

Community Assistance Grants March 2026 Guidelines and Assessment Criteria

Introduction

Our Community Assistance Grants Scheme supports projects that deliver positive community outcomes in line with Wellington Shire Council [Community Vision](#), the [Council Plan](#), and [Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan](#).

Through this program, Council provides funding to initiatives that contribute to building community capacity by encouraging:

- Safe, inclusive and connected communities
- Healthy, active and resilient lifestyles
- Active community spaces and places for wellbeing and participation
- Protection and connection to the natural environment
- Connection to nature, culture, country and environmental stewardship for current and future generations

Overview

Not-for-profit community groups operating in the Wellington Shire can apply for a Community Assistance Grant of \$2,501 to \$6,000.

Applications Open: **9.00am Friday 9th January 2026**
Applications Close: **4.00pm Wednesday 4th March 2026**

If you require assistance in completing this application, please contact Council's Grants Officer on 1300 366 244.

Please see below reference to our Helpful Resources for Applicants:

[Sample Answers for Grant Applications](#)

[Tips for Preparing your Project Budget](#)

Important things to note

What will not be funded:

- Scholarships, awards, trophies or prizes for participating and/or attending.
 - Activities that deliver a direct and focused religious or political party message.
 - Activities associated with or hosted at areas/facilities with or designed for gaming machines, gambling and betting.
 - Requests for ongoing operational costs such as but not limited to, insurance, salaries, electricity, water and other utilities.
 - Appliances that do not meet minimum 4-star energy rating; consideration can be made for specialised appliances/equipment - see Climate Change and Sustainability Guidance Sheet.
 - Activities which focus on or promote unhealthy food, sugary drinks, alcohol consumption, gambling or tobacco, e-cigarette or vaping industries.
- Wages will not be funded but can be used as evidence of contribution towards the project.
- The not-for-profit community group applying for the grant will be referred to as the 'organisation' throughout the application.
- The applicant is the organisation, not the individual representative or person completing the application form.
- The event or project will be referred to as 'activity' in the Assessment Criteria and Guidelines, Application Form, Funding Agreement and Acquittal Report

Criteria – General

After reading the funding guidelines, please contact the **Grants Officer 1300 366 244** to seek feedback on your proposal. This will ensure you are eligible to apply, and your application meets the guidelines.

1. Grants are available to not-for-profit community groups operating in the Wellington Shire.
2. Schools are not eligible to be an applicant, however, can be a community partner in project proposal.
 - a. Grants are available to Volunteer groups associated with Schools who are eligible to apply, applicants will be required to demonstrate the benefits and outcomes to the broad community outside the school community.
3. Applicants must be incorporated bodies or have an established legal entity. If your organisation is not incorporated or doesn't have an ABN, you will be required to provide the details of an auspice organisation. The auspice organisation will receive the grant funding on your behalf and will ultimately be responsible for the Acquittal Report.
4. Sub-groups of umbrella organisations are eligible to apply.
 - a. Umbrella organisation definition: An umbrella organisation is a centralised entity that oversees and coordinates the activities of multiple affiliated sub-groups, typically sharing a common purpose, mission, or interest. An organisation that consolidates administrative duties and expenses while still maintaining separate roles and functions within the community.
5. Activities must commence after **1 June 2026 and take place by 30 June 2027**. Acquittal Report forms must be submitted to Council within 8 weeks of the activity completion.
6. If your organisation is incorporated but does not have an ABN, a 'Statement by a Supplier – Reason for Not Quoting an ABN' form must be included with your funding agreement. This form is available from the Australian Tax Office website.

