Community grants applicant guidelines

For community grant applicants

Version 3.0
Prepared 1 July 2026

This guideline document has been prepared to help you apply for our community grants.

Bendigo Bank

Introduction

This community grants program is administered by Community Bank Bright. Our grants program accepts applications all year round.

Community and not-for-profit organisations can apply for funding for projects and activities that are aligned with our impact strategy, at least one of our focus areas and clearly demonstrate positive community outcomes.

You should **read these guidelines before beginning your application**.

Community Investment and Impact Strategy

Community Bank Bright's Community Investment and Impact Strategy is driven by our overarching commitment to invest in the growth of a **resilient**, **thriving** and **sustainable** community in Bright and surrounds.

To guide investment towards this outcome, the following priority areas of focus have been identified:

1. **Health and Wellbeing**
   Nurturing the physical and mental health of individuals and groups in our community and improving access to health services.

2. **Liveability**
   Enhance local community groups capacity, capabilities and infrastructure. Support the ongoing protection and sustainability of environmental assets.

3. **Economic Impact**
   Grow the economic strength of our region and drive innovative solutions to challenges facing businesses and our community.

4. **Culture**
   Supporting cultural and arts activities that celebrate our region's identity and heritage and empower people through creativity and connection.

5. **Inclusion**
   Fostering a culture of belonging, improving connectedness for all members of our community and strengthening activity and participation.

What is a grant?

Our grants are paid to an organisation to address a social issue within the community aligning with our community impact strategy and one or more focus areas.

Key dates

Our grant applications are open quarterly. Please refer to communitybankbright.smartygrants.com.au to view the available rounds and key dates.

Eligibility

You must:

- be an incorporated community or not-for-profit organisation

- have a project partner if you are not an incorporated organisation. A project partner is an incorporated community or not-for profit organisation that is willing to enter into the funding agreement on your behalf and help you to deliver the project
- be located within Bright, Harrietville, Myrtleford, Porepunkah, Wandiligong or surrounding areas between these locations or have a project partner within these locations.
- show evidence of self-funding (minimum 25% of total project cost- this can be cash or in-kind)

Who is ineligible?

- individuals or unincorporated organisations without an eligible project partner
- for-profit organisations
- applicant organisations (or partner organisations) with an unsatisfactory result to the Anti Money Laundering / Know Your Customer search.

Use of grant funds

Grant funds can be used for projects that align with Community Investment and Impact Strategy program outcomes.

We will not provide funding for projects that are illegal, commercial or confer private benefits.

Organisations are limited to one grant application per financial year.

We will also not fund projects which:

- take place outside the areas of Bright, Harrietville, Myrtleford, Porepunkah, Wandiligong or surrounding areas between these locations.
- break or attempt to change the law, or direct political donations
- claim retrospective funding – paying for costs already incurred
- involve gambling
- exclude or offend any part of the community
- encourage violence or involve the use of weapons
- mistreat, exploit, or harm animals
- create environmental hazards
- present a danger to public health or safety
- contribute to modern slavery
- take place solely outside of Australia.

Assessment criteria

Your application will be competitively assessed against the following merit criteria:

Criterion 1: Alignment with program outcomes (50%)

- How well aligned is your proposed project to the community investment strategy and focus area outcomes?
- Problem definition and demonstrated benefits for your organisation and the community.
- Need for funding (will your project proceed without our funding).
- The extent to which you demonstrate clear and realistic project goals and objectives.

Criterion 2: Community support/stakeholder engagement (20%)

- Evidence of support from the broader community showing how your project will benefit local people or the local community.
- Evidence of support from other stakeholders who are critical to your project delivery.

Criterion 3: Capacity to deliver (20%)

- Track record delivering similar projects.
- Financial viability (if applicable).
- Proposed project is realistic and achievable.
- Demonstrate a minimum 25% contribution from applicant organisation and/or the community toward the project cost; this may be cash, in-kind or donated items. (A maximum of 10% of this amount can be made up of unskilled labour.)*
- Any other grant funding or in-kind support.

