

Policy

Title: Funding Programs Policy

Category: Community Services and Events

Date Last Adopted: June 2025

1. Objectives

This policy provides the framework for how the City of Hobart provides and manages funding to individuals and organisations applying for support through its various funding programs.

The objective of the Funding Programs is to encourage and support the development and delivery of Hobart-based activities, events, projects and programs that have outcomes that align with the objectives of the City of Hobart Capital City Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) and other Council endorsed strategies.

2. Background

In accordance with Council's role and principles under the *Local Government Act 1993*, the City of Hobart administers funding through grants, strategic partnerships and sponsorships (Funding Programs).

The City of Hobart plays an important role in the funding landscape for the community. The Funding Programs seek to meet an identified community or business need, encourage innovation, support pilot programs, or complement State and Federal funding through programs that benefit the City of Hobart.

Through its Funding Programs, Council is responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of individuals and organisations within its community, and to addressing priorities of the City of Hobart as articulated in the City's Strategic Plan and Council endorsed strategies.

The Funding Programs will generally fall into one of two categories. Firstly, funding that seeks to change behaviour or incentivise investment into something that might not have otherwise occurred. Secondly, funding that supports organisations that are better placed than Council to deliver an activity contributing to Council's strategic objectives.

The term “grant” is defined as funds or products that are disbursed from one party to a recipient. All support provided through the City of Hobart Funding Programs, be it cash or in-kind is referred to as a “grant” and recognised as hard costs.

The City of Hobart Funding Program Team provides transparent and equitable governance of the City’s Funding Programs.

Sponsorship arrangements held by the City of Hobart with other organisations are not grants and are defined as a commercial arrangement with the City of Hobart as the sponsor, or an external party sponsoring the City, and involve a contribution of money or in-kind support for an activity, in return for a certain specified benefit.

3. Scope

This policy covers all Funding Program related activities and is developed to replace the former Grants Program Policy and the Inbound Requests for Sponsorships Policy.

This policy does not include activities covered through the City of Hobart Procurement Policy or the administration of incoming grant or sponsorship funding paid to the Council.

Funding programs are different from the purchase of services, where the City of Hobart determines the type of project, product, or service it requires and develops a contract to manage how this is delivered.

The Council may approve cash and in-kind funding support to individuals and organisations outside this policy under exceptional circumstances as part of the normal decision making of Council.

4. Definitions

Funding Programs are defined in the following ways:

- Grant – funding to our communities to support their initiatives in line with the objectives of our funding streams, and allocating funding based on merit through an application and assessment process,
- City Partnership – a commercial arrangement with the City of Hobart as the sponsor and involves the contribution of money or in-kind support for an activity, in return for a specified benefit. Funding is provided over one or multiple years and Council may be involved in project development and implementation to aid in achieving mutually beneficial results.

5. Current Funding Structure

The City of Hobart’s Funding Program (as at June 2025) is structured as follows:

- Quick Response Grants – in-kind and cash.
- Project based competitive grant rounds referred to as funding streams, offered twice per year, once per year or every two years.
- Sponsorship Program – this program offers support to events, festivals and activities in return for promotional benefits. The support from Council can be cash, in-kind or a combination of both, in exchange for mutually beneficial outcomes for the city.
- The existing Inbound Requests for Sponsorships policy is to be replaced by this updated Funding Programs policy, and all future sponsorship proposals will be presented as City Partnership Agreements.
- City Partnerships – Council has a number of agreements with various organisations to deliver events and activities. Similar to the Sponsorship Program these partnerships must deliver mutually beneficial outcomes for the city.