7. Grants are subject to GST. If your club/organisation is registered for GST, you will be paid the grant amount, plus GST. If your club/organisation is not registered for GST, you will be paid the grant amount only (no GST applies). Please take this into consideration when submitting your budget and calculating your funding request.
8. In December 2023 the Wellington Shire Council adopted a Fair Access Policy (the Policy) <https://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/policies/fair-access-policy> that seeks to address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community and sporting infrastructure. The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Wellington Shire Council in the identification, and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to community sports infrastructure. The Policy is designed to comply with the Gender Equality Act 2020, and the wider Victorian Government gender equality strategy and the Wellington Shire Council Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). Council will undertake take the necessary and proportionate steps towards implementation of the Fair Access Policy which includes collecting and analysing data to ensure diverse representation on Committee's. The community group/committee purpose and committee numbers questions are mandatory, remaining gender and diversity questions are optional. Responses are not used as part of the application assessment but will help inform industry training to committees and sporting clubs in partnership with key stakeholder including Change Our Game, GippSport and Gippsland Women's Health to inform them of Council's Fair Access Policy.
9. Applicants providing services to children must complete the Child Wellbeing and Safety Declaration in the application form. Organisations must comply with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005, which includes implementing child safe standards. All children have the right to feel safe and be safe, but safety does not just happen. Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities for children (anyone under 18 years old) are required by law to implement Child Safe Standards to protect children from harm. A child safe organisation takes deliberate steps to safeguard children from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse and neglect. It puts children's safety and wellbeing first and embeds a commitment to child safety in every aspect of the organisation. Victoria's mandatory Child Safe Standards (the Standards) have been in effect since 2016. Following a Royal Commission, the Victorian Government reviewed the Standards. The review found strong support for the Standards and recommended a number of changes to better align the Standards with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and to strengthen administration of the Standards. In line with these recommendations, the new Standards were released by the Victorian Government in 2021. They consist of 11 updated Standards and apply from 1 July 2022. More information on the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme can be found on the Commission for Children and Young People website or at <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/>

Within the grant application, applicants will need to confirm the following two statements.

- *Our project involving direct contact with children and young people under the age of 18 will be compliant with legislation and regulations relating to child safety including but not limited to the Child Wellbeing Safety Act (2005). In addition, I have read and understand Council's Child Wellbeing and Safety Policy and I agree to work in compliance with Wellington Shire Council's requirements and /or Victorian Child Safe Standards.*
- *All staff, committee/board members and volunteers who have direct contact with children via the funded project understand the Child Safe Standards and their requirements and will have a Working With Children Check (WWCC) in place prior to the commencement of the funded project. Routine systems are also in place to monitor WWCC's including that your organisation details are registered on individuals WWCC.*

10. Activities must be administered in the Wellington Shire, please note activities at licensed venues, applicants will be asked to demonstrate that there is no appropriate alternative venue and that they have considered the potential impact to participants.
11. **Applicants who have previously been successful in receiving funding MUST have completed all due Acquittal Reports and complied with Council requirements prior to being considered for the current funding round.**
12. All applicants must provide a copy of a current Public Liability Insurance certificate of currency with activity/event details, where applicable. (For an event the P/L certificate of currency must include the event name, date and location).
13. All activities **MUST** align with Key Council Plans and Strategies:
 - a. [Wellington Shire Council Plan](#)
 - b. [Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan](#)
 - c. [Sustainability Strategy](#)
14. All activities must ensure inclusivity, social connectedness and accessibility has been considered. This includes improved opportunities for inclusion for groups who can sometimes be excluded due to gender, age, cultural background, sexual orientation, financial vulnerability, or disability.
15. All activities are encouraged to consider the waste that will be produced through delivering their grant outcomes and have appropriate measures in place to manage waste.
16. Multiple applications for the same activity will not be accepted.
17. A limit of two Community Assistance Grant applications per round (2 rounds per financial year) for different activities will be accepted, although applicants must prioritise applications before submission.
 - a. Each demonstrated sub-group of an umbrella organisation may apply for a limit of two Community Assistance Grant applications per round (2 rounds per financial year) for different activities will be accepted, although applicants must prioritise applications before submission.
18. Priority will be given to groups who haven't received Council funding during the current financial year.
19. Applications must be completed in full and have sufficient evidence to make a reasonable assessment of the application. Council reserves the right to further investigate aspects of the application. Applications and Acquittal Reports must be on the correct form.
20. Where possible, the goods and services used in the funded activity (suppliers and contractors) be sourced from within the Wellington Shire.
21. Activities that are primarily for the purpose of fundraising will be required to demonstrate the Community benefits in addition to the fundraising outcome.
22. No set amount of contribution will be required. A contribution (monetary, donated or volunteer labour) will assist with assessment. Applicants will be required to identify their contribution capacity.
23. For all expenditure items of \$1,000 or more you must include a quote or evidence of the item cost.
24. Applications deemed to be for commercial benefit will not be considered. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. This will include applications where the main beneficiary is a business.
25. Funding must not be regarded as a recurrent commitment from Council. There is no guarantee a recurring activity will be funded in the future. Funding is limited.
26. The applicant is responsible for all ongoing maintenance and running costs of any equipment purchases resulting from a successful application.
27. Council may reduce the amount allocated to you if the funding applied for is considered unsubstantiated and/or excessive.
28. Council may reduce the amount allocated to you if the funding round is oversubscribed; additionally, if Council is aware of an alternative option available to you, it will recommend it as an alternative to funding.
29. Successful applicants will be required to complete a Funding Agreement, which includes the conditions of grant funding. You may also be asked to comply with additional conditions.

