

Community Donations Program Guidelines

1. Purpose of the Program

The Community Donations Program provides flexible support to assist community organisations and defined cohorts where small financial and non-financial contributions can have a meaningful and immediate impact.

This program aims to:

- Respond quickly to emerging or unplanned community needs
- Support participation, inclusion and access
- Provide relief from minor operational or cost pressures
- Complement, but not replace, Council's other forms of community support programs such as formal grant and sponsorship programs.

Donations are provided with no expectation of commercial or reciprocal benefit to Council.

2. Program Principles

The Community Donations program is delivered in accordance with the Council's Community Support Policy and guided by the following principles:

- **Community benefit focused** – support delivers real local outcomes
- **Proportionate** – effort and requirements match the size of the request
- **Accessible** – simple and easy to apply
- **Responsive** – able to respond quickly to need
- **Transparent and consistent** – decisions are clear and defensible
- **Equitable** – supports fair access across the community

3. Scope of support

Council provides the following financial and non-financial support through the Community Donations Program:

Donation type	Description
Cash donations	Small financial contributions to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community activities or events • Minor project or operational costs • Participation and access initiatives
In-kind support	Provision of Council resources, services or materials including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Council facilities or venues • Staff time or technical support • Equipment, plant or materials • Waste, traffic or infrastructure support
Fee waivers / concessions (organisations only)	Reduction or waiver of Council fees and charges, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility hire fees • Permit or application fees (e.g. event or development application fees) • Food, local law and trade waste licence fees

Rates and charges donations (organisations only)	Financial relief provided through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates rebates or concessions • Water, waste or other Council charges <p><i>Note: Rates and charges concessions are administered in accordance with relevant legislation and Council rating policies</i></p>
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4. Eligibility

4.1 Eligible applicants

Eligibility does not guarantee funding. Applications may be submitted by:

- Not-for-profit community organisations
- Incorporated associations
- Community clubs or volunteer organisations
- Schools and learning institutions – for activities that are not curriculum based, and the primary benefit is for the wider community
- Unincorporated groups applying through an auspicing organisation

Eligible applicants must operate in, or deliver outcomes within, the Whitsunday region.

4.2 General eligibility requirements

Applicants must:

- Demonstrate a clear benefit to the Whitsunday community
- Be able to demonstrate appropriate use of funds or support
- Have no outstanding debts to Council (where applicable)
- Have acquitted all previous Council funding support as required
- Provide information requested to support assessment.

4.3 Application limits

Eligible community organisations may receive two (2) approved applications per financial year across all Council support programs (donations, grants and sponsorships combined). This limit does not apply to:

- Ongoing or pre-approved support arrangements (e.g. Community Service Obligations, waste and water agreements), or
- Concessions or in-kind support associated with the ongoing or repeated use of Council services, facilities or infrastructure (e.g. venue hire, or use of open space).

These may be considered separately on a case-by-case basis in line with the intent of these guidelines.

4.4 Individuals

Individuals are **not eligible** under the Community Donations Program.

5. Eligibility Activities

Donations may support:

- Small-scale community events or activities
- Participation costs (e.g. travel, access support)
- Community-led initiatives with local benefit.

Donations will not be provided for:

- Requests more suited to grants or sponsorships
- New infrastructure, capital works or facilities maintenance works
- Ongoing or recurrent funding commitments
- Retrospective funding
- Activities that exclude or harm community groups
- Activities primarily the responsibility of other levels of government (State, Federal)
- Activities that do not demonstrate a clear community benefit

6. Types, value and timing of support

6.1 Support type and availability

Support is subject to available budget and Council is not obligated to approve any application.

Donation Type	Value/threshold	Timing	Key Conditions
Cash donations	Up to \$1,000	Ad hoc (throughout the year)	For small or time-sensitive requests and subject to available budget
Cash donations	Up to \$5,000	Assessed and administered through funding rounds (3 per year)	For larger or planned activities, subject to available budget
In-kind	No fixed cap	Ad hoc or as part of a funding round	Provided at Council's discretion based on availability of resources, operational capacity and community benefit
Fee waivers / concessions	No fixed cap	Ad hoc or as part of an application	Subject to relevant policies and operational considerations

6.2 Combined applications and limits

Applicants may request a combination of cash, in-kind and/or concessions within a single application. Council will assess the total value of support holistically and may approve full or partial support, including a different mix of cash and in-kind than requested.

7. Application and Assessment

All applications are required to go through Council's nominated assessment process.

Applicants will generally be required to provide the following information as a minimum:

- Purpose of the request
- Amount or type of support requested
- Financial position

- Who will benefit
- Timing of the activity.

Council may request additional information and provide guidance and clarification, but cannot prepare or submit applications on behalf of applicants.

8. Incomplete Applications and Missing Information

If an application is incomplete or missing information, the applicant may be contacted and asked to provide further information within a specified timeframe.

If the information is not provided within the timeframe, the application may be deemed ineligible or assessed based on the information provided.

9. Delivery and Accountability

Successful applicants may receive donations as:

- Direct payment
- Fee waiver or concession
- Provision of services or resources.

Accountability requirements are proportionate to the level of support provided.

10. Acquittal and reporting

Recipients may be required to provide:

- Confirmation of use / proof of spend (e.g. receipt / photo)
- Brief outcome description.

Council will record and report all support as part of its broader community support reporting. Council may publish information about funding recipients on its website or through other public reporting. Value of in-kind support may be estimated for assessment and reporting purposes.

11. Further Information

Applicants are encouraged to contact Council's Community Support Team for advice prior to submitting an application.

Council may provide:

- Application guidance and support materials
- Feedback on unsuccessful applications.

12. Review of Guidelines

30 June 2027