6. Proposed Funding Structure

The Funding Program and associated funding streams will be categorised in one of three new categories, as follows:

- Open Competitive Grant Rounds:
 - Held periodically, usually open biannually, annually or biennially.
 - Advertised publicly and any eligible applicant can apply during the application timeframe.
 - Applications are assessed against set criteria and compared to each other.
 - Program specific grants.
- Quick Response Grants
 - Advertised publicly and any eligible applications accepted at any time during the application timeframe or until the funding allocation is exhausted.
 - Each application is assessed on its own merits, not against others.
 - Available as in-kind or cash support.
 - Quick Response Grants.
- City and Civic Partnerships
 - Includes unsolicited sponsorship proposals.
 - For the Civic Partnerships, specific organisations are invited to apply.
 - Held annually or biennially
 - Proposals/applications are assessed against criteria.
 - Within this category there is scope for annual or multi-year agreements, for which the decision will be made by Council.
 - All multi-year agreements will be reviewed annually to ensure the City Partner has delivered the activity and benefits in line with the agreement.

The next stages of this Policy document provides direction around four key areas:

- Funding Priorities
- Funding Program Principles
- Eligibility Framework
- Funding Programs Management Process

7. Funding Priorities

The Funding Programs are aligned with the 8 pillars of the City of Hobart Strategic Plan, *“A Community Vision for our Island Capital”*. Each of the Funding Programs guidelines will need to demonstrate how their assessment criteria are aligned to these Funding Priorities.

1. Sense of Place
2. Community inclusion, participation and belonging
3. Creativity and culture
4. City economies
5. Movement and connectivity
6. Natural environment
7. Built environment
8. Governance and civic involvement

8. Funding Program Principles

Each of the Funding Programs Guidelines need to be aligned to these principles in addition to any bespoke Assessment Criteria developed for each Funding Stream.

Each Funding stream will have its own unique set of Guidelines, that will be reviewed and amended administratively on an as needs basis. The Chief Executive Officer will have delegation to approve amended versions of these as long as the amendments are consistent with the Funding Priorities and Funding Program Principles.

Principle 1 – Alignment with the City’s Strategic Goals

- The funding needs to deliver outcomes that align with the goals outlined in the City of Hobart Capital City Strategic Plan 2023.

Principle 2 – Value for Ratepayers and Community Benefit

- The funding needs to provide value and deliver outcomes that provide benefits to the community aligned to strategic goals/priorities.

Principle 3 – Fit for Purpose and Responsive

- The funded project requirements are proportional to the funding being pursued and responsive to community needs. Local Government is the appropriate level of government for the delivery of the funding.

Principle 4 – Equity and Transparency

- Funding needs to be provided transparently and consistently while maintaining flexibility to react to community needs and the City of Hobart priorities.

Principle 5 - Accountability

- Recipients of funds need to be held accountable for how those funds are expended.

Principle 6 – Probity

- Recipients of funds will be held accountable for funds are expended.

9. Eligibility Framework

General Eligibility

Each Funding Program will have eligibility requirements, to ensure an equitable and transparent funding process and funding distribution, in line with the Funding Principles.

Applicant and activity eligibility requirements will be detailed clearly within the Guidelines and upheld through eligibility assessment processes. Specific Funding Programs may target specific entity types or other eligibility requirements to meet the Funding Priorities of the program.

Community Benefit

To deliver on its Strategic Plan key pillars, Council will prioritise funding applications to organisations as outlined in Sections 6 and 7.

All proposed projects must demonstrate benefits to the City of Hobart community within the context of this policy.

Eligibility Minimum Standards

As a minimum, each grant applicant must meet the below eligibility requirements:

- For funding streams >\$5,000: Applicants must be an Australian legal entity type with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Restrictions on entity type may apply within certain funding streams, and this will be clearly outlined in the guidelines for the funding stream.
 - Where an applicant is not a legal entity, they will need to be auspiced by an organisation that is a legal entity, otherwise they will be deemed ineligible.

