
Councillor Small Grants Program Policy

Responsible Officer **Governance and Corporate Planning Manager**

Date **15 August 2011**

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a mechanism to make small grants available to assist individuals, community groups and other organisations which could not otherwise be funded by the City of Darebin Community Grants program.

In addition to outlining the criteria by which grants from the Councillor Small Grants Program may be allocated, this policy provides a formal mechanism to ensure the transparent reporting and accountability of the fund.

SCOPE

Councillor Small Grants Program funds are available to fund minor projects and other community support initiatives within the City of Darebin. Applications can be made to Council, with each Councillor being able to approve individual grants of up to \$300, to a total of \$1,000 in grants in each financial year, and the Mayor able to approve an additional \$1,000 (bringing the Mayoral total to \$2,000).

POLICY

Funding Criteria

Successful funding applications are to be consistent with

- The objectives of the City of Darebin Council Plan
- Council's broader policy framework

The Councillor Small Grants Program is not designed to be a recurring funding source. Accordingly, projects may not receive multiple grants totalling more than \$300, or repeat funding in successive years. However, for recurring scholarships where the scholarship recipient is different every year, this shall not apply and the recipient of the scholarship shall be a City of Darebin resident.

Preference may be given to applicants that have not received previous funding by Council under the Councillor Small Grants Program or Community Grants Program.

Application Process

Public advertisement of the Councillor Small Grants Program will occur at the commencement of the financial year and at other times throughout the year where necessary. Applications will be assessed by individual Councillors for approval.



Funding Allocation

Each Councillor may submit applications to Council until \$1,000 in their applications have been approved in a financial year.

In addition to the Councillor allocation, the Mayor may submit additional applications to Council until \$1,000 in their applications have been approved in a financial year.

The additional \$1,000 Mayoral allocation refers to the 'Office of the Mayor', rather than the individual Councillor and as such, any unallocated funds from the Mayoral allocation will transfer to the new Mayor upon a change in office.

The Mayor is required to declare whether applications submitted are to be supported from the Councillor allocation or the Mayoral allocation, or a combination of both.

By agreement between the Councillors, allocations from more than one Councillor may be consolidated to fund projects.

Where applications are supported by more than one Councillor, the funding is to be allocated equally from their respective funding allocations, except where a specific funding distribution has been agreed between the Councillors.

As funds for the Councillor Small Grants Program are from the Operating Budget, unallocated funds not expended in one financial year will not be carried forward to the following year.

Conflicts of Interest

The close ties held by Councillors with the local community may give rise to conflicts of interest as defined in the *Local Government Act 1989*.

It is essential that Councillors not participate in decision-making that could give rise to a conflict under the Act and the Councillor Small Grants Program Approval form requires the disclosure by the supporting Councillor of any conflicts. If a conflict exists, the Councillor may not approve the application.

Applications will not be approved unless the Councillor Small Grants Program Approval form is completed and signed by the Councillor(s) supporting the application.

Monitoring and Transparency

For all applications, receipts will be sought as evidence that monies were spent in accordance with the application. Where receipts for minor amounts (less than \$50) within a larger project cannot be provided, a signed declaration shall suffice.

Council reserves the right to audit how monies were expended.

Should receipts not be provided, or an audit reveal monies were not appropriately expended, Council reserves the right to seek reimbursement of those monies, together with costs.

Breach of this policy, including adverse findings from an audit, will be a relevant consideration in considering any future applications by an organisation for support under the Councillor Small Grants Program.

The details of the Councillor Small Grants Program will be reported the Audit Committee annually and a list of all grant recipients, together with the grant amount shall be published in Council's Annual Report.



Application Process

Applications for access to these funds are to be submitted to Councillors through completion of the Councillor Small Grants Program Application Form. The application must include a description of the project or initiative, cost estimates including the maximum to be expended, the beneficiaries, a statement of consistency with Council's Council Plan and policy objectives.

The application should be prepared by the applicants and/or recipients of the funding, and all supporting paperwork (including where relevant invoices, quotes or supporting evidence) must be provided for the application to be processed. Councillors and staff may provide advice to applicants on the completion of the application form and suitability of projects.

Approval

Councillors are able to approve applications by completing a *Councillor Small Grants Program Approval* form.

Once completed, the Councillor Small Grants Program approval form shall be submitted to the Office of the Chief Executive for authorisation and payment.

Payments shall be made by electronic funds transfer or by cheque in accordance with Council's regular payment cycle.

Caretaker Provisions

In a year where a General Election is to occur, no applications shall be approved under the Councillor Small Grants Program from 1 July until after the declaration of the General Election.



Councillor Small Grants Program Application

PROJECT TITLE

APPLICANT

AMOUNT OF GRANT

DETAILS OF THE GRANT

Please provide a description of the project or activity that will be supported by this grant. You may attach further information, including invoices, quotes or supporting evidence where relevant.

APPLICANT DECLARATION

I declare that the information provided in this application is complete and accurate and that if successful, I will abide by the conditions of the Councillor Small Grants Program.

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Name

Signature

Date



Councillor Small Grants Program Approval

PROJECT TITLE

APPLICANT

AMOUNT OF GRANT

DISCLOSURE

In approving this application I am aware of my obligation to declare any direct or indirect interests that arise as a result of Council's consideration of the application and have declared that I do not have an interest by ticking below.

I declare that in approving this grant I do not have a direct or indirect interest as defined at Section 77A of the Local Government Act 1989

COUNCILLOR APPROVAL

I declare that the attached application meets the requirements of the Councillor Small Grants Program and supports the City of Darebin Council Plan and Council's broader policy framework.

I approve the application for funding under the Councillor Small Grants Program.

Cr		
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Name

Signature

Date

CHIEF EXECUTIVE AUTHORISATION

I authorise the Governance and Corporate Planning Manager to arrange payment of this approved Councillor Small Grants Program Grant.

Rasiah Dev, Chief Executive		
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Name

Signature

Date

