

COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING GRANTS



Community Strengthening Grants Standard Guidelines

1. COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING GRANTS

Is your Golden Plains community group looking to fund a project?

Council's Community Strengthening Grants Program has been a valuable source of financial support for local events and projects in Golden Plains Shire communities for 26 years. There are two rounds of grants each year with applications opening in April and September.

Grants of up to \$10,000 are available in four streams:

1. Healthy Active Living
2. Creative Community
3. Environment and Sustainability
4. Community Safety

1.1. Standard Guidelines

These standard guidelines include important information and requirements that are common to all the four streams when preparing an application.

1.2. Policy Statement

Golden Plains Shire Council provides grants to community groups for the development of positive and beneficial projects which deliver on the Community Vision 2040 and the Council's priority actions.

- [Golden Plains Shire Community Vision 2040](#) is a plan that capture the hopes and aspirations of the Golden Plains community and ensures we are planning for a bright future for all.
- [Council Plan 2021-2025](#), incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan outlines Council's strategic commitment to deliver on Council's Vision, which includes that following themes of **Community, Liveability, Sustainability, Prosperity & Leadership**.

Please note: Council recommends that in the preparation of applications and delivery of grant projects individuals/groups are aware of and adhere to the most recent Covid-19 advice which can be found at <https://www.australia.gov.au/>.

1.3. Key Dates

- Round 1 opens on 1 April and closes at 2pm on 30 April each year
- Round 2 opens on 1 September and closes at 2pm on 30 September each year

**The above dates may change due to public holiday/weekend.*

1.4. Process Flowchart



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2. GRANT STREAMS

All funding streams should relate back to the objectives of the Council Plan 2021-2025 and the Community Vision 2040.

Healthy Active Living	Creative Community
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Eating • Active Living: Increasing physical activity, sport, and active recreation opportunities for residents • Connected Communities: Social connectedness and activated spaces • Mental Health • Gender Equity and the prevention of violence against women • Increased access to health and community services <p>Reference may be made to the strategic objectives of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2020-2030.</p>	<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting and engaging through participation in creative experiences • Initiatives that demonstrate direct benefit to the local artistic community • Arts and Culture as a tool to revitalize local spaces • Workshops, performances and exhibitions • Arts activities as part of community festivals or events • Artist-in-residence programs • Public art and design projects • Community seminars and forums • Activities or projects which support the development of lost trades or practices <p>Reference may be made to the strategic objectives of the Golden Plains Shire Council's Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy 2022-2026.</p>
Community Safety	Environment & Sustainability
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for residents to connect, to get to know their neighbours and build stronger communities that are better equipped to survive and thrive during and after times of crisis • Support activities which address specific risk factors within the community such as fires, extreme weather events, or crime • Small infrastructure projects which increase the safety of the community for example fire danger signs, communication boards or air conditioning units in public buildings <p>Reference can be made to the strategic objectives of the Golden Plains Shire Council's Community Safety Team.</p>	<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Sustainability – to meet the needs of the present but also provides a quality environment for future generations • Resilience – sustained ability of a community to use available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations • Environment – our physical and biological surroundings, both where we work and live and the way these affect how people feel • Waste – covers waste management activities including reducing landfill waste, increasing recycling, composting, improving community knowledge on waste actions <p>Reference can be made to the strategic objectives of the Golden Plains Shire Council's Environment Strategy 2019-2027.</p>

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3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicant must be a community group or organisation
- Community groups and organisations must be:
 - not for profit; and
 - incorporated or have an auspice arrangement.
- Groups may submit multiple applications per round, but they must be for different projects and cannot be the same application over multiple streams.
- Government organisations and agencies are not eligible to apply. However, kindergartens, Committees of Management, other community committees and local branches of larger organisations (e.g. CFA and SES) are eligible where significant community benefit can be demonstrated.
- The project must be carried out within the Shire and benefit Golden Plains Shire communities and residents.
- Primary and Secondary schools are eligible to apply as long as the project is not solely curriculum-based and can strongly demonstrate a partnership with another community organisation or have a joint use agreement in place guaranteeing community access.
- Previous funded applicant must have no outstanding debts or overdue acquittals with Golden Plains Shire Council.
- Applicant must have a level of public liability insurance appropriate to cover the project. This is where if increased insurance is required to your specific project, it can form part of the budget in your application.
- Applicant must provide quotes or evidence to support the budget for any individual expenditure over \$250.
- Applicant must match the requested funding through either cash or in-kind (volunteer labor) contributions.