- For funding streams <\$5,000: Applicants must be an Australian legal entity with an ABN or be eligible to provide a Statement by Supplier Form.
- Be financially viable at the time of application.
- Applicant has not received other funding from the City for the same activity within the financial year.
- Activities need to be delivered in or have the outcomes delivered in the City of Hobart Local Government Area (LGA), but it isn't a requirement that the grant recipient is based in the City of Hobart LGA.
- Applicant has fulfilled the conditions of all previous City of Hobart grants and have no overdue debts or outstanding compliance matters with the City of Hobart LGA. All outstanding debts/acquittals/compliance matters need to be finalised/paid/resolved prior to the eligibility assessment process of the applied funding stream, otherwise the applicant will be deemed ineligible.
- Demonstrate that any funds received will be used for the purpose of delivering activities consistent with the Guidelines for individual Funding Programs and in accordance with this Policy.
- Have submitted the application not less than the prescribed period as outlined in the Funding Program Guidelines from the activity commencement date.
- City Partnerships - be able to demonstrate the City of Hobart will receive a return on investment through demonstrated benefits including, but not limited to:
 - Appropriate branding and profile-raising opportunities.
 - Ability to be included in high-profile media/advertising.
 - Participation, displays or on-site presence at events.
 - Complementary tickets and promotional giveaways.
 - Promoting complementary City of Hobart programs or events.
 - Provide opportunities for City of Hobart to reach and engage a large audience.

Ineligible applicants

As a minimum for each funding stream, the City of Hobart will not fund:

- Current Council employees/Elected Members or former employees/Elected Members who ceased in their role less than six months before applying.
- Applicants that have already received funding (including in-kind) from the City of Hobart for the same activity within the same financial year.
- Federal, state and local government agencies/bodies or funded agencies/bodies.
- Political parties.
- Applicants that are in any way associated with illegal activities.

Activities the City of Hobart Will Not Fund

As a minimum for each funding stream, the City of Hobart will not fund:

- Activities or programs that are already delivered by the City of Hobart or are our core business.

- Activities that are a part of a larger festival or event, which has already received a grant or sponsorship from the City of Hobart to deliver that activity.
- Donations or fundraising activities that support the recurrent operations of the applicant.
- Contributions towards payment of rates, or repayment of debts or loans.
- Contingency costs.
- Costs that are normally core business of other State or Federal Government funding or where the application is directly from other levels of government.
- Activities that conflict with the City of Hobart strategies, values and mission.
- Activities emanating from political parties.
- Individual pursuits or professional development, unless there is a broader public outcome.
- Activities that discriminate under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 in employment, marketing, advertising practices or within the event itself.
- Applicants are in any way associated with illegal activities.
- Retrospective activities.
- Registered school or registered training organisations seeking supports for costs associated with the employment of teaching or support staff and/or the delivery of curriculum.

This list is not exhaustive, and each grant program may include further ineligible activities, or funding uses within the guidelines.

Social Responsibility, Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection

Applicants must pay at least minimum award rates or industry-recommended rates of pay to workers involved in funded projects. Where an industry standard applies, applicants are expected to meet those rates of pay. It is acknowledged that many community applicants will be utilising volunteers which must be detailed in the application.

The City of Hobart has a corporate social responsibility to advocate for vulnerable and unseen members of the community. The Funding Programs are a mechanism to enable support, by assisting organisations that contribute towards achieving our objectives of inclusion, access and equity for all who live, work or play in Hobart.

Where an application involves working with children, young and vulnerable persons, applicants must provide advice on how they comply with the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 or the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP) Scheme.

10. Funding Project Management Process

Roles and Responsibilities

Elected Members

The role of Elected Members is to set strategic direction and approve the policy within which Council delivers funding to the community. Through the appropriate statutory meeting of Council, Elected Members are responsible for approving:

- Funding budgets
- Major changes to the Policy
- Funding decisions relating to the Closed Non-Competitive Grant Rounds

Chief Executive Officer

The CEO is delegated to authorise administrative changes to Funding Program guidelines, application forms, assessment criteria, other relevant documentation and timing of Funding Programs in accordance with this policy, as may be required, to ensure implementation of the program is compliant with this policy.

