Monash Community Grants Program 2022/2023 Frequently Asked Questions – Draft

This FAQ information will appear on Council's Website and will include links to other pages.

Before applying…

How do I apply for a grant?

To apply for a grant you must first read the MCGP Guidelines and talk to an officer to determine your eligibility and the correct category to apply in.

All applications must be submitted online through SmartyGrants using the relevant application form for the category of funding that you wish to apply for. The following page on Council's website will lead you to SmartyGrants, where you will find all the application forms for each category: https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/community-grants

The online application system will allow you to save, edit and print out applications for review, before you choose to submit them online. Supporting material can also be attached to your online application.

When can I apply for a grant?

Applications for the MCGP are open every year from late January to early March for funding in the following financial year (1 July to 30 June).

The 2022/23 round will open at **9am on Thursday 27 January, 2022** and will close at **2pm on Thursday 3 March, 2022**.

Applications can only be accepted during this time frame and no late applications will be considered.

If you are seeking funding for a project outside this time Council also offers a Quick Response Grant program that has up to $4,000 available throughout the year. For more information regarding this program please see: https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Awards-Grants/Quick-Response-Grant-Program

Why do I need to speak to a Grants Officer?

All applicants must speak to a member of the grants team prior to submitting an application. This is to give you an opportunity to discuss your project and ensure that you are eligible to apply, that you have chosen the most appropriate funding category and that the items you require the funding for are eligible.

Can my application be moved if it's in the wrong category?

The assessment criteria differs across categories therefore there is no opportunity to move your application to a different category once it has been submitted.

You will need to contact a member of the grants team to withdraw your incorrect application and submit a new application in the correct category. This can only occur whilst applications are still open. After the closing date, applications that have been submitted in the wrong category will be declined.

Am I eligible?

There are a number of factors which determine an applicant's eligibility for funding through the MCGP. Some of these relate to the category and type of project that you are seeking funding for, but there are also essential eligibility criteria that ALL applicants must meet.

Most importantly, all applicants must be a not-for profit incorporated association/organisation (or be auspiced by a not-for profit incorporated association/organisation) and must have a valid public liability insurance policy (minimum $20,000,000 coverage).

A full list of who is not eligible to apply, along with ineligible activities can be found on page 5 of the Guidelines document here: <add link to page 5 of the guidelines>.

How long will it take to complete an application?

We understand that most applicants are volunteers, however we have found the more time you spend preparing your application the better the quality and the greater likelihood of a successful outcome.

The time it takes to complete an application can depend on many factors and varies across categories. At the beginning of each application form it outlines the average time it has taken previous applicants to complete that form, if all information is available to them. This varies from approximately 1 hour for a Hall Only application to 10 hours for a Specialist Services application. Please note that these times are approximate and it could take you a longer or shorter amount of time.

Can I submit a late application?

No you cannot. Late applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered.

Do I need to read the guidelines?

Yes, it is very important that you read the guidelines so you understand the aims of the program, points of eligibility, what you can apply for and what your responsibilities are in receiving the funding and delivering your project. The MCGP Guidelines are a great resource for all applicants to refer to not only during the application phase, but throughout the project and when it comes time to acquit the grant.

You will be required to indicate that you have read these guidelines before you are able to complete an application form.

Who do I contact if I'm having trouble using SmartyGrants or submitting an application form?

The grants team are available to assist you with any aspect of the grant program, including any issues you have with your application form, by contacting them on 9518 3568.

If you haven't used SmartyGrants before or if you need help, the grants team offers information and assistance sessions throughout February. This provides an opportunity for you to meet one-on-one with a member of the Grants team to be guided or assisted with using SmartyGrants. These sessions also provide an opportunity to ask any questions you have regarding your project or the grants program in general.

The sessions for the 2022/23 MCGP will be held from **Monday 7 February to Thursday 17 February 2022** and are outlined on page 2 of the MCGP Guidelines <insert link to Guidelines>. To attend one of these sessions you must book online via TryBooking.

Can I post or email my application?

No, we cannot accept any applications by post or email. All applications need to be completed online via Smartygrants.

Will the grant cover all of my costs?

It is likely that delivery of your project will involve some costs that cannot to be covered by the grant. These might include Public Liability Insurance, transport, personal expenses, purchasing of equipment or gifts. A detailed list of ineligible expenses can be found in the MCGP Policy here.

It is very important to be aware of items that are ineligible for funding in this program. Submitting a project budget that includes items that are ineligible may affect the successful outcome of your application. Should your application be successful these ineligible items will be deducted from the total amount of funding you requested. You will receive a letter advising the outcome of your grant and outlining what your funding has been awarded for, based on what you provided in your project budget.

If you are still unsure about which costs can be covered by the grant, please contact the grants team before you submit your application.

