

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Community Requests for Council Budget Allocation Policy</h2>
Version No.	Version 1, 9 March 2018
Endorsement	Policy Review Panel - 18 April 2018
Authorisation	Council – 30 April 2018
Review date:	July 2021
Responsible officer:	Manager Community Planning
Policy owner	Social Planning Officer

1. Purpose

This Policy describes Melton City Council's (Council's) approach to the management of requests for Council budget allocation from community members, Incorporated Community Organisations and Community Service Agencies for projects, programs or services that address local need.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all submissions for Council budget allocation from community members, Incorporated Community Organisations or Community Service Agencies. The provisions of this Policy also apply to those responsible for the administration, assessment and approval of received submissions.

This policy applies to:

- Submissions requesting partnerships between Council and Incorporated Community Organisations or Community Service Agencies, where Council provides funding for the delivery of projects, programs or services that benefit the local community and these activities are delivered by the funded organisation.

Submissions may be for single-year or recurrent funding for periods of up to 5 years. Recurrent funding of up to 5 years is typically awarded only to organisations providing projects, programs or services for the benefit or welfare of the community or any members who have a particular need by reason of youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social or economic circumstances. Examples include:

- The provision emergency food relief to low income residents
 - The provision of learning and social opportunities for people with disabilities
 - Funding for the delivery of elements within a master plan for a community asset, i.e. landscape works.
- Submissions requesting Council to undertake projects, programs or services. In such cases, Council is responsible for funding and delivering the activity.

This Policy does not preclude community members making a submission under Section 223 of the Victorian Local Government Act 1989.

Definitions

Word / Term	Definition
Auspice Partnership	An arrangement between an incorporated organisation (auspisor) and an unincorporated organisation (auspicee), where the auspicee carries out the project 'under the auspices of' the auspisor'. The auspisor receives funding or enters into relevant agreements on behalf of the auspicee
Budget Development Period	The period during which Council's annual budget is developed. This typically begins in the 2 nd quarter of the financial year prior and the final budget is adopted in June at the end of the financial year
Community Grants Program	Council's primary community funding stream, comprised of a range of grants that are open to various applicants either year-round or at specified times only
Community member	Any individual who has attained the age of 18 years and is not making a submission on behalf of a corporation; a Council or any other body incorporated or constituted by or under the Local Government Act 1989; or any public statutory corporation constituted by or under any law of the State of Victoria, any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth or the Commonwealth
Community Service Agency	Funded organisations that promote, provide or carry out activities, facilities or projects for the benefit or welfare of the community or any members who have a particular need by reason of youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social or economic circumstances
Incorporated Community Organisation	A legal entity separate from its members. Incorporation of a community organisation includes a number of requirements including a written constitution and an elected committee of management or board of directors. Examples include sports clubs, service clubs and local charitable organisations

3. Policy

Melton City Council (Council) recognises that community engagement and participation processes are a vital part of local democracy. Community engagement in the development of the annual budget provides an avenue for the community to make submissions for budget allocation. The budget reflects Council's core business as outlined in the Council and Wellbeing Plan.

Submissions are assessed on a case-by-case basis as part of Council's annual budget development. Allocation of funding is dependent upon the availability of funds and the merit of submissions. Should funding recipients seek further funding after the end of their existing funding term, they will need to prepare a new submission during their final year of funding to be considered for budget allocation for the next financial year. Further allocation must not be assumed.

3.1 Objective

This Policy aims to establish a clear process for the management of community requests for Council budget allocation.

3.2 Policy Principles

The principles underpinning this Policy are:

a) Alignment with Council and Wellbeing Plan

The Council and Wellbeing Plan is the 4 year strategic plan that directs Council operations to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. There is significant community input in to the development of Council and Wellbeing Plan. Submissions for Council budget allocation should align with the current Council and Wellbeing Plan objectives.

b) Good governance

Budget will be allocated under principles of good governance. This means that the process of receiving and assessing submissions should be transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive, effective and efficient, participatory and consistent with relevant legislation.

c) Community engagement

The community should have the opportunity to be involved in decision making regarding budget allocation. The process should be participatory, equitable and inclusive. Community members, Incorporated Community Organisations and Community Service Agencies will be invited to make submissions to the budget development process. The engagement process should endeavour to be accessible to the breadth of Melton's community.

3.3 Eligibility Criteria

Any community member, Incorporated Community Organisation or Community Service Agency may make a submission for budget allocation.

Special conditions apply for parties seeking funding to deliver programs, services or projects themselves. Parties should meet the following eligibility criteria for their submission to be considered:

- Be an Incorporated Community Organisation or Community Service Agency. In the unlikely circumstance that an unincorporated group seeks funding, an auspice partnership may be considered
- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN)

- Hold relevant Public Liability Insurance coverage to the value of \$20 million
- Eighty per cent (80%) of participants for the proposed activity should be residents of the City of Melton

Projects, programs and services that are the direct responsibility of other government agencies are generally not viewed favourably for Council budget allocation.

Schools are not eligible to apply for budget allocation, but may be a partner in a project submitted by an eligible organisation.

Individual community members cannot seek funding to deliver programs, services or projects themselves. They may only make submissions requesting that Council fund and deliver outputs.

3.4 Assessment Considerations

Funding should be allocated based upon the merit of the submission and available funds. A Submission Form template is provided in the Community Requests for Council Budget Allocation - Guidelines for Submission.

The table below outlines assessment considerations for submissions.

Submissions seeking Council to fund and deliver a project, program or service should respond to Considerations 2 and 3.

Submissions requesting Council funding for external parties to deliver activities should respond to Considerations 1 to 5.