30. You are required to acknowledge Wellington Shire Council's support of your activity as specified in the Funding Agreement.
 - a. This may include the Middle of Everywhere.
31. Funding must be returned if the activity is not completed in line with the Funding Agreement. Any excess funding must be returned.
32. Wellington Shire Council is committed to upholding the Human Rights principles as outlined in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) and has referred to Council's Human Rights Policy to develop the WSC CAG program Guidelines and Assessment Criteria.
33. Applications must be completed and returned by 4.00pm on Wednesday 4 March 2026. The closing date will apply for all applications. No late applications will be accepted.
34. You will be notified via SmartyGrants of the outcome of your grant by 20 May 2026. You are welcome to contact the Grants Officer for further feedback. Please note once a completed Funding Agreement is received it can take up to six weeks for the funding to arrive in your bank.
35. Applicants must complete a Harmful Industries Declaration as part of their application. Harmful industries include any businesses deriving significant benefit or income from any one or more of the following: unhealthy foods (high in saturated fats, sugar, salt and/or energy), sugary drinks, alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and vaping, and gambling. Council is collecting this information to help form educational opportunities on the impacts of harmful industries for Wellington Shire community groups.

Assessment Process

Applications undergo an initial eligibility check to determine whether they meet the funding guidelines and will then be scored against the criteria.

Criteria	Maximum Points 100%
Community Benefit and Alignment to Council Initiatives	40%
Planning and Capacity to Deliver	20%
Accessibility and Inclusion	20%
Marketing, Promotion and Evaluation	10%
Contribution	10%

Based on the score received against the assessment criteria, applications are prioritised by a panel from the Wellington Shire Council. This panel provides advice and recommendations to Council. During a Council meeting, Councillors make the final decision on which applications will be funded under the scheme.

Applicants can have special funding conditions placed on their application. These conditions will be included on the Funding Agreement form. These can be conditions that must be met prior to receiving funding and included in the Acquittal Report phase of the activity to ensure compliance.