What does Innovation mean?

An Innovative project will be original, creative and will respond to emerging needs in the community. The Monash Community Grants Program aims to support new ideas or projects that will adapt and build on previous successful programs. If your application is for an annual event that has been delivered before, we encourage you to explain in your application how you will improve on previous years and increase the benefit to the Monash community.

Can someone from the grants team help me with my application?

To maintain the fairness and integrity of the application process, applicants cannot be offered individual support or help with their applications. The grants team can provide you with general information and advice on which category is the best fit for your application and answer any questions you may have about the Monash Community Grants Program, but we cannot help you to write your application.

If you need help preparing an application, we highly recommend attending a grant writing workshop. Free workshops are occasionally offered by the City of Monash, and cover a range of skills such as grant writing, budgets, acquittals, and event management.

The grants team also offers grants information and assistance sessions throughout February. This provides an opportunity for you to meet one-on-one with a member of the grants team to be guided or assisted with using SmartyGrants. These sessions also provide an opportunity to ask any questions you have regarding your project or the grants program in general.

The assistance sessions for the 2022/23 MCGP will be held from Monday 7 February to Thursday 17 February 2022 and are outlined on page 2 of the MCGP Guidelines <insert link to Guidelines>. To attend one of these sessions you must book online via TryBooking.

Details of assistance sessions can be found on Page 2 of the MCGP Guidelines

Do I have to attend an assistance session?

You do not have to attend an assistance session if you are familiar with the application process and the MCGP Guidelines.

These sessions are provided to give those who have not used SmartyGrants before or have general questions about the program the opportunity to have one-on-one time with a member of the grants team. These are also beneficial for those who are not comfortable or confident using a computer.

Will I be contacted if there are problems/questions about our application?

To maintain fairness and the integrity of the application process, grants officers cannot contact applicants to resolve issues with their applications after the submission deadline has passed. However, if applicants supply incomplete documents, they may be contacted for more information.

If you are unsure of any details in your application, please contact the grants team prior to submitting your application, and preferably at least one week prior to the deadline.

What if my organisation is not incorporated?

Non-incorporated groups or individuals may still apply, but the application must be auspiced by an incorporated organisation that accepts legal and financial responsibility for the grant. You will need to provide the details of the auspicing organisation in the application form.

More information about incorporated organisations can be found on the Consumer Affairs Victoria website.

What if our organisation does not have insurance?

As part of the terms and conditions of the program, all grant recipients must hold a current Public Liability Insurance Policy to the minimum value of $20,000,000. This policy must remain current for the period of the project described in the work plan attached to the application. If a policy expires during that period, a new Certificate of Currency must be provided to the grants team.

In the case of Hall Only grants, an organisation may request to purchase Public Liability Insurance through their Monash Halls booking, at a cost of $18.75 per booking. The cost of insurance is not covered by the grant.

What are some examples of projects that have received funding in previous years?

To see some examples of the projects delivered by successful grant applicants, you can visit the City of Monash website here. (create new web page and insert link here)

How long until I find out if my application has been successful?

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in May. All key dates are listed on Page 7 of the MCGP Guidelines Here

Where can my activity take place?

To be eligible for funding, the location of your activity must be within the boundaries of the City of Monash. A map of the City of Monash can be found on Council's website here

Funded activities are not able to take place in venues that have Electronic Gaming Machines. This includes social activities such as lunches, gatherings and AGM's.

I've never done a risk assessment or event plan before. How do I get Help?

Council has developed templates to assist event organisers in completing their event documentation. These templates, as well as risk assessment guidelines, document examples, and helpful information sheets, can be found on our Planning an Event in Monash webpage, under **Additional Resources**.

You can also get in touch with our Events Officers by emailing events@monash.vic.gov.au with any questions, or by requesting to speak to an Events Officer when you book in for an Information and Assistance Session.

I am a member of a seniors club, what funding can we apply for at Monash?

As long as your club meets the program criteria and has more than 20 members that live in the City of Monash your seniors club could be eligible for a Positive Ageing grant. The City of Monash supports many seniors groups with funding for Hall Hire, activities and and/or meal-subsidies through the Positive Ageing grants category.

More information can be found on Page 19 of the MCGP Guidelines here, or by contacting a Grants Officer on 9518 3568 or by email monash.grants@monash.vic.gov.au

What activities are considered to have a religious purpose, and are therefore not eligible for funding?

The Monash Community Grants Guidelines document states that an activity is not eligible for funding "That is held for specific religious purposes or seeks to proselytise or influence a person's religious beliefs".

If an activity is held for 'Specific religious purposes', this means the primary reason for the activity taking place is for participants to engage in a spiritual or faith-based practice, and the application would be deemed ineligible. This includes activities such as religious services, prayer gatherings, religious study groups or any activities with a purpose of inviting others to join a particular Church or religious group.