Consideration	To be included in the submission
1. Applicant Details and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does your organisation do? • When were you established? • What are your governance arrangements? • What relevant work have you done in the past?
2. Community Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What existing or emerging need does this proposal address? • How do you know this is a need? (Statistical and anecdotal evidence should be provided to support this) • Explain how the identified need aligns with current Melton City Council and Wellbeing Plan objectives.
3. Community Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will be involved in the project/program/service planning and delivery? • Describe any new community partnerships and connections that will be developed. • Who will benefit from the project/program/service? (Identify which groups will benefit).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will be the outcomes of the project/program/service for these groups?
4. Ability to Deliver Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a project plan that demonstrates the steps to be taken to deliver the project/program/service during the funded period. • Provide a complete, realistic and achievable budget. • Provide details of other sources of funding or resourcing for the project/program/service. • Explain how the project/program/service may continue into the future (without Council funding) if it is an ongoing event or activity.
5. Commitment to the Improvement of the Municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how your organisation has participated and been engaged in other community events and activities in the City of Melton. • Explain your organisation's history of promoting positive outcomes for the community.

3.5 Submission Process

Submissions for budget allocation are invited from community during the annual budget development period. Submissions received at this time are assessed at the optimal time for inclusion in the upcoming budget. Submissions may be received at any time but will only be assessed during the annual budget development period.

Parties requesting funding allocation should:

1. Read and ensure adherence to Community Requests for Budget Allocation - Guidelines for Submission.
2. Complete the Community Requests for Budget Allocation Submission Form.
3. Submit Form and any relevant attachments to Council by the published deadline (which may vary from year to year).

The submission process is designed to be accessible to a range of community members, Incorporated Community Groups and Community Service Agencies. The onus is on submitters to provide substantial information and evidence to support their submission and assist Council to assess the merits of the proposal.

Submission for budget allocation is one option for community members and organisations to seek support from Council. The Community Grants Program is another option that may be more appropriate for some submissions. Refer to the Community Grants Program Guidelines for further detail.

Applicants are encouraged to first exhaust the Community Grants Program options, where appropriate, prior to making a submission through this Policy.

3.6 Assessment Process

Submissions should be assessed using the following process:

1. Submissions will be invited from community members, Incorporated Community Organisations and Community Service Agencies annually in line with Council's budget development process. Submission information will be available via Council's website and will be promoted on the website and by public notice.
2. Submissions will be received by Council's Risk and Performance Department.
3. Council Budget Engagement sessions will be held to allow submitters to present their submission to Council Officers and Councillors in person.
4. Relevant Council Officers will be asked to make comment on submissions. Commentary will be sought regarding the quality of the submission, assessment considerations and history of previous funding outcomes (if applicable).
5. Submissions and commentary will be presented to the Council's Executive and Councillors.
6. Councillors will consider submissions and commentary and decide which submissions (if any) will be included in the draft budget.
7. Submitters will be notified in writing whether their submission is included in the draft budget.
8. Submitters will be notified in writing of Council's decision when the final budget is adopted by Council. Council's decision is final.

3.7 Funding Agreements

Successful applicants for funding to deliver activities with Council monies will be required to sign a Funding Agreement before funding is disbursed. The Funding Agreement will include the conditions that funded organisations will need to meet throughout the funding term and upon acquittal of the funds.

3.8 Acquittal Process

An acquittal process will be consistently applied to those parties subject to Funding Agreements to ensure correct and intended use of funds.

Funding recipients will be required to complete an acquittal form either:

- Annually for multi-year funding
- Within two months of project completion for single-year funding

Funding recipients who fail to properly acquit their grants will not be eligible for any further Council funding until the matter is resolved.

Recipients of multi-year funding will also be required to submit proof of solvency in order to receive funding for the following year.

3.9 Internal Process for Acquittals

Receipt of acquittal reports will be the responsibility of Council's Finance Department.

The Manager Finance will assess expenditure and forward to the relevant Manager to assess outcomes of the funding.

Acquittal reports will be signed off by both the Manager Finance and the relevant Department Manager.

The Manager Finance will ensure that all reports are added to ECM (Council's record management system).

Any issues with acquittals will be raised with the relevant General Manager who will make recommendations to Councillors regarding action required.

4. Responsibility / Accountability

4.1	<p>Council Officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer relevant parties seeking budget allocation to this Policy • Ensure that this Policy is followed • Provide commentary on submissions as requested • Provide advice to prospective submitters and unsuccessful submitters as requested • Oversee outcome component of acquittal process as requested
4.2	<p>Manager Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present submissions to Executive and Council • Notify submitters of outcomes of submissions • Provide input in to the development of Funding Agreements • Oversee assessment of financial component of acquittal process • Add acquittal forms to ECM
4.3	<p>Manager Risk and Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive submissions • Enter data into Register of Submissions • Cross-check submissions with Community Funding Officer to ensure that no acquittals are outstanding and that the same program has not been funded under the Community Grants Program • Distribute submissions to relevant Council Officers for comment
4.4	<p>Community Funding Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information about previous or current grants received by Submitters

4.5	<p>General Managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to Council regarding action on acquittal issues as required
4.6	<p>Executive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review submissions prior to presentation to Council
4.7	<p>Councillors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer relevant parties seeking budget allocation to this Policy • Ensure that this Policy is followed • Assess submissions • Select successful submissions (if any)
4.8	<p>Funding Recipients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for meeting the obligations of the Funding Agreement

5. References and links to legislation and other documents

Name	Location
Melton City Council - Council and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021	melton.vic.gov.au
Community Grants Program Guidelines	melton.vic.gov.au
Community Requests for Council Budget Allocation – Guidelines for Submissions	melton.vic.gov.au
Profile ID website – Melton (Census information)	profile.id.com.au/melton