The following rates should be used as a guide when calculating **in-kind** budget expenses:

 - ✓ Community group/individual labor: \$30 per hour.
 - ✓ Professional labor provided by a qualified tradesperson: \$45 per hour.
- The number of times an applicant has previously received funding through the Community Strengthening Grants program will be considered during the assessment process. Council may choose not to fund a project by applicants who have

previously received funding should the program be oversubscribed.

- For facilities' improvements, the applicant must either be the owner of the land/building/facility or have the written consent from the owner. Consent evidence must be in writing and attached to the online application.
- If the community facility is on Council-owned land/property, the applicant must discuss the project with a Golden Plains Shire Council officer prior to submitting the application.

4. FUNDING CRITERIA

All applications will be assessed against the following criteria (weighted out of 100):

- a. **Clear objectives that align with the grant focus areas (20%)**
 - The objectives of the project are clearly identified
 - The project and intended target group aligns with the grant focus areas
- b. **Direct benefit to the Golden Plains Shire community (40%)**
 - The project demonstrates clear and measurable outcomes and benefits to the target group
 - The project can demonstrate strong community impact
 - Demonstrated ability to foster greater understanding of community issues or provide for preventative measures
- c. **Capacity of the organisation to manage the funding and deliver the service or program (40%)**
 - There is evidence of project planning for the full funding period (including achievable timelines)
 - The application contains a detailed, clear, and accurate budget
 - Clearly demonstrated ability to manage and implement the project

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5. COUNCIL WILL NOT FUND

- Applicant whose project has received Golden Plains Shire Council funding for the same activity through another grant stream of funding (you cannot be funded twice).
- Individuals cannot be the applicant.
- Projects that only provide direct financial benefit to a commercial business or individual with no significant community outcome.
- Projects outside of the Shire or that cannot demonstrate significant benefit/outcomes to Golden Plains Shire communities.
- Projects that have already commenced or completed prior to receiving the grant funding agreement.
- The purchase of land.
- Projects for which the funding is the responsibility of other levels of government.
- An organisations recurring operational costs such as salaries, rent and utilities or insurance.
- Duplicates of existing services/activities unless it can be demonstrated that it meets an unmet community need.
- Applications that rely solely on Golden Plains Shire Council funding. (i.e: Council will only contribute a maximum of 50% of the funding of the project costs)
- Funding for individuals to attend conferences, training or workshops.
- Funding for prizes, donations, awards, scholarships or gifts.
- Activities that are inconsistent with Council Plan 2021-2025 and Council Vision 2040.
- Payments or wages for contracted staff, players, coaches and/or administrators.
- Deficit funding (to repay cash shortfalls).

5.1 Environment & Sustainability Grants Specific Exclusions

- Energy and water efficiency improvements to facilities that are not publicly accessible.
- Revegetation that is required as a condition of a planning permit or illegal vegetation clearing.
- Revegetation projects using plants that are not indigenous to the local area.
- Control of weeds on private land that are already the statutory responsibility of the project applicant.

- Applicant labour and hire charges for applicant-owned equipment, which should be shown as an in-kind contribution.
- Plantings which are solely for beautification.

5.2 Community Safety Grants Specific Exclusions

- Equipment which is the responsibility of the CFA or SES.
- Works on private land which solely benefit the land holder and do not contribute to wider community safety objectives.

