

Community Grants Policy

1. PURPOSE

This policy guides the delivery of Council's Community Grants Program, providing financial and in-kind assistance to community organisations and individuals. The aim is to ensure equitable, open and transparent decision-making aligned with local government principles:

- a) Transparent and effective processes and decision-making in the public interest.
- b) Sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services.
- c) Democratic representation, social inclusion, and meaningful community engagement.
- d) Good governance by local government.
- e) Ethical and legal behaviour of councillors, local government employees, and councillor advisors.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to community groups and individuals seeking financial and in-kind assistance through the Community Grants Program for programs, activities, events, and projects that enhance cultural, social, sports, recreation, and economic development in the Torres Strait Island Regional Council area.

3. LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN

- People *Bisnis* - *Pipol*
- Sustainability *Bisnis* - *Mekem las long*
- Prosperity *Bisnis* – *Pruitpul*

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1. Grant Programs

Council provides funding to the community via the following Community Grant Programs:

- Community Grants
- Funeral Grants
- Funeral Travel Grants
- Community Gifts.

Each stream has objectives, eligibilities, application processes and evaluation criteria identified in the Community Grant Schedules included in this policy.

4.2. Conflict of Interest

Council employees assessing applications must declare any real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, or to the Mayor if the conflict involves the Chief Executive Officer, before the applications are assessed.

Councillors must declare any real, actual, or perceived conflict of interest, or any prescribed or declarable conflict of interest, related to an application before it is considered by the Council. They must follow the usual meeting processes for such declarations and comply with the *Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulation 2012*. This requirement applies to all funding requests and supplements any other specified requirements.

4.3 Eligibility

4.3.1 Applications

Applications may be submitted by;

- a) an **organisation** that undertakes activities for a public purpose; or
- b) an **individual**.

To be eligible an organisation or individual must not:

- have breached an agreed current payment plan with Council; or
- be a registered political party; or
- have exceeded the maximum funding an Applicant can access per financial year as per section 15 of this Policy.

4.3.2 Projects/activities

Eligible applications must be:

- a) applying for a project, activity or event taking place within the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area which is in the public interest; or
- b) applying for a project, activity or event benefiting current Torres Strait Island Regional Council residents which is in the public interest;
- c) applying to participate in an event in or outside the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area to achieve results and bring back new experiences to share with their community which are in the public interest.

Eligible applications must not be:

- a) Requesting funding or support for a project or activity:
 - that has already occurred; or
 - where necessary permits and approvals have not been obtained; or
 - that does not involve a Torres Strait Island Regional Council resident or community.
- b) For projects or activities that:
 - duplicate existing services or programs; or
 - have a purely political purpose; or
 - have a life greater than 12 months from date of application for funding.

4.4 Annual budget allocations

The budget for the Community Grants, Funeral Grants and Travel Grants are allocated on the basis of each Island community.

The total combined annual budget allocation for the Community Grant Program, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grants are tabled below:

Program Name	Budget
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Badu	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Boigu	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Dauan	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Erub	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Hammond	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Iama	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Kubin	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Mabuiag	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Mer	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Poruma	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Saibai	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant St Pauls	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Ugar	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Warraber	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Yorke	\$ 25,000
Community Grants, Funeral Grant and Funeral Travel Grant Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area Mayor	\$ 25,000
Community Gifts	\$ 20,000
TOTAL	\$ 420,000

Community Grant balances held as unexpended at financial year end, will not be carried forward to the next financial year, in accordance with legislation.

4.5. Further considerations

In approving a request for assistance Council will consider:

- The benefit to the community;
- whether funds have already been received from another program and/or for another event;
- the impact on Council's operations of any provision of plant, equipment and materials for in-kind donations;
- the availability of funds within the Council's annual budget.

5. REPORTING

A report will be supplied to Council at each Ordinary meeting including details of any resolutions required, information for noting and an overview of applications and their corresponding financial information for the financial year to date, at the time of the report.

6. DEFINITIONS

Cultural means:

- a) of or relating to the shared knowledge and values of a society;
- b) denoting or deriving from or distinctive of the ways of living, built up by a group of people;
- c) of or relating to the arts and manners that a group favour.

Economic development means:

- a) the creation of wealth from which the community may realise benefits.

Social means:

- a) of or relating to communal living;
- b) of or relating to human society and its modes of organisation.

Sports and recreation means:

- a) physical activity governed by a set of rules or customs and engaged in competitively and the vast array of activities people pursue in their leisure time

Ground-truthing means:

- a) checking of facts relating to a proposed activity/event or the applicant;
 - does the applicant live in the Council local government area;
 - is the event happening on ground;
 - is the event happening?