Criterion 4: Value for money (10%)

- Budget is reasonable and reflects good value.
- Proposed outcomes are proportionate to proposed investment.

How to apply

You should read and understand these guidelines before beginning your application.

Organisations are limited to one grant approval per financial year. (Should a grant application not be approved, your group is allowed to submit request/s for other project/s in the same financial year).

We will only accept one application per project.

Use our application hub to complete and submit your online application- https://communitybankbright.smartygrants.com.au/

We will send you a confirmation email to your registered email address once your application has been submitted.

To ensure a fair process, we will not accept late applications or provide extensions.

We may contact you during the assessment process to request more information, evidence or to clarify information provided in your grant application.

If we refer this application to the Community Enterprise Foundation to assess and administer, you will be notified and provided with relevant information.

Supporting documentation

You must provide the following supporting documentation for a small grant (less than $10,000):

- Current bank statement for your organisation.
- Project budget which clearly shows how you will spend the funds, and two (2) quotes for all budget items greater than $1,000.
- Letters of support to demonstrate community need and benefit (optional).
- Applications involving a project partner must include a letter of their support and a copy of their financials. Email us for a template.
- Proof of other approved funding or your own funds to put towards the project. (including in-kind support).

- Evidence of all necessary licences, permits and insurances which will enable you to run your project (e.g. public liability insurance, local council permits).
- For projects involving children, evidence that relevant personnel have Working With Children Checks.

You must provide additional supporting documentation for large grants (greater than $10,000):

- Current signed audited financial statements for the applicant organisation or project partner (where applicable).
- Organisations not required to audit financials must provide a profit and loss statement as a minimum, and a balance sheet if available.
- Two (2) quotes for all budget items greater than $1,000 (use local itemised quotes where possible). If you are applying for funding for wages, please attach a position description and a copy of the relevant award.
- If you have conducted this project/program before (e.g. annual events), copies of receipts/invoices that substantiate this request from previous expenditure plus a detailed budget.
- Plans/designs for projects that involve building or refurbishment.
- Letters of support to demonstrate community need and benefit, particularly for large projects or initiatives that have a sporting or recreational element and need to show wide community benefit.

*** In-Kind Contributions**

In-kind contributions can be in the form of donations of materials, equipment, workspaces, labour etc. The value of these contributions must be included in the Project Budget .

*** In-Kind Labour**

In-kind labour refers to work completed by volunteers at no cost to your group/organisation and should be calculated at $25 per hour. A maximum of 10% of an organisation's contribution can be made up of unskilled labour. e.g., 5 club volunteers work for 2 hours each preparing a site = 10 volunteer hours @ $25.00 per hour = $250.00 in-kind.

Skilled in-kind labour such as earthmovers, qualified tradespeople and those with professional skills should be calculated at their usual charge out rate, if you do not know this, calculate at $45 per hour e.g., 15 hours @ $45 = $675 in-kind.

Decisions on applications

Application round timelines for the current financial year can be found at https://communitybankbright.smartygrants.com.au/.

Managing your grant

Keeping us informed

You must notify us about anything which is likely to impact your organisation and its ability to deliver your project. This may include, but is not limited to, changes to your organisation's name, address, financial situation, senior staffing arrangements, or significant changes to the project budget.

Grant agreement variations

We understand that circumstances change and things don't always go according to plan. If there has been a change that will impact your project, you can request a variation to your grant agreement by contacting us.

We will consider your request, and if we decide to accept your proposed changes, we will issue a deed of variation.

Reporting requirements

You will be required to complete a Project Completion Acquittal within 60 days of your nominated project end date. The Project Completion Acquittal will be submitted electronically through the application portal. The report includes information about how the grant was spent, the outcomes, achievements of the project, and any lessons learned.

Privacy information

View our privacy policy.

Enquiries

Application queries

Community Bank Bright
Phone: 0408 505 865
Email: sponsorship@communitybankbright.org

For technical support with application hub

SmartyGrants–Our Community
Phone: 03 9320 6888
Email: service@smartygrants.com.au