

City of Ipswich

Councillor Discretionary Funds Guidelines



OVERVIEW

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with Ipswich City Council's (council) Councillor Discretionary Funds Policy.

Through the provision of Councillor Discretionary Funds, council seeks to support the role of community organisations and recognise the significant role they play in developing and delivering initiatives that benefit

the residents of Ipswich and respond to identified community need.

Councillor Discretionary Funds allow for funds to be allocated to not-for-profit community organisations for community purposes.

DISCRETIONARY FUNDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide council's administration of discretionary funding:

- **good governance** – decision making is undertaken in the public interest, processes are effective and efficient and feedback and evaluation mechanisms ensure opportunities for improvement are identified and addressed
- **transparency and fairness** – processes are transparent, applications are assessed objectively against eligibility criteria and any conflicts of interest are addressed and declared
- **access and equity** – documents, resources and application forms are publically available, easy to access and understand, and provide all necessary information in a clear and concise manner.



TIMEFRAME

Applications for discretionary funds can be submitted at any time during the year. Council encourages applicants to apply at least 4 weeks before their project commences.

Applications received after commencement or completion of an event or activity are ineligible and will not be considered.

FUNDING RANGE

Applicants can apply for a maximum of \$10,000.00 (the maximum allocation from each Councillor is \$2,000 per application).

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The budget allocation for discretionary funding must not be more than the prescribed amount described in the *Local Government Regulations 2012*, being 0.1% of the local government's revenue from general rates for the previous financial year.

While an application for discretionary funding may be made at any time during the year, funding will only be available while such funds set aside in council's annual budget for this purpose remain unexpended.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for discretionary funding organisations must:

- provide direct benefits to residents within the Ipswich Local Government Area
- be a not-for-profit community organisation and/or be an incorporated body under the *Associations Incorporation Act* or a registered charity
- hold adequate public liability insurance to cover the staff, members and the general public as appropriate
- have satisfactorily accounted to council for the expenditure of any previous funding and have no outstanding debts with council
- have an adequate risk management plan in place (where considered relevant by council)

Exclusions

The following will not be considered eligible for discretionary funding:

- for-profit organisations/businesses
- projects and events conducted outside of the Ipswich Local Government Area (excluding sporting clubs/groups travelling as a team for competitions)
- government agencies or departments of local, state or federal government
- schools (not including Parents and Citizens Associations)*
- religious or political organisations where the application is for the organisation's core business
- individuals.

** School affiliated parents' associations must demonstrate broader community benefit. (excludes school facility upgrades, capital equipment purchases, employee resources and training, etc.)*

Eligible Projects/Initiatives

To be eligible for discretionary funding a project or initiative must:

- demonstrate a purpose that is in the public interest and for a purpose that benefits the community of Ipswich
- align with the priorities of council's strategic plan, iFuture Corporate Plan 2021-2026.

The following activities are **excluded**:

- funding requests that are considered by council to be the funding responsibility of other levels of government (e.g. facility upgrades, capital equipment purchases, employee resources and training, etc.)
- school facility upgrades, capital equipment purchases, employee resources and training, etc.
- donations or prizes (e.g. money, trophies, vouchers, etc for fundraising or gifts) or for the payment of personal expenses including those associated with personal travel and accommodation
- projects or initiatives that have already commenced or have been completed prior to council approvals
- ongoing operational or recurrent costs and expenses of community organisations, such as printing, insurance, ongoing venue hire, salaries, rent, etc
- projects or activities run by or involved with political or religious groups seeking to promote their core beliefs
- projects included in other council funding applications or which have received funding through another funding avenue of council
- initiatives or activities whose funding is already sufficient to cover expected outlays
- applications which request funding for a project or program scheduled to occur later than 12 months beyond the time of funding approval.

Application Process

Applications for discretionary funding must be submitted using the online application form available on council's [website](#). Council staff can assist community organisations in lodging their online application however council staff may not act on behalf of applicants in verifying or certifying application information or by submitting the application on behalf of the applicant.

Additional supporting information can be attached to the online application form, for example:

- research to demonstrate identified needs/emerging community issues
- letters of support which demonstrate community support for the proposed initiative.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining all appropriate permits, approvals, etc relating to the project.

Applications must include copies of quotes for all goods and services the council funds will be used towards (please do not attach invoices). Wherever possible, goods and services should be purchased from Ipswich-based suppliers. Please see the [Acceptable and Unacceptable Quotes fact sheet](#) to ensure your quotes are eligible

Incomplete applications will not be considered. This includes applications which have failed to provide relevant documentation.

Once the online application form has been submitted applicants will receive a confirmation notice.

Approval Process

Eligible applications will be considered and approved at the discretion of the mayor and councillors via council's online funding administration system, SmartyGrants, where all information related to funding approvals will be recorded.

Payment of approved discretionary funding will be made by electronic funds transfer to the organisation's nominated bank account as outlined in the application form.

Terms and Conditions

All successful applicants will receive approved funding from council subject to the following terms and conditions:

- councillor discretionary funds must be acquitted within four (4) weeks of project or expenditure completion
- alignment to council's strategic outcomes, as outlined in the iFuture Corporate Plan 2021-2026
- clearly identified positive outcomes and benefits to the people of the Ipswich Local Government Area
- to ensure appropriate accountability by recipients with regard to the use of funding, all funding provided by council will require a financial acquittal, outlining the use of the funds (including proof of expenditure, i.e. paid invoices or receipts) within four (4) weeks of the expenditure of the funds. This is based on the final project/event date noted in the application.
- applicants must use funds for the purpose for which funding was awarded
- if the funds are not fully spent, all remaining funds must be returned to council
- if the scope or purpose of funding changes from the original application, a variation request form will need to be submitted in writing online through SmartyGrants. Changes can not be made without prior written approval from council.
- as noted in the Ethics Framework, successful applicants should note that any donation received is provided without expectation of reciprocated benefits. That is, no benefit is to be received in return for the provision of any donation (financial or otherwise) by Ipswich City Council and/or the mayor or councillor/s.

Notification of Funding Approval

Once an application has been decided the applicant will be provided with written advice of the outcome.

Where an application is approved the applicant will be provided with details of any conditions of the approval and any specific requirements which are a prerequisite to the payment of the funding.

In accordance with section 202 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* notice of the approval will be published on council's [website](#).

Ethics framework

Ipswich City Council will not support any activities, entities, or individuals associated with entities, that are considered to:

- discriminate, or encourage discriminatory behaviour, including discrimination on the basis of age, disability, race, religion, sex and/or sexual orientation
- contribute to, or advocate for, the infringement of human rights
- demonstrate behaviour that does not align to council's strategic intent for the city and community of Ipswich
- pollute land, air or water, or otherwise damage the natural environment
- market, promote or advertise products or services in a misleading or deceitful manner
- produce, promote or distribute products or services likely to be harmful to the community
- entice people into financial over-commitment
- exploit people through the payment of below-award wages or poor working conditions
- represent a reputational risk for Ipswich City Council to partner with or support, or be seen to partner with or support.

Importantly, successful applicants should note that any donation received is provided without expectation of reciprocated benefits. That is, no benefit is to be received in return for the provision of any donation (financial or otherwise) by Ipswich City Council and/or the mayor or councillor/s.

More Information

Information about how to apply for Councillor Discretionary Funds is available at ipswich.qld.gov.au/funding. If you require additional assistance, please contact the Community Funding Team on (07) 3810 6648 or email communityfunding@ipswich.qld.gov.au