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

Schedules

1. Community Grants
2. Funeral Grants
3. Funeral Travel Grants
4. Community Gifts Grants

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed annually, or if legislation changes, or direction of the Chief Executive Officer.

Policy type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council <input type="checkbox"/> Operational
Directorate:	Corporate Services
Responsible Officer	Manager, Administration and Communication
Authorised on:	11 December 2024
Effective date:	13 December 2024
Next review date:	December 2025
Review history:	2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023
Version	2.0

Schedule 1: Community Grants

1. Intent

The intent of the Community Grants Program is to provide financial and in-kind assistance to community organisations and individuals in the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area. The program aims to support and promote community organisations that contribute to the enrichment of cultural diversity, social well-being, sports and recreation, and economic development opportunities for residents and businesses in the region.

2. Application and timing

Applications for Community Grants may be made any time throughout the financial year.

Applications can include funds and/or in-kind assistance (e.g. use of Council facilities or assets through waiver of fees) for the purposes of the project/activity.

In-kind use of council facilities will only be approved on a short-term basis. In-kind use is not available for ongoing utilisation.

Applications are reviewed monthly, with the monthly deadline for assessment being 5pm on the last Friday of the month.

Application Forms are available from <http://www.tsirc.qld.gov.au/your-council/grants-opportunities/community-grant-program> or by contacting the Community Grants team on 4034 5741.

Applications can be submitted at any of Council's Divisional Offices or via email to Community.Grants@tsirc.qld.gov.au.

Applicants requiring assistance in completing the application forms can contact the Divisional Office.

3. In-Kind assistance

Any organisation or individual can make an application for in-kind assistance for the use of Council facilities (e.g., use of Council vehicle, hire of community hall, corporate and recreational buildings etc.). Reasonable in-kind assistance will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer (or the Mayor if the Chief Executive Officer is conflicted) having regard to the recommendation/s of the applicable Divisional Manager and Councillor, and/or Executive Director/s. Ground-truthing will be conducted by the Divisional Councillor as appropriate. The view of a Divisional Councillor is not determinative of the final decision of the decision-maker.

In-kind use of Council facilities through the Community Grants application will only be approved on a short-term basis. In-kind use is not available for ongoing utilisation.

Approved in-kind assistance will be recorded in the executive budget for accountability and transparency.

In-kind assistance will be reported as part of Council's contributions made to the community.

Approved transactions relating to in-kind assistance do not impact divisional budget allocations.

3.1. Peppercorn Licenses – In-kind assistance

Yearly applications for license fee waivers (in-kind support) to provide yearly peppercorn licenses for community organisations and enterprises are processed through the Community Grants process.

Year-to-year peppercorn licenses (rent of \$1.00) are issued where supported by Council for the following reasons:

1. The premises is on Council's Enterprise Divestment list.
2. The premises (community hall or stadium) is licensed to a church organisation for ongoing weekly church services, with the Councillor supporting hire fee waiver of the venue.
3. The premises (community hall or stadium) is licensed to a not-for-profit community organisation delivering regular community education and/or sports/gym sessions to the community, with the Councillor supporting hire fee waiver of the venue.
4. The premises is licensed to a PBC for PBC purposes, on the basis of previous stakeholder negotiations with the PBC.

3.2. Application and Timing

Enterprise divestment licensees must apply for Community Grant in-kind support for ongoing peppercorn licensing (including Divisional Councillor endorsement).

Not-for-profit community groups and PBCs wanting to use Council premises for regular activities must apply for a community grant in-kind support for ongoing peppercorn licensing (including Divisional Councillor endorsement).

Licenses are for a financial year period (July-June) and applications for an upcoming financial year are to be made by 31 May.

Application Forms are available from <http://www.tsirc.qld.gov.au/your-council/grants-opportunities/community-grant-program> or by contacting the Community Grants team on 4034 5741.

Once approved, Legal Services will manage the licensing.

3.3. Licensing Parameters

Peppercorn licenses are based on the following:

- a) Licence Agreement to be signed by the organisation and Council's Chief

- Executive Officer;
- b) Current public liability insurance must be in place (either through Council or the organisation provides evidence of public liability coverage);
 - c) Licence fee and hire fee waiver of the venue is supported by Divisional Councillor;
 - d) Peppercorn licence fee, no hire fee or local law permit application fee payable, and no utilities or outgoings payable;
 - e) Any required Powercards are payable by the organisation, unless approved under a community grant;
 - f) Breach procedure of two warnings (with photographic evidence), with licence cancelled on the third strike, subject to Divisional Councillor and Chief Executive Officer approval; and
 - g) Any condition otherwise approved in writing by the Chief Executive Officer.
 - h) Councillors are required to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to any 'peppercorn' licensing (license fee waiver) at the time of application.

