

# Annual Community Initiatives Program Grant Guidelines 2025 to 2026

## Overview

Byron Shire Council values the many community, cultural, sporting and other organisations contributing significant, often voluntary, resources to enhance the quality of life in the Byron Shire community.

The Community Initiatives Program (CIP) awards annual grants for projects that address a specific need, build a sense of community and align with Council priorities.

Incorporated not-for-profit organisations and community groups auspiced by an incorporated organisation are eligible to apply for grants of up to \$5,000. GST is not applicable.

Applications are made via the online form.

## Why do we provide these grants?

The Community Initiatives Program (CIP) is one of the ways in which Byron Council supports the strategies and actions outlined in the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan. These Plans guide how Council responds to the opportunities and challenges within the Shire.

The Community Initiatives Program (Section 356) Policy 2022 states that the CIP aims to:

- provide a funding program for community driven initiatives that address a specific community need and that also build a sense of community
- assist community organisations in the provision of services and facilities for the benefits of residents
- help fulfil Council's objectives in priority areas and achieve measurable outcomes for residents and the community
- provide an equitable framework for Council in providing community donations, including guidelines for determining donations to be made within the adopted budget allocation.

## Key dates

Grant round opens	Monday 7 April 2025
Applications close	Friday 16 May 2025 at 11.59pm
Announcement of grant outcomes	After 28 August 2025
Projects commence	Upon signing of Funding Agreement

## Eligibility

### Who can apply?

- Incorporated organisations with an active ABN or proof that you are not required to be registered for GST.
- Not-for-profit entities that meet the eligibility criteria but do not have an ABN can be auspiced by an incorporated organisation. Auspicing helps small or new organisations who are not incorporated or who do not have an ABN to access grant funds. They accept legal and financial responsibility for the grant if successful. If successful, the Funding Agreement for a successful grant will be negotiated between the auspice organisation and Council and grant money will be paid directly to the auspice organisation.
- Indigenous corporations.
- Applicants must be locally based and/or providing a service or activity of benefit to the Byron community.
- Applicants must have public liability insurance (minimum \$20,000) with a suitable level of coverage and Working with Children Check(s) (if relevant).
- Applicants must have successfully acquitted all previous grants and have no outstanding debts to Byron Council.

### Who cannot apply?

- Applicant organisations or groups that receive significant regular funding from a sponsor or auspice organisation (e.g. government agencies or political groups).
- Commercial organisations, businesses or groups (e.g. for the profit or gain of individuals). Applications will not be accepted for individual or sole traders.
- Council will not provide funding to individuals or organisations raising funds on behalf of another community group or organisation. Applications must be received directly from the group or organisation proposing the project.

## What can we fund?

- Funding is available for Community Projects of up to \$5,000 (excl. GST) that address a specific need, build a sense of community and align with Council priorities
- Applicants can submit multiple applications for different projects, however only one application per project will be considered
- Some examples of types of projects that may receive support include:
  - Bringing people and community organisations together to foster stronger more resilient communities
  - Celebrating a sense of identity, diversity, creativity and cultural connection within the community
  - Improving community health and social wellbeing
  - Enabling people to develop skills, knowledge and confidence to lead and contribute to community life
  - Enhancing places where communities gather
  - Increasing access and inclusion for communities experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.

All applicants are required to provide a budget with your application. It must clearly show the required items and all income and expenses related to your project. Budgets should be realistic. Please make sure your income and expenditure figures are balanced correctly. Failure to provide a budget may result in your application being deemed ineligible.

Applicants can apply for a maximum of \$5,000 per project.

## What cannot be funded?

Council may not approve financial assistance for:

- Community initiatives or events that generate financial profits for commercial companies and/or individuals
- A core activity of the applicant organisation
- The purchase of equipment only that is not directly linked to the program objectives
- Ongoing operational or administration expenses of an organisation. For example: expenses include funding an ongoing staff position, insurance, utility expenses (electricity, phone, etc.), rent or debt payments
- An initiative that duplicates existing available services to an identical target group within the same geographical location

- Activities that are sponsored by gambling businesses or that take place at inappropriate venues
- Activities that take place outside of the Byron Shire, unless part of a larger project with proven and public benefit to the Byron community
- Activities that are the primary responsibility of other funding agencies or government
- Building, renovation works, capital works (minor maintenance and upkeep may be considered, where there is a clear demonstrated community outcome, including improved accessibility). Applicants are encouraged to speak with officers from Council Building Works team beforehand
- Council reserves the right to not fund the same activity for consecutive years
- Where it is deemed that applicants are in a position to self-fund the activity
- For a project which includes illegal activities
- If the organisation or group received funding in the previous financial year and did not comply with acquittal requirements
- Applications to fund activities retrospectively.

## CIP Grant Assessment Criteria

The CIP application assessment process is competitive. Applications will be evaluated on how they address the program assessment criteria.

