COMMUNITY FUNDING POLICY

Policy/Procedure Type	Council
Responsible Department	Community & Organisational Development
Responsible Officer	Manager Community Connections
Related Policies and Procedures	• Small Sponsorships Program Guidelines • Youth Sponsorship Program Guidelines • Community Grants Program Guidelines • Events Sponsorship Program Guidelines • Community Celebrations Guidelines • Community Chest Guidelines • Community Impact Partnership Guidelines • Customer Complaints Policy • Privacy Policy
Community Plan Link	1. Community Living 1.2 Our Community participates in community activities, learning opportunities and volunteering 2. Civic Leadership 4.1 We have strong leadership and governance
Date Originally Adopted	28 September 2015
Last Review Date	9 December 2024
Next Review Date	August 2027
ECM Document No.	9046037

1. **PREAMBLE**

    1.1. In accordance with Council's role, function and principles under the *Local Government Act 1999,* the City of Unley administers funding through grants, sponsorships, and partnerships.

    1.2. The City of Unley plays an important role in the funding landscape for the community. Through its community funding programs, Council is responsive to the needs, interests and aspirations of individuals and organisations within the community and the priorities of the Community Plan.

2. SCOPE

2.1. This Policy applies to the creation and administration of the City of Unley grants, sponsorship, and partnership programs where funding is provided to the community through an application process.

2.2. The City of Unley community funding programs are comprised of:

- Community Grants
- Community Event Sponsorship
- Small Sponsorship
- Youth Sponsorship
- Community Celebrations
- Community Chest
- Community Impact Partnerships.

2.3. Council's community funding programs may change title or funding limit over time with Council endorsement. Rather than be exhaustive, this Policy provides a foundation for decision making across existing and future community funding programs.

2.4. Council's community funding programs, unless otherwise indicated in the relevant guidelines, will be limited to:

- Individuals who live in the City of Unley,
- Owners of properties in the City of Unley,
- Community based groups, organisations and services that operate within the City of Unley and/or for the benefit of the City of Unley residents, and
- Events or activities that will take place within the City of Unley.

Employees and Elected Members of the City of Unley are ineligible to receive community funding.

2.5. The Policy excludes:

- Any funding provided without an application process,
- Any funding provided as a fee for service,
- Procurement, purchasing or tenders,
- Contract management,
- Grants attraction where Council seeks to win funding for Council activities, and

2.6. Other Council administered funding programs not listed in this Policy.

3. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

3.1. Community funding programs are an important way that Council in collaboration with individuals, businesses and community groups strive to achieve aspects of the Community Plan.

3.2. The purpose of this Policy is to guide the provision of Council's community funding programs (including grants, sponsorships, partnerships, and in-kind support) and ensure their effective monitoring, reporting, and periodic review.

4. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Acquittal	Information provided by a community funding recipient that ensures the funds have been administered responsibly and in line with the funding agreement / conditions of the funding program.
Agreement	A document outlining the funding conditions accepted by the Council and the funding recipient prior to the provision of funding.
Applicant	The person or organisation applying for funding support from Council.
Application	The request for funding made using the relevant application form.
Auspicing	An arrangement in which an eligible organization manages a grant on behalf of another group, assuming full responsibility for reporting requirements, fund expenditure, and acquittal.
Council	City of Unley
Community Member	A person who lives, works, studies or socialises in the City of Unley area.
Funding	Is the act of providing resources to finance a need, program or project. While usually in the form of money, it can also take the form of goods, services or resources provided in-kind.
Grant	A sum of money provided by Council to deliver a particular project, program, initiative or other outcome.
Guidelines	A document pertaining to the specifications of an individual funding program.
In-kind	In-kind support includes real project costs provided free of charge, such as volunteer labour, guidance or advice, administrative support, donations of materials or equipment, or provision of facilities or venues.
Organisation	A structured entity or group of people with a particular purpose. Includes businesses, not-for-profit groups, incorporated associations or other entities who may be registered with the Australian Taxation Office.
Sponsorship	Funding and/or in-kind support provided by an organisation to demonstrate their support, often in exchange for a negotiated mutual benefit.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
Elected Members	• Endorse a Community Funding Policy. • Endorse the award of funding for the Community Grants, Community Impact Partnerships and Event Sponsorship Programs. • Allocate a budget for community funding programs. • Receive regular updates on successful and unsuccessful applications made through Council's community funding programs.