Religious organisations are eligible to apply for funding through the MCGP to provide activities, services and events as long as their proposed projects or activities are open and accessible to all, not for the purpose of promoting specific religious practices and are consistent with Council's principles and objectives outlined in the Council Plan here.

Council provides funding through the MCGP for many Cultural Festivals and Arts and Cultural activities that celebrate diversity, encourage intercultural understanding and support emerging CALD communities. While many of these celebrations may have their original foundations in faith, such as Christmas, Chinese New Year or Diwali, applications for cultural celebrations can clearly demonstrate a purpose that is not specifically religious.

I want to apply for Hall Hire funding. Do I need to make a booking?

If you wish to include funding for Hall Hire in your application, you will need to seek a quote/tentative booking for your preferred venue and attach a copy in your application.

If you wish to hold your activity at a Monash Halls venue, please contact Council's Halls department prior to submitting your application to discuss availability and submit a Halls Booking Request form. You will then receive a Booking Confirmation letter to attach to your grant application.

Keep in mind that some grants are multi-year agreements, such as Hall Only and Positive Ageing grants. You must contact Council's Halls department to renew your bookings for the following year, and receive a new Booking Confirmation letter. You can contact Monash Halls on 9518 3684, or by email: halls@monash.vic.gov.au

Information about Monash Halls for hire can be found on Council's website here

During the project…

Can I make changes to my funded Project?

The MCGP Policy states that any recipient organisation which does not deliver the intended outcomes, or does not expend cash funding in line with their Funding Agreement, may be required to return the grant (either in part or in full).

This is because the grant funding was awarded to deliver specific outcomes. If you wish to make any changes to your project after your initial application was submitted, you must contact the grants team by email and confirm your request in writing. The grants team will assess your request, and if approved, we will provide written confirmation of a variation to your grant.

Do I still need to apply for an event permit (in addition to my grant application)?

If your project is an event that occurs outdoors, it will require an event permit but **you do not** need to fill out a separate expression of interest. Your grant application will serve as your expression of interest for the funded event, which is why it is important that you submit your event documentation (event plan, risk assessment, site map). Our Events Officers will then work with your organisation and different departments in Council to review the documentation and offer recommendations to help refine the planning and safety of the event.

You can find out more about the safe events permit process once you've submitted your grant application, on our Planning an Event in Monash webpage.

I have received hall hire funding, what can I use this for?

The hall hire funding you received is to cover the costs of the bookings you included in your application. Should you increase your hall bookings or move to a larger venue the costs may exceed what you have been granted for. Any costs above your granted amount will need to be covered by your organisation.

This is an in-kind amount, which means that you will not be paid the cash directly. The grants team will pay this amount directly to Monash Halls.

Can Council help me to market/promote my event/project?

Applicants are responsible for managing the marketing and promotions of an event/project to their audience, and associated costs can be included in the budget as an eligible expense. Council can assist in promoting an event via the 'What's On' listing on Council's website, and Council's e-newsletters, such as 'Art and About'. We encourage you to provide information and images to promote your event to the grants team at least 2 months prior to the event. You can submit your event listing for the 'What's on' page here.

All marketing material that includes the Monash Logo must be sent to the grants team for approval prior to distribution. Please email to monash.grants@monash.vic.gov.au and allow up to 2 weeks to obtain approval.

After the Project is completed…

What is an Acquittal?

After you have completed your project, you will need to tell us what the outcomes for your project were and how you spent the grant money. This is known as the acquittal process. The Acquittal form will be made available for you to complete online via smartygrants in July and August, after the completion of your project.

In the acquittal form, you will be asked to provide a Statement of Expenditure that clearly shows what items the grant money was spent on. It's important that you allocate the grant money only to eligible items, or you may be asked to return the funds

We will send you an email to let you know it is time to complete your acquittal and provide a link to the form in Smartgrants. If you would like more information about what to include in your acquittal, you can attend one of our Acquittal Assistance Sessions held by Grants Officers in July and August.

We encourage you to include as much information as you can about how your project went, and share photos and feedback with us. This is the main way Council can see the outcomes of the wonderful work you are doing in the Monash community.

I haven't spent all of the funding, do I have to return it?

Any unspent funds will need to be returned to the City of Monash. In the acquittal form, you will be asked to provide a Statement of Expenditure that clearly shows what items the grant money was spent on. It's important that you allocate the grant money only to eligible items, or you may be asked to return the funds. A list of eligible items can be found on Page 6 of the MCGP Guidelines here. If you are still unsure whether an item is an eligible expense, please contact the grants team by email monash.grants@monash.vic.gov.au