The CEO is delegated to make funding decisions for the Open Competitive Grant Rounds and the Quick Response Grants.

Administration

The role of the Administration is to deliver the Funding Programs within the strategic direction of this policy as set by the Elected Members. The Administration is encouraged to explore innovative models of funding events and activities that deliver community benefits. Where these innovative models differ from the funding structure in this Policy, officers will report back to Council to determine the way forward.

Budget

All grant funds are contained within a single budget function that shall be reserved solely for this activity, except for Heritage Grant funds, which are administered through a designated trust.

The funding allocation to each grant stream is not transferable to another stream unless approved by the Chief Executive Officer in exceptional circumstances in accordance with this policy, as may be required throughout the implementation of the program.

Grant streams may be divided into categories. Grant funding can be transferred between categories within a stream if funding for a category has not been fully expended within the financial year and there is insufficient funds within another category to fully fund all recommended applications.

Guidelines

Each Funding Program will establish its own set of Guidelines detailing operational and administrative requirements, including:

- The purpose of the Funding Program and identified links to the City of Hobart Strategic Plan.

- Eligibility criteria that meet the eligibility requirements of this Policy, and any other identified requirements for the Funding Program.
- Amount of funding available, including both the total funding pool and the minimum and maximum funding amounts, as allocated through annual budgets.
- Eligible costs outlining the types of activities that can be undertaken with the funding.
- Timeframes for grant periods, when they will open and close, indicative timeframes for assessment and timeframes for when projects are to be delivered for that Funding Program or grant round.
- Assessment criteria and weightings – that will be focused on the priorities and principles outlined in Section 6 and 7 of this Policy.
- Assessment panel makeup, i.e. a mixture of internal and external representatives.
- The Acquittal process.
- Contact details for further information.
- May also include Frequently Asked Questions and other information to support applicants, such as links to any relevant documentation.

All Funding Programs are to be reviewed every four years at a minimum, or in line with a review of the City of Hobart Strategic Plan.

During the caretaker period for Local Government elections, Funding Programs can only be administered in line with approved budgets and programs.

Applications

All Funding Programs will use an agreed online platform for the application and assessment processes.

All Funding Programs will be open to application through funding rounds at set times each year. These may be subject to change, but any change will be proactively promoted through the appropriate communications channels, e.g. Councils website.

Funding programs that include a 'Quick Response' category will be open to applications throughout each financial year until such time as the annual budget allocation is fully allocated.

All applications must be received by the deadline of the Funding Program as outlined in the relevant Guidelines. Late applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be accepted.

Late submissions

If applicants are experiencing technical or other issues and are unable to submit by the close date of the Funding Program, they must contact Council within 48 hours to request an extension to submission. The Manager of the Funding Program can approve on a case-by-case basis.

Assessment and Decision Making

Eligibility will be assessed by Council officers, using the eligibility criteria stated in the Guidelines.

All eligible applications will be assessed against weighted Assessment Criteria using the below criteria as a minimum:

- Demonstrates strong alignment with the objectives of the specific Funding Program, for example, City Partnerships or Community Quick Response Grants.
- Demonstrates alignment with identified City of Hobart Strategic Plan outcomes and underlying strategies.
- Demonstrates that the activity is well planned, that suitably skilled people are involved, and that the applicant and the activity are financially viable.
- Demonstrates value for money for the level of funding request.

Closed Non-Competitive Grant Rounds will be assessed with a focus on the economic and tourism benefit to the city.

All eligible applications will be assessed by an assessment panel including a mix of Council officers and external subject matter experts, as identified by Council officers. Budget will be allocated within the Funding Program budget to cover expenses for the external subject matter experts that participate in the assessment panels.