	• Establish, revoke, or significantly amend community funding programs. • Endorse major changes to community funding programs and/or guidelines in a way which significantly alter the nature of the program, its eligibility criteria, types of activities funded, or the level of funding provided.
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Overall responsibility for the delivery of community funding programs within the strategic direction and Policy set by Council.
Executive Leadership Team (ELT)	Monitor the delivery of the community funding programs delivered through this Policy.
General Manager Community and Organisational Development	Assess and approve funding applications for the Community Chest Program.
Manager Community Connections	• Oversight of the delivery of community funding programs covered by this Policy. • Agree to accept an application after a program closing date, where prior approval is sought and granted. • Responsibility for the review of this Policy.

Employees who administer community funding programs	• Coordinate and manage the preparation of community funding guidelines, application forms and marketing materials.
	• Undertake activities to promote Council's community funding opportunities and increase the capability of community organisations, groups, and businesses to prepare funding applications.
	• Administer the application, assessment and selection process for grants, sponsorship and partnership programs in accordance with the program guidelines.
	• Prepare Resolution Reports for Council for the Community Grants, Event Sponsorship and Community Impact Partnership programs.
	• Prepare annual reports for Council to showcase the outcomes of the community funding program.
	• Facilitate opportunities for Elected Members to be involved in the presentation of grants and sponsorship.
	• Make minor changes to program guidelines which:
	    ○ Improve, make clearer or respond to community feedback about the eligibility criteria, application process, opening / closing dates, timing of rounds, assessment, or advice to applicants, and
	    ○ Do not significantly alter the intent, eligibility criteria or level of funding provided by Council.
	• Ensure funding is acquitted or returned in a timely manner.
	• Maintain an official record of all funding recipients which describes the intended purpose of the funding, the funding given, the date of the funding and its acquittal.

6. STATEMENT

6.1. Principles

6.1.1. Council has adopted six best practice principles for community funding that underpin the delivery of this Policy.

- **Accessibility**

  Community funding programs will be accessible to all members / groups of the community, regardless of their background, experience, or circumstances. Application and reporting processes will be simple, with clear guidelines and criteria that are easy to understand. Capacity-building opportunities and support will be offered to funding applicants and recipients.

- **Transparency**

  Community funding programs will be delivered with clear information about the funding process, criteria, and outcomes. This includes being transparent about the funding available, selection criteria used, and the decision-making process. Probity risks will be managed to ensure decisions are free from bias and prevent the misuse of funds.

- **Community Engagement**

  Community funding programs will be informed by community engagement processes to ensure that the funding is meeting needs and supports the community's aspirations. The community will be provided with opportunities to participate in grant making processes and is kept informed of the outcomes being delivered.

- **Alignment**

  Community funding programs will focus on delivering meaningful outcomes and impact for the community. This means prioritising projects and initiatives that can demonstrate clear benefits to the City of Unley's community and strategic plans.

- **Sustainability**

  Community funding programs will be directed to initiatives that are carefully planned and have considered all associated costs, including responsibilities for ongoing costs.

  Funding partners will be selected carefully to ensure they are financially sustainable without ongoing funding assistance and have the skills and capacity to deliver the agreed project outcomes.

- **Value for Money**

  Funding will be directed towards local organisations and projects that are professionally managed and create lasting benefits for the community (environmental, social, and economic).

  There will be sufficient due diligence and regular evaluation to ensure funds are delivering a positive return to the broader community.

6.2. Guidelines

6.2.1. Guidelines will be established for each community funding program. A copy of the guidelines will be available on Council's website and be reviewed every two years to ensure the program continues to meet community needs. The guidelines will explain:

- The purpose of the funding program, any links to Council's Community Plan and/or strategies,
- Who is eligible to apply,

- Amount of funding available (both the total funding pool and the minimum and maximum funding amounts),
- How to apply,
- Eligible costs,

6.2.1.1. Open and close dates for applications

6.2.1.2. An overview of the assessment process,

- Any merit criteria and/or weightings to clarify how applications will be scored,
- A description of the acquittal requirements, and

6.2.1.3. Contact details for the funding program coordinator.

6.3. Application Forms

6.3.1. All documentation required for community members to apply for funding should be designed and reviewed with the user in mind. It should be clear, easy to read and free from unnecessary bureaucracy, while also adhering to accessibility standards.

6.3.2. The number of questions and amount of supporting material required from applicants should be commensurate with the funding amount and ensure an equitable and transparent assessment process.

6.4. Eligibility

6.4.1. The focus of community funding should be on the projected outcomes it aims to achieve, rather than solely on who receives it. However, this must be balanced with a commitment to equitable and fair distribution.

6.4.2. Preference may be given to new activities or projects in specific areas to promote equity. Priority may also be extended to local organizations and those whose mission and values closely align with the City of Unley's. Conversely, organizations whose purpose and principles conflict with those of the City of Unley will not be eligible for funding.

6.4.3. Specific funding programs may target or exclude specific organisation types, such as businesses, schools, charities, or not-for-profit organisations. Guideline documents will specify eligibility for each program.

6.4.4. To be funded an organisation must be registered with the Australian Tax Office (ATO). The exceptions, where permitted and specified within a program funding guideline, are:

- Individuals
- Unincorporated groups
- A group auspiced by a legal entity.

6.5. Auspicing

6.5.1. The intention of auspicing to allow community members and groups who are not registered as an organisation with the Australian Tax Office to access Council's funding programs.

6.5.2. Organisations with a structure and/or purpose that is deemed ineligible for a funding program cannot obtain auspicing to meet Council's eligibility requirements. For example, a business cannot be auspiced to apply for a grant that is only open to not-for-profit organisations.

6.6. Unsatisfactory Dealings

Organisations or individuals that have had unsatisfactory dealings with Council may be precluded from receiving funding. For example, an organisation may be deemed ineligible in future funding rounds if they have:

6.6.1.　Breached their conditions of funding.

6.6.2.　Failed to deliver on the projected outcomes or failed to acquit a grant, sponsorship or partnership.

- Failed to comply with all applicable statutory requirements, including but not limited to, all acts and activities that constitute development pursuant to the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016.

6.6.3.　Are in litigation with Council.

6.7. Breaches and Outstanding Debts with Council

6.7.1.　A record will be kept of all breaches, outstanding debts, and issues in a central register for future reference, including any correspondence with the funding recipient.

6.7.2.　Minor breaches, outstanding debts or issues may exclude an organisation from being funded until the issue is resolved to Council's satisfaction.

6.7.3.　Major breaches, outstanding debts and issues may exclude an organisation from being funded indefinitely.

6.7.4.　Whether or not an organisation is funded is always at Council's discretion.

6.8. Council's Brand and Reputation

6.8.1.　The assessment of all funding applications will take into consideration the potential impact and risk, both positive and negative, on Council's brand and reputation. Council reserves the right to not fund any applicant that could be deemed to damage Council's brand and reputation.

6.9. Late Applications

6.9.1.　Applications must be received by the deadline of the funding program as outlined in the relevant guidelines. Late applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be accepted unless prior approval has been provided by the Manager Community Connections.

6.10. Incomplete Applications and Missing Information

6.10.1.　If a funding application submitted to Council is incomplete or missing information, the applicant may be contacted by an employee to address the situation. The employee will inform the applicant of what further information is required and provide up to five business days for the applicant to submit the relevant information`/documentation.

6.10.2.　If the information is not provided within this period, the employee or assessment panel will decide on the eligibility of the application and proceed with the assessment based on the documentation provided.

