

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CS20



NARRANDERA SHIRE COUNCIL POLICY

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Policy No:	CS20
Policy Title:	Financial Assistance Program
Section Responsible:	Corporate and Community Services
Minute No:	16/215
MagiQ No:	8896
Next Review Date:	December 2019

Objective

Narrandera Shire Council is committed to making our Shire a great place to live and work. Council realises that community groups are often key partners in improving the quality of life for residents, workers, and visitors.

To assist in supporting the work of these groups, Council provides limited financial assistance to selected voluntary groups and community groups under this policy on an annual basis.

This document provides a framework of management for the allocation of any financial assistance to local organisations under Section 356 of the Local Government Act, 1993.

This policy also ensures that the administration of the financial assistance program is managed in a transparent, accountable, merit-based manner and that all applications received for funding are assessed fairly and without favouritism.

Policy Statement

Section 356 Local Government Act 1993 provides that Councils may “contribute money or otherwise give financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions”.

Scope

This applies to the administration and management of the Financial Assistance Program.

Definitions

Acquittal

The report that recipients of financial assistance from Council may be asked to provide on the final outcomes of the project and the expenditure of funds received

Automatic Inclusion

A recipient where Council recognises the groups' enhancement of the social capital within the Shire community and a written application for financial assistance is not required

Eligibility Criteria

The measures against which an application is assessed

Financial Assistance Program

The funding grants program in which Council supports non-profit groups and community groups in accordance with this policy

Formal Application

An application received during the formal period within which Council seeks requests for financial assistance

Impromptu Application

An application received outside the formal period within which Council seeks requests for financial assistance.

Content

Eligibility Criteria

- Financial assistance will be provided to support activities, services, projects and/or programs by groups which:
 - encourage resident participation in activities that benefit the community as a whole and that facilitates the inclusion of people who are disenfranchised and/or financially disadvantaged
 - have established clear goals and outcomes that enhance community harmony and social cohesion within in a particular target group
 - encourages people and groups to help themselves
 - have leaders of the project that belong to or are able to demonstrate a strong connection with the community they seek to assist
 - are able to build on existing community assets, such as a service, physical building, bases of knowledge and community skills
 - have relevant project partners with an appropriate and sound budget
 - show cash or in kind contributions to the project
 - meet one or more of the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.

- Financial assistance will not be provided for:
 - use by an individual
 - the waiver of rates and charges
 - the payment or reimbursement of recurrent operational expenses
 - illegal activities
 - funding requests of more than \$2,000
 - political activities
 - commercial activities
 - legal costs
 - reimbursement of expenses for projects that have already commenced or been completed
 - branches of charities that fundraise for projects outside the Shire.

- Notwithstanding the established criteria, Council at its discretion may make a variation where it is demonstrated that financial assistance is required

- **Due to special circumstances (i.e. a pending application to Council by the Narrandera Parkside Cottage Museum Committee to become a Section 355 Committee of Council) the Museum to be exempted and able to receive payment or reimbursement of recurrent operational expenses until such time as the application has been considered by Council.**

Operation

- Determinations will be made annually for the following financial year, as part of Council's budget process
- Applications must be in writing and must use the relevant published application
- Applicant organisations will be asked to forward submissions by the first week in February each year
- Applications will be received once per financial year
- Impromptu applications may still be considered but will be assessed against the same assessment criteria as the formal applications and a weighted score derived
- Recipient groups must nominate identifiable outcomes in the project/service program and will be assessed against the eligibility criteria
- Recipient groups may be asked to provide an acquittal at the end of the nominated project
- A report will be submitted to Council following the application closure date at which time a copy of all applications will be provided with a scoring against the eligibility criteria with a concluding recommendation
- Groups financially assisted in one year will not automatically receive ongoing funding in future years
- Precedence will be given to applicants who did not receive financial assistance during the previous financial year
- Schools within the Shire, the Narrandera TAFE and TAFE NSW Riverina Institute will be provided with an annual donation towards academic prizes and as such are an automatically inclusion for consideration
- Where a request to waive fees or charges on a Council owned/managed facility is approved by Council, the value of the amount waived is to be deducted from the Mayor and General Manager donations pool
- The following groups and community services are recognised as enhancing the social capital within the community and as such are an automatic inclusion for consideration but capped at the maximum funding limit of \$2,000
 - Rural Counselling Service
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Fusion
 - Riverina Sports Academy
 - Parkside Cottage Museum
 - Barellan Museum
 - 100% of charges for junior sporting bodies using Henry Mathieson Oval, the canteen facility and the change room facility
 - 50% of charges for junior sporting bodies using the Narrandera Sports Stadium

Roles and Responsibilities

The Financial Assistance Program is managed within the Corporate and Community Services function of Council.

Council will:-

- Register any applications received
- Create a workflow to the appropriate officer for action
- Assess each application to ensure that it has been completed in full and that any referenced material is attached
- Record the application in an assessment spreadsheet where each criteria is weighted and a total scoring derived
- Prepare a report to Council with recommendations

Related Legislation/Guidelines

Section 356 of the Local Government Act, 1993

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy.

Policy History

Adopted	September 1996
Reviewed	4 September 2000
Amended	20 March 2007
Amended	15 July 2008
Reviewed	9 December 2008
Reviewed	11 December 2013
Amended	15 April 2014
Amended	17 November 2015
Adopted following consultation	5 January 2016
Proposed Amendments	27 September 2016
Adopted	27 September 2016
Amended	14 January 2018
Endorsed by ELT	15 January 2018
Adopted by Council	20 February 2018



Signed: George Cowan, General Manager

Date: 20 February 2018