- Open Non-Competitive Grant Rounds such as Quick Response Grants to be assessed by 1 Council officer against the assessment criteria.
 - Recommendation is then made to the Manager responsible for the Funding Program for consideration.
 - The Manager responsible for the Funding Program's recommendation is then submitted to the CEO for final approval.
- Open Competitive Grant Rounds or project-based funding for competitive grants are to be assessed by an assessment panel of at least 2 Council officers and 1-2 external subject matter experts against assessment criteria.
 - Recommendation is then made to the Manager responsible for the Funding Program for consideration, and then the recommendation is submitted to the CEO for final approval.
- Closed Non-Competitive Grant Rounds or City Partnership agreements, including unsolicited sponsorship requests, will be assessed by Council officers and a proposal with a high-level benefit assessment based on information provided by the applicant will be submitted to Council for consideration.
- All applications will be subject to a level of risk assessment completed by Council officers of the City of Hobart.

Communications of Approved Grants

Where Elected Members are not the delegated approver, notice of the approved grants will be provided at the nearest Council Committee meeting.

Grant Outcomes and Appeals

If an applicant would like to have their application outcome appealed, they will need to contact the Funding Program team within 7 business days of the outcome. The Council Officers will review the appeal, ensuring due process was followed.

Any recommendations will be submitted to the Manager of the Funding Program for review.

Any applications recommended for funding consideration from an appeal, will require CEO approval, and must be within the approved budget of the Funding Program.

Probity

Applicants must disclose any reasonably identifiable perceived, potential or actual conflicts of interest when submitting their application to the City of Hobart. Failure to do so may result in the termination of funding.

Assessors must disclose any reasonably identifiable perceived, potential or actual conflicts of interest prior to reviewing any applications. Failure to do so will remove the assessor from the assessment process.

To ensure impartiality and fairness of the assessment process, City of Hobart officers providing activity advice to applicants during submission, such as Relationship Managers, will be exempt from participating in the assessment of applications.

Conditions of Funding

All successful applicants are required to enter into a Funding Agreement with the City of Hobart. Certain conditions within agreements will vary between Funding Programs and also potentially from application to application. The more significant the level of support the more significant the applicant can expect the acquittal obligations to be.

All successful applicants across all Funding Programs will be required to complete an acquittal report using the preferred City of Hobart format to clearly demonstrate how the grant has been spent in line with the Agreement, and how the grant has contributed to priorities from the City of Hobart Strategic Plan.

Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines are to be attached to the Funding Agreement that each funding recipient signs, and clearly outlines the obligations of the funding recipient in relation to acknowledging the City of Hobart as the funding provider.

Cancelled or Postponed Activities or Events

Applicants notifying Council of the cancellation or postponement of their funded activity will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any changes or postponement requests must be submitted in writing, and a re-negotiated delivery timeline must be approved by the responsible Council officer.

The responsible Council officer will consider each request to ensure Funding Program objectives are being met and will continue to be met. The proposed changes must align with the Funding Agreement, in particular the approved scope of the project.

If an activity is cancelled or postponed indefinitely, Council will seek a return of the funding.

Reporting and Disclosure

The outcomes of the individual Funding Programs will be reported to Council on an annual basis.

All grants and benefits requiring disclosure under S77 of the Local Government Act 1993 will be reported in the City of Hobart Annual Report in accordance with City of Hobart's Policy 'Grants and Benefits Disclosure'.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

12. Legislation, Terminology and References

Hobart: A community vision for our island capital

Capital City Strategic Plan 2019-29

City of Hobart Grant and Partnership Acknowledgment Guidelines

Terminology

Grant	Cash or in-kind products, facilities or services that are disbursed from one party (grant maker) to a recipient (grant seeker).
Grants Program	Provides transparent and equitable governance of the City's grant provision.
Grant Stream	Focuses on a specific aspect of the City's strategic direction.
Grant Category	Targeting a specific type or size of funding category within a grant stream e.g. Quick Response, Small, Medium, etc.
City of Hobart	Refers to the Council Administration.
Council	Refers to the Elected Members of the City of Hobart.

Responsible Officer:	Manager Economic Development
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