the targeted group with high needs.
- Demonstrate how the project will have long term benefit and become self-reliant into the future.
- If applicable, a plan for on-going alternative funding.
- A detailed budget that articulates all monetary and in-kind support.
- A timeline that estimates when key objectives and tasks will be undertaken and completed by.

4. Definitions

Nil

5. Who is responsible for implementing this policy?

Manager Community Futures.

6. Legislation and other references

6.1 Legislation

For further information related to this policy see:

- Disclosure of Interest Section 79 – Local Government Act
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Australian Standards for Access (AS1428).

6.2 Documents

This Policy is implemented in conjunction with the following documents:

- Grants Policy CP021
- Rural Access Grant Guidelines.

6.3 Risk Assessment Reference

This Policy aligns to the following core Risk Management Standards and ARK Assessment Criterion:

- Product and Service Delivery.

Risk Category	✓	Risk Category	✓
Asset Management		Financial Sustainability	✓
Committees	✓	Human Resource Management	
Compliance – Legal & Regulatory		Leadership & Organisational Culture	
Contract Management	✓	Occupational Health & Safety	✓
Contract Tendering & Procurement		Organisational Risk Management	
Corporate Governance		Project Management	✓
Environmental Sustainability		Public Image and Reputation	✓