Eligible projects will be assessed against four equally weighted program criteria:

1. **Organisational capacity:** the applicant has demonstrated capacity to deliver the project outcomes on time and within budget and the project does not represent risk to Council.
2. **Addressing a community need:** demonstrated evidence that the project supports activities and services needed by local communities. In particular that the activities/project should prioritise equitable outcomes for communities facing systemic barriers and historical disadvantage.
3. **Increasing community participation, accessibility and inclusion:** the application demonstrates how the project encourages and promotes participation and/or engagement, accessibility and inclusion in activities or services within the Byron community.
4. **Program Delivery:** the application provides clearly identified aims/objectives, well defined outcomes and a complete, balanced and realistic budget. Necessary approvals and certificates are supplied or can be achieved within the timeframe. The project is

appropriate to the context and the application addresses Council's commitments to sustainability.

## **Assessment of Applications**

After the closing date, applications will be assessed by the Grants Assessment Panel for eligibility. Any applications received after the advertised closing date may be deemed ineligible.

Only eligible applications which include all the requested information and supporting material will be assessed by the Grants Assessment Panel against the advertised assessment criteria.

All assessors of the Byron Council CIP grant must declare (in writing) if they have, or could be perceived to have, a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as a conflict between a person's private interests and their public obligations. This process ensures that any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is promptly identified and addressed. All CIP grant assessors must declare if they have any relationship with an applicant or private interest in the application before any grant applications are assessed.

In a panel setting, assessors with a clear conflict of interest, must absent themselves from all discussions of the particular application and must not provide any additional information/background/context, allowing the application to speak for itself. If it is known that a Council officer will have multiple conflicts of interest, they should not participate in the assessment at all. All assessors are also required to declare that they will treat information they have access to through the assessment process, confidentially.

Council officers record the outcomes of panel assessments within the grants administration system and prepare a report listing the recommended applications; this is presented to Council for consideration. Following the Council meeting, the successful and unsuccessful applicants are notified in writing as soon as is practicable.

Council is committed to sound decision-making processes to ensure fair and reasonable outcomes for the Byron community. Council's decision in determining grant outcomes is considered final and there are no appeal processes.

## **Additional assessment information**

- Council will only provide one CIP grant to any organisation each financial year, for projects owned and managed by that organisation.
- Applications that do not meet the assessment criteria may be declined without report to Council for consideration.
- All funding is allocated at the discretion of Council and subject to the allocations within the adopted annual Council budget. No application is guaranteed funding support.
- Council reserves the right to include a strategic priority area additional to the selection criteria, when there is a more current demonstrated community need.

## **Additional information**

### **Accessibility**

Applicants should endeavour to ensure that their project will be accessible for people of all abilities. We encourage applications that enhance the accessibility and inclusion of everyone in our community.

### **Do I need to provide a matching contribution?**

No, applications do not need to show a matching contribution to be eligible, however, demonstration of any other funding or in-kind contribution(s) and whether confirmed or unconfirmed should be outlined in the budget.

## **Successful applications**

### **What will happen if your application is successful?**

If you are successful, a Funding Agreement which must be signed by both parties will be sent to you (or your auspice organisation). The funding agreement protects the interests of Council and the grant recipient and enables the conditions of the grant to be enforced. Within the Funding Agreement, you are requested to provide details of your nominated bank account. All payments will be made by electronic transfer.

Funding will be paid in two instalments:

- 75% at the commencement of the project, upon receipt of the signed Funding Agreement and an invoice.
- 25% upon receipt of a satisfactory acquittal of the project.

## **What to do if your grant is not fully funded?**

If your application is successful but did not receive the full amount of funding requested, and you would like to proceed with the grant, please discuss any changes to your application with Council Officers.

All projects must be completed within 12 months of the funds being granted. Any extension to these terms must be made in writing.

Funds must be used for the purpose for which they were granted and according to the terms and conditions in the Funding Agreement. Any variations in the use of funds must be approved in advance by Council and confirmed in writing.

## **Acquittal**

Each grant recipient is required to submit an acquittal form within two months of project completion and by no later than 30 June 2026. The acquittal demonstrates the effectiveness of the project and how the funding was expended.

To be eligible for a grant, organisations must have successfully acquitted all previous grants from Byron Council. Applications from applicants with outstanding acquittals may **not** be assessed.

## **Promoting your project**

Council will supply you with the Byron Shire Council logo for use in all publications, advertising material and social media published in connection with the Project, where Council should be recognised as a supporter.

If your grant is successful, Byron Shire Council reserves the right to contact you and your organisation for promotional purposes. This may include but is not limited to promoting your project on Council's website, social media channels, electronic and print newsletters and external media outlets. At the Acquittal stage, you will be asked to provide 5 images with image credits, that may be shared in promotion of the Community Initiatives Program and Byron Shire Council.

## **Contact Council**

All enquiries should be directed to:

Malcolm Foard - Community Projects Officer

Ph 02 6626 7073

[communityservices@byron.nsw.gov.au](mailto:communityservices@byron.nsw.gov.au)