6. FUNDING CONDITIONS

- All applications must be submitted online at <https://goldenplains.smartygrants.com.au/>
- All applicants must acknowledge that they have read and understood the legislative requirements for volunteer health and safety. [A Guide to Work Health and Safety for Volunteers](#)
- All applicants must submit a completed application form to Council before the closing date to be considered for funding.
- Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application within 8 to 10 weeks of closing of the round which will include funding agreement. Funding agreements must be returned within 6 weeks of receipt or Council has the right to remove the funding. If successful, funding will be paid directly into the bank account specified in the tax invoice.
- Grant approval is subject to the applicant demonstrating that they have obtained the necessary permits or approvals to complete the project.
- All projects must be completed within 12 months of the execution of the agreement unless Council gives prior written permission for an extension. Extensions may be granted up to a maximum of 6 months.
- Applicants are required to submit a final project report via SmartyGrants at the completion of the project.
- Every approved project is subject to the acquittal process to validate the expenditure and confirm that the funding has been spent on the project in accordance with the funding agreement.
- Council accepts no responsibility for budget over-runs.

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- Council accepts no responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of projects unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

6.1 Assessment Process

- Projects will be assessed via a competitive process whereby a panel of 3 Council officers relevant to the specific stream of funding make an initial assessment against the funding criteria.
- Final endorsement will be given by the Council CEO.
- All applicants will be informed on the outcome of their application in writing.
- Applicants may appeal decisions made in writing, to the CEO.

Important: Meeting all the criteria does not guarantee that an application will be successful. Budget constraints will ultimately limit the projects that can be funded in any given financial year.

6.2 What Happens After Assessment Process?

- Unsuccessful applicants will be advised by post or email by within 8 to 10 weeks of closing of the round.
- Successful applicants will be contacted within 8 to 10 weeks of closing of the round and will be required to enter into a contractual agreement with Golden Plains Shire Council in accordance with the Funding Conditions within 6 weeks of receipt or Council has the right to remove the funding.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

7.1 Features of a strong funding application

There are ways to make your funding application more competitive:

- Broader community reach, multiple objectives.
- Clearly outline what is proposed, why it is needed, how it will be achieved, who is involved and where it will take place.
- Provide relevant support material: preference will be given to projects which can demonstrate clear, defined partnerships with other community organisations and demonstrate partnership by providing letters of support from partner organisations/groups.

- Provide relevant support material that shows the potential of the proposed activity.
- You have spoken to Council Planning and Grants Officer about your application.

7.2 Auspice Information

If your group is a not-for-profit organisation but is not incorporated, you will need to find an organisation that can auspice your application to be able to lodge an application.

Once you have an agreed auspice organisation you will be required to complete an auspice agreement form and upload the completed form and the Auspice organisations certificate of currency.

- It is the applicant responsibility to have an auspice agreement completed using the grant program [Auspice Agreement form](#).
- Applicant must keep the auspice organisation fully informed of the details of the application and all project aspects and progress.
- If the application is successful, all grant funds will be paid to the auspice organisation for distribution to the applicant.
- In some instances, an applicant may request the auspice organisation provides public liability insurance (PLI) for their project. Should this occur, the applicant must obtain a PLI certificate of currency from the auspice organisation and include this in the applicant application. A policy statement or receipt is not acceptable.

7.3 Legal and Taxation Requirements

- If required, you must arrange public liability insurance to cover the activity/s detailed in the grant application.
- All applicants must possess an Australian Business Number (ABN) or provide [a statement by a supplier form](#) available from the ATO website.
- Allocated funds must be expended within 12 months of receiving the grant, unless otherwise negotiated.

7.4 Acknowledgement, Promotion and Marketing

- Successful grant applicants must acknowledge Golden Plains Council as a funding source on all marketing and publicity material.

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- You will need to include the Council official logo and the following wording: *'This project is supported by the Golden Plains Council through its Community Strengthening Grants Program'*.
- A logo will be supplied via email to successful applicants. Successful applicants are required to contact Council Planning and Grants Officer to arrange approval of all proofs/materials before making these public.
- Unauthorised use of the Golden Plains Council logo or inappropriate attribution may result in the funded applicant being ineligible to apply for further grants.

7.5 Contacts

To discuss your Community Strengthening Grant application please contact Council Planning and Grants Officer on 5220 7111 (or email communitygrants@gplains.vic.gov.au).