4. Maximum application threshold

Applications can include funds and/or in-kind assistance (e.g. use of Council facilities or assets through waiver of fees) for the purposes of the project/activity.

In all instances, there must be a budgeted allocation to cover the application.

The application amount can be a combination of funds or in-kind assistance; however, the maximum application amounts are:

	Individual	Community organisation
Community Grant Funding	\$ 2,500 per financial year	\$ 10,000 per financial year

5. Ineligible expenditure

Non-allowable expenditure includes:

- a) fund-raising activities
- b) prizes - (excluding trophies which are allowable expenditure)
- c) alcohol
- d) uniforms where Council has funded purchase in the last three years
- e) promotional material (including supporter apparel)
- f) travel associated with any of the ineligible projects

6. Assessment criteria

The grant assessment and selection process aims to fairly select projects that best meet the objectives of the grants program.

Written applications will be assessed using all of the following criteria:

Criteria	Definition
Eligible organisation or individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an individual; or • an organisation that undertakes activities for a public purpose; including • an organisation or individual that has not breached an agreed current payment plan with Council; and • an organisation that is not a registered political party.
Eligible project/activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is taking place within the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area or benefits Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area residents; and • has not already occurred; and • is not the subject of litigation; and • does not duplicate existing services or programs; and • does not have a purely political purpose; and • does not have a life greater than 12 months from date of application for funding.
The alignment of the project with Council's plans and values (as stated in Council's Corporate plan):	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure we preserve cultural heritage, history, and place; • ensure our communities are safe, healthy, and active; • ensure accessibility to community support services; <p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the sustainability and future of our individual communities and region; <p>Prosperity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure investment into the retention of key skills within the region; • ensure opportunity is brought to the region.
The community need for the project or activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letter of support from community members • needs analysis, community consultation

Applications are reviewed by Council's Community Grants team to ensure that the application is complete.

If insufficient detail is provided in the application form, the Community Grants team

will make contact with the applicant and advise of further information that is required to enable assessment.

Upon receipt of a complete application the Community Grants team will make the initial assessment based on eligibility criteria. If a division has exhausted their yearly allocation or a funding application is not supported by the respective councillor for the full amount, the team will liaise with other divisions to seek financial support. A recommendation report is then prepared for Council listing the applications that meet the eligibility criteria. Council will make the final determination at a Council meeting.

7. Approval and payment

Upon receipt of the list of endorsed applicants from the Council Meeting, the Finance department will approve payment. Payments are processed via purchase order to the supplier.

A remittance advice will be sent to the supplier and the applicant when payment is made.

8. Out of cycle funding applications

Council recognises that there may be occasions where urgent assessment of Community Grants is required. This is particularly in relation to school sporting events (Peninsula Sport). Such requests will be assessed by Council's Community Grants team for eligibility and finally approved or rejected by:

- (a) the Chief Executive Officer based on assessment and endorsement where the amount requested is \$5,000 or less; or
- (b) the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor based on assessment and endorsement where the amount requested is more than \$5,000.

9. Outcome reporting

Successful applicants will need to provide an Outcomes Report, including photos, where relevant, within 4 weeks following the event.

Council's Community Grants team will provide the Outcome Report form on confirmation of acceptance of approved funding.

If an Outcome Report is not provided, any future applications by the Applicant for Community Grants will be deemed ineligible.

- ENDS

Schedule 2: Funeral Grants

1. Intent

The intent of the Funeral Grants is to provide financial assistance to support culturally significant funerals in the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area. The policy aims to recognise and respect cultural practices and protocols, ensure that funerals are conducted in accordance with cultural traditions and provide financial support for eligible expenses such as repatriation costs, catering costs and funeral home costs.

2. Application and timing

Council recognises that funerals are a very culturally significant event in their region. Applications for a Funeral Grant may be made at any time throughout the financial year.

An application form must be submitted to community.grants@tsirc.qld.gov.au.

3. Assessment

Requests for Funeral Grants are assessed by the Community Grants team for eligibility and approved or rejected by:

- (a) the Chief Executive Officer based on assessment and endorsement where the amount requested is \$5,000 or less; or
- (b) the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor based on assessment and endorsement where the amount requested is more than \$5,000.