Assessment Criteria and Assessment Scoring Details

Community Benefit and Alignment to Council Initiatives 40% of the application assessment	
Benefit to the Community	
Poor demonstration of community needs and how the activity will benefit the community.	1
Limited demonstration of community needs and how the activity will benefit the community.	2
Standard demonstration of community needs and how the activity will benefit the community.	3
Above standard demonstration of community needs and how the activity will benefit the community.	4
Very high standard demonstrated of community needs and how the activity will benefit the community. Detailed evidence provided; additional information provided eg project or event plan, activity risk management plan, volunteer, ABS data, letter/s of support from beneficiaries, etc.	5
Alignment to Council Plan Initiatives	
Poor demonstration of how the activity aligns to council initiatives.	1
Limited demonstration of how the activity aligns to council initiatives.	2
Standard demonstration of how the activity aligns to council initiatives.	3
Above standard demonstration of how the activity aligns to council initiatives.	4
Very high standard demonstrated of how the activity aligns to council initiatives. Detailed evidence provided outlining strong alignment to Council Plan and Live Well in Wellington initiatives	5
Planning and Capacity to Deliver 20% of the application assessment	
Organisation and/or Committee details	
Poor details and information provided about the organisation.	1
Limited details and information provided about the organisation.	2
Standard details and information provided about the organisation.	3
Above standard details and information provided about the organisation	4
Very high standard of details and information provided about the organisation. Detailed evidence provided, additional information provided eg strategic plan, alignment with strategic plan, participation plan, governance overview, succession plan, copies of articles, etc.	5
Project Planning	
Poor details and information provided about planning undertaken to deliver the activity.	1
Limited details and information provided about planning undertaken to deliver the activity.	2
Standard details and information provided about planning undertaken to deliver the activity.	3
Above standard details and information provided planning undertaken to deliver the activity.	4
Very high standard of details and information provided planning undertaken to deliver the activity. Detailed evidence provided, additional information provided eg project plan, engagement plan, risk assessment, required approvals, etc.	5
Accessibility and Inclusion 20% of the application assessment	
Accessibility and Inclusivity	
Poor demonstration of Access and Inclusion considerations, and how the activity engages with broad segments of the community.	1
Limited demonstration of Access and Inclusion considerations and how the activity engages with broad segments of the community.	2
Standard demonstration of Access and Inclusion considerations and how the activity engages with broad segments of the community.	3
Above standard demonstration of Access and Inclusion considerations and how the activity engages with broad segments of the community.	4
Very high demonstration of Access and Inclusion considerations and how the activity engages with broad segments of the community.	5

Detailed and evidence provided, additional information provided eg accessible action plan, gender impact assessment, images, signage, etc	
Marketing, Promotion and Evaluation 10% of the application assessment	
Marketing	
Poor details of promotion and marketing initiatives.	1
Limited details of promotion and marketing initiatives.	2
Adequate details of promotion and marketing initiatives.	3
Above standard details of promotion and marketing initiatives.	4
Very high standard of detail provided of promotion and marketing initiatives. Detailed evidence provided, additional information provided eg draft media articles, copies of previous marketing, marketing or promotion strategy, etc.	5
Evaluation	
Poor details of evaluation planning have been presented and considered.	1
Limited details of evaluation planning have been presented and considered.	2
Standard details of evaluation planning have been presented and considered.	3
Above standard details of evaluation planning have been presented and considered.	4
Very high standard of detail of evaluation planning have been presented and considered. Detailed evidence provided; additional information provided eg. Survey examples, previous survey results, committee review meeting notes, etc	5
Contribution 10% of the application assessment	
Has the applicant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrated other contributions towards the activity? (Contributions can be monetary, volunteer hours, in-kind support, and/or sponsorship. Demonstrated sufficiently the restricted access to funds towards the activity. Sourced goods and services for the delivery of the activity (suppliers and contractors) from within the Wellington Shire, where possible. Demonstrated why local suppliers were not used? (Quotes supplied, evidence the service or expertise is not supported in Wellington Shire and/or limited availability). 	
Contribution Assessment	
No evidence of contribution provided.	1
Minimal evidence of contribution provided.	2
Standard evidence of contribution provided.	3
Above standard evidence of contribution provided.	4
Significant evidence of contribution provided.	5

Contact

For general grant enquiries or if you require assistance in completing the application form please contact:

Community Facilities Planning and Grants Officer

Phone: 1300 366 244

Email: grants@wellington.vic.gov.au