

7.2.1 MONASH EQUALITY & RESPECT GRANT

Responsible Manager:	Fee Harrison, Manager Community Strengthening
Responsible Director:	Tanya Scicluna, Director Community Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the guidelines for the *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* program to fund local organisations to provide capacity building initiatives that prevent violence against women and family violence, with a particular focus on multicultural communities.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the guidelines for the one-off *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* program to further support organisations that aim to prevent violence against women and family violence, particularly for our multicultural communities.

COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Sustainable City

Ensure an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable municipality.

Inclusive Services

Community development and advocacy to support the Monash community.

Fostering an equitable, just and inclusive Monash.

Good Governance

Ensure a financially, socially and environmentally sustainable organisation.

Effectively communicate and engage with the community.

BACKGROUND

Monash Council has had a longstanding commitment to, and leadership role in, promoting gender equity in our community and workplace. Through Council's Monash Community Grant Program (MCGP), the program has historically prioritised initiatives that deliver on gender equality, diversity and inclusion, prevention of violence against women, community safety and respect. Additionally, this commitment has been demonstrated through Quick Response Grants, to further support community groups to deliver initiatives such as the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign.

To continue this commitment, at its meeting on 27 May 2025, when considering the allocation of the 2025/26 Monash Community Grants Program budget (\$2,591,894), Council recommended to:

[Allocates the] residual funds \$52,000 to a grant program to support initiatives which contribute to the prevention of violence, and requests officers to prepare associated guidelines for Council's consideration.

Officers have subsequently developed the *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* program and associated guidelines in response to this request.

DISCUSSION

Monash Council has had a longstanding commitment to, and leadership role in, promoting gender equity through Council's Gender Equity Framework, Gender Equity Advisory Committee, and recently completing the Free from Violence program (2022-2025) funded by the Victorian Government.

The *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* aims to further demonstrate Council's commitment to fostering safety, respect, and inclusion through the provision of this grant program for community.

It will enable organisations to apply for this grant to assist with furthering Council's work in the prevention of family violence and violence against women while having competency, sensitivity and focus on multicultural communities.

To be eligible to receive a Monash Equality & Respect Grant, applicants must:

- Have the primary purpose to deliver services or programs that focus on the primary prevention of family violence and violence against women
- Provide their services