6.11. Multiple Applications

6.11.1.　Applicants can submit applications to separate funding programs within the same financial year and/or round, provided that the applications are for different activities.

6.11.2.　To ensure equity and fair access to funding, when assessing an application, Council may choose to rank an applicant lower if they have secured funding through another community funding program in the same or previous financial year. How this will be applied will be detailed in the guidelines for each program.

6.11.3. When submitting multiple applications, applicants will be asked to rank their applications in order of preference for funding.

6.12. Profit Making Activities

6.12.1. Activities that indicate they may return a profit for their applicant are acceptable, however consideration will be given to whether Council funding is required for the activity to go ahead and how the profits will be used. These factors will be considered in the assessment process.

6.13. Retrospective Activities

Council will not provide community funding for any activities that have already commenced or have been completed. For example, applications will be deemed ineligible where:

- Applicants have purchased, paid a deposit, or made part-payment towards an item.

6.13.1. Events/projects/programs/activities have or will begin prior to funding being approved.

6.14. Assessment and Approval

6.14.1. To ensure transparent decision-making, applications will be assessed based on criteria provided in the program guidelines.

6.14.2. The assessment criteria and any scores allocated will guide the ranking of applications whether they will be funded, and to what extent. However, Council reserves the right to decide which applications will be funded and to what extent, regardless of any scores allocated through the assessment process. For example, new activities or activities in specific locations may be prioritised.

6.14.3. For probity, funding programs (excluding youth, small sponsorships, and community celebrations) should be evaluated by an assessment panel, consisting of at least three people. It is preferred that panels include at least one community member. Community members involved in the assessment process will adhere to Council's Volunteer Code of Conduct and will not have applied for funding for the program that they are on the panel for.

6.14.4. Any conflicts of interest will be managed according to the Local Government Act 1999.

6.14.5. Unless otherwise agreed through a resolution of Council, finding allocations will be approved in line with Clause 29 of this Policy.

6.15. Privacy and Confidentiality

6.15.1. All information collected during the funding process will be treated in accordance with Council's Privacy Policy. It is important that no information is shared publicly until the assessment process has been completed and approved.

6.15.2. Information will be published on Council's website when allocations have been approved which will include information such as:

- The name of the applicant and any other parties involved in or associated with the project.

- Information about the proposed activities outlined in an application, such as the project name and summary.

6.15.3. The amount of funding allocated.

6.16. Conditions of Funding

6.16.1. All successful applicants will be required to sign and adhere to a funding agreement or conditions of funding and to deliver their activity as outlined in their funding application.

6.16.2. The conditions of funding will include relevant clauses to ensure successful applicants:

- Use funding for the purpose outlined in the application.
- Indemnify Council and employees against any actions, costs, claims, charges, and expenses which may be brought or made to claim against them in relation to their funded activities.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, laws, regulations, and guidelines.
- Obtain any required consent, permits, licences or approvals before commencing their funded activities and comply with them.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of the applicant's employees, volunteers, and the public.
- Undertake to minimise any impact to the environment and residents.
- Manage all enquiries/complaints in relation to their funded activities.

6.16.2.1. Are aware of their requirements for reporting and acquittal.

6.16.3. The funding conditions will require a financial acquittal and an evaluation report (formatted according to the grant guidelines and/or funding agreement) to finalize the funding arrangement.

6.16.4. Applicants that do not comply with the conditions of funding may be asked to return funding or be deemed ineligible for future funding.

6.17. Payment

6.17.1. For most funding programs, Council will make a single full payment within one month of receiving a signed funding agreement from the applicant.

6.17.2. If a funding program does not provide full-funding up-front, this will be detailed in the program guidelines.

6.18. Cancelled or Postponed Activities

6.18.1. When an applicant notifies Council of the cancellation of their funded activity, employees will consider this on a case-by-case basis. It is expected that Council funding will be returned in-line with the program guidelines, allowing for the deduction of any approved costs incurred by the applicant to date.

6.18.2. If the applicant believes there is an option to alter the activity or defer or postpone it for up to 12 months, this option is preferred to cancellation. When activities are changed or postponed, funding can be retained by the applicant until the activity has been completed within the re-negotiated period. All changes must be recorded by the funding program coordinator.

6.19. Ongoing Funding

6.19.1. It is recognised that without ongoing funding some activities would not continue. For this reason, Council may fund the same activity in subsequent funding rounds, in-line with the program guidelines.

6.20. Unallocated Funding

6.20.1. It is within Council's discretion to:

- Move unallocated funds between program rounds, where a funding program has multiple funding rounds within the same financial year.

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- Use unallocated funds in an additional funding round.
- Move unallocated funds to the Community Chest funding program.

6.20.1.1. Retain unallocated funds as savings.

6.21. Unsolicited Requests for Funding

6.21.1. Unsolicited requests for funds will be provided with a response that details the correct process to apply for funding.

6.22. Complaints and Disputes

6.22.1. Any concerns, complaints or disputes raised will be managed according to Council's Customer Complaint Policy.

6.23. Document Management

6.23.1. All funding documentation must be recorded in Council's corporate document management system. This is the responsibility of the funding program coordinator.

7. DELEGATIONS

7.1. Council will receive a Resolution Report for the Event Sponsorship Program, Community Grant Program and Community Impact Partnership Program.

7.2. The General Manager Community & Organisational Development has delegation to assess and approve Community Chest applications.

7.3. Council Officers who administer the Youth Sponsorship, Small Sponsorship and Community Celebrations funding programs have delegation to assess and approve such applications.

8. LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1999* – Sections 7 (c) 7 (h), 137

9. AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

9.1. The Policy is available for public inspection during normal office hours at:

The Civic Centre,

181 Unley Road, Unley SA 5061.

A copy may be purchased for a fee as determined annually by Council.

It is also available for viewing, download and printing free of charge from the Council's website www.unley.sa.gov.au.

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Version No.	Comment
28 September 2015	Version 1	C255/15
23 October 2017	Version 2	C966/17
22 July 2019	Version 3	C0065/19
22 March 2021	Version 4	C0477/21, general review / update
9 December 2024	Version 5	C1468/24 *Update into new Policy template and rewrite to include new clauses: Preamble, Scope, Purpose, Roles & Responsibilities and removal of clauses titled: Policy Statement and Policy Objectives.*

Date	Version No.	Comment
		Updates made consistent with the 2023 Community Grants and Sponsorship Review recommendations, which include:

Positioned within the Comment column, continuing the same row:

- Name change from Community Grants and Sponsorship Policy to Community Funding Policy.

- Within the Principles Clause, adoption of the best practice principles for community funding programs identified in the Community Grant and Sponsorship Review report.

- Update of Delegations clause to reflect additional funding programs not considered in the 2021 Policy.

- Development of a detailed framework to ensure a high level of consistency across all the funding programs which include the following clauses:

  o *Program Guidelines,*
  o *Application Forms,*
  o *Eligibility,*
  o *Auspicing,*
  o *Unsatisfactory dealings,*
  o *Breaches and outstanding debts,*
  o *Council's Brand and Reputation,*
  o *Late applications,*
  o *Incomplete applications and missing information,*
  o *Multiple applications,*
  o *Profit making activities,*
  o *Retrospective activities,*
  o *Assessment and approval,*
  o *Privacy and confidentiality,*
  o *Conditions of funding,*
  o *Payment,*
  o *Cancelled and postponed activities,*
  o *Ongoing funding,*
  o *Unallocated funds,*
  o *Unsolicited requests,*
  o *Complaints and disputes,*
  o *Document management.*

- Update and expand Definitions in line with the new Policy.

- The Community Celebrations and Community Chest program have been included in the Policy to ensure these funding programs benefit from the same consistency as programs listed in the previous Policy.

- Change in the name of Community Impact Grants to Community Impact Partnerships.