In making their assessment of the Funeral Grants, the Chief Executive Officer and/or Mayor will consult with the Divisional Councillor unless it is not appropriate in the circumstance to do so.

In assessing Funeral Grants and Funeral Travel Grants, consideration must be given to Ailan Kustom and applicable cultural protocols.

4. Criteria

- Protection of cultural practice
- Recognition of cultural protocols
- Funeral must be taking place in the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area
- Deceased must be a current Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area resident
- Details of any special circumstances if the amount applied for is greater than \$5,000

5. Eligible expenditure

Allowable Expenditure includes:

- a) repatriation costs
- b) catering costs
- c) Funeral Home costs.

6. Maximum application threshold

Absent any special circumstances, the maximum amount available for a Funeral Grant is \$5,000 per funeral, which is in addition to any in-kind contributions which may be offered.

7. Approval and payment timing

Council acknowledges the urgency of Funeral grants. In the event that the required payment date falls within the normal creditor payment timeframes, payments will be processed as part of Council's regular creditor payment run every Wednesday and Friday.

Alternatively, if the payment is considered urgent and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer, payments can be processed via a special creditor payment run at the discretion of the Finance department.

Payments are processed via purchase order to the supplier.

A remittance advice will be sent to the supplier and the applicant when payment is made.

- ENDS

Schedule 3: Funeral Travel Grants

1. Intent

The intent of the Funeral Travel Grants is to provide financial assistance to individuals who need to travel for the purpose of attending a funeral in the Torres Strait Island Regional Council Local Government Area. It recognises the importance of community and cultural connections during times of bereavement and seeks to ensure that individuals can participate in funeral ceremonies and support their families and communities.

2. Application and timing

Council recognises that funerals are a very culturally significant event in their region.

Applications for Funeral Travel Grants may be made at any time throughout the financial year.

An application form must be submitted to community.grants@tsirc.qld.gov.au.

3. Assessment

Requests for funeral travel assistance are assessed by the Community Grants team for eligibility and finally approved or rejected by the Chief Executive Officer based on assessment. In assessing an application for Funeral Travel Grant, the Chief Executive Officer will consult with the Divisional Councillor unless it is not appropriate in the circumstance to do so.

In assessing Funeral Grants and Funeral Travel Grants, consideration must be given to Ailan Kustom and applicable cultural protocols.

4. Criteria

- Protection of cultural practice
- Recognition of cultural protocols
- Deceased must have a strong and enduring connection to communities within Council's local government area, and the Torres Strait region

5. Eligible expenditure

Allowable expenditure includes travel costs, flights, accommodation and ground transportation.

6. Maximum application threshold

The maximum amount available for Funeral Travel Grants is \$5,000 per funeral per community.

7. Approval and payment timing

Council acknowledges the urgency of funeral travel. In the event that the required payment date falls within the normal creditor payment timeframes, payments will be processed as part of Council's regular creditor payment run every Wednesday and Friday.

Alternatively, if the payment is considered urgent and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer, payments can be processed via a special creditor payment run at the discretion of the Financial Services Department.

Payments are processed via purchase order to the supplier.

A remittance advice will be sent to the supplier and the Applicant when payment is made.

- ENDS

Schedule 4: Community Gifts Grant

1. Intent

The intent of the Community Gifts Grant is to allocate funds to be used by the Torres Strait Island Regional Council for expenses related to the 'on-division' Council meetings. It ensures that necessary resources are available to conduct these meetings effectively and efficiently. The grant recognises the importance of these meetings in facilitating communication, decision-making, and collaboration among Council members and stakeholders and recognises the hospitality and contribution of the community.

2. Application and timing

Council holds a maximum of four (4) 'on-division' Council meetings per financial year.

Grant funding is to be used for community projects that strengthen community cohesion or community expenses towards the on-division Council meeting.

3. Assessment

No external applications relate to the Community Gifts Grant. Disbursement of Community Gifts Grant funding is coordinated by the Office of the Chief Executive Officer, with all expenses approved or rejected by:

- a) the Chief Executive Officer based on assessment and endorsement where the expenses required is \$5,000 or less

4. Eligible expenditure

Expenditure must benefit the community and is at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer in agreement with the Mayor and divisional Councillor.

5. Maximum application threshold

The maximum amount available for Community Gifts Grants per financial year is \$20,000 equating to a maximum of \$5,000 per 'on-division' Council meeting.

6. Approval and payment timing

Payments are processed by Council to the identified suppliers under Council's purchasing terms and conditions.

- ENDS