

BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANTS POLICY

PURPOSE

Council's Annual Business Support Grants Program is a strategic tool developed to support and encourage:

- The sustenance of existing business;
- The development of new business and industry; and
- The use of innovative and bespoke business models.

The program will support direct and indirect economic benefit to the Shire of Quairading.

The program will recognise the important role commercial enterprises play in achieving the Shire's vision – "A place of welcome for all, where we work together, with thriving industry creating jobs, a bright future for our young people, and a bustling town in a beautiful and productive rural setting".

OBJECTIVE

- a. Attract State, Federal and international investment into the Shire of Quairading.
- b. Assist new enterprises to establish in Quairading.
- c. Encourage individual businesses to invest in online and e-commerce activities.
- d. Encourage local enterprises to invest in professional development and training.
- e. Assist local business in the ability to increase business opportunity and sustainability.
- f. Provide businesses with support for capital works projects to adapt to changes in business structure and/or conditions.
- g. Enhance local business capacity to improve their streetscape presence.

POLICY

Council grant funding of up to \$5000 (per application, per annum) is available to assist current or potential local businesses or enterprises to

- Sustain existing business;
- Develop new business and/or industry; and
- Pilot innovative and bespoke business models.

The purpose of the grant funding application must adhere to the purposes and/or objectives of this policy.

Council reserves the right to automatically reject non-compliant applications without consideration. Council also reserves the right to reject applications, even if they are compliant.

Council will fund this policy to encourage the growth and sustainability of business and enterprise, which will in turn improve local employment opportunities for residents and help achieve thriving local industry and community.

1. Allocation of Resources

Council will review and confirm allocation of resources annually as part of their Annual Budget processes.

Resources will be allocated to a specific General Ledger Account.

A single tranche will be allocated and available to local businesses upon the adoption of the annual budget.

Grants will be available twice each calendar year and assessed by Council on 01 March and 01 October each calendar year. This will ensure:

- Council is using an accountable and transparent selection process to approve applications.
- Applications will be assessed on merit, and the most worthy applications will be selected against a priority criteria.
- The Shire can provide a designated resource to assist businesses to prepare applications over a three-month period.

A process whereby applicants can apply all year around assumes an unlimited amount of funding for the program or a lack of structure whereby projects can be prioritised according to value to the community (i.e. the least valuable projects may be submitted early in the financial year and the most valuable projects submitted after the funds have been exhausted). An 'all year around' model also makes it difficult for Council to demonstrate transparency and to select according to priority.

Businesses/enterprises will be allocated a maximum of one grant every 12 months. If an application is unsuccessful, the organisation can apply again in a later round.

Organisations may not apply for funding under the Business Support Grants Program if they have also received funding under the Shire Community Grants Program in the same year. There is a requirement to provide an Acquittal Report back to the Shire to show where funds have been spent at the end of each financial year.

2. Eligibility Conditions

- a. Applicants must be based within the Shire of Quairading.
- b. Applicants must hold an Australia Business Number.
- c. All successful projects are to be completed within 12 months of the funding being awarded.
- d. Applicants must verify that the funded project could not be covered by insurance.
- e. The program will not support organisations that are political or that have a political purpose, government departments or agencies, grant making bodies or have a primary focus on fundraising.
- f. Requests for funding or support cannot be for a project/activity that has already occurred.
- g. The grant will not fund any reoccurring business/operational costs.
- h. The applicant must have all insurances, permits and licences for business operation.
- i. Organisations may not apply for funding under the Business Support Grants Program if they have also received funding under the Shire Community Grants Program in the same year.

3. General Conditions

- a. Projects that will be considered, but not limited to, include:
 - i. New business/enterprise assistance.
 - ii. Training and professional development.
 - iii. Investing in e-commerce activities.
 - iv. Projects that increase business opportunity and sustainability.
 - v. Capital works projects including major projects and streetscape and aesthetic/amenity improvements.
- b. Budget allocation for the Business Support Program will be determined during the Council's Annual Budgeting Process.
- c. Allocation of grant funding, partial or entire, will be at the sole discretion of the Council.
- d. Council's position is to fund to a maximum of one half of the total project cost and applicants are encouraged to contribute their own funding and/or obtain grant or loan funding for the remaining project costs.
- e. In-kind labour and equipment may be included in the applicant's contribution but may not exceed one third of the completed value of the project.
- f. Council may opt to use their employees or equipment in lieu of a cash contribution.
- g. Council reserves the right to carry out a progress inspection or request a progress report at any stage of the project.
- h. The Chief Executive Officer is given delegated authority to approve or reject minor variations to the applicant's project budget following approval of the grant from Council.
- i. Any applications received that are considered to not completed in their entirety or lacking in information, will be returned to the applicant for resubmission. It is encouraged that applicants carefully read through and address each criteria item to ensure the application will be considered.

4. Acquittal

All businesses/enterprises that receive funding will have to provide the following after their project's completion within 12 months of the funding being awarded:

- a. Completed Acquittal Form (to be provided);
- b. Proof the project, activity or event took place (e.g. photographs etc.);
- c. Proof of expenditure (e.g. copy of financial records and invoices paid); and
- d. Evaluation of project, activity or event (e.g. copy of participant feedback, surveys etc.).

5. Assessment Process

- a. Applications will be assessed by the grants team based on grant criteria and a recommendation made to Council.
- b. Applications will be presented to Council and assessed based on eligibility and merit.
- c. Allocation of grant funding is at the discretion of the Council.
- d. All applicants will be contacted in writing regarding the outcome of their application.
- e. Applicants are encouraged to seek feedback on the outcome of their application.

6. Submission Information

Applications can be received via mail, email or printed copies dropped into the front counter at Shire Administration Office.

GUIDELINES


Annexure A - Assessment Criteria (Attached)

Annexure B – Shire of Quairading Business Support Grants Process

Application Form - (Separate Document)

STATUTORY ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act (1995)

Record of Policy Review						
Version	Author	Council Adoption	Resolution	Reason for Review	Next Review Date	CEO Signature
01	Jen Green	29/4/21	164-20/21	New Policy	Apr 23	
02	Nicole Gibbs Jen Green	27/07/23	019-23/24	Biennial Review/Council request	Jul 25	

ANNEXURE A

1. Assessment Criteria

Each Grant Submission will be assessed based on the following criteria

Criteria 1 –Benefit:

- a. Is the project part of an overall business/enterprise strategy?
- b. Is there identified and demonstrated business/enterprise need?
- c. What are the benefits (value adding) to the business/enterprise and the community?
- d. Does the project align with outcomes in the Strategic Community Plan?

Criteria 2 – Organisation:

- a. ABN? Y/N
- b. Business type and purpose

Criteria 3 – Project Cycle:

- a. Planning and design of project
- b. Management and delivery of project (incl. milestones and works schedule)
- c. Project Budget
- d. Financial contribution - \$; In-Kind; External
- e. Evaluation of project
- f. Sustainability of project
- g. Use of local suppliers for capital works

2. Score

Each Grant Application will be assessed based on these criteria

Each criteria will be evaluated and given a score between 1 (Poor) and 5 (Excellent).

3. Weighting

Weighting for each criteria to be determined by the Council.

Proposed weighting is: -	
Community Benefit -	40%
Organisation -	20%
Project Planning -	40%
Priority/Need	Number/Submissions Received

A minimum weighted score of 3 out of 5 (60%) will receive a positive recommendation.

ANNEXURE B

Shire of Quairading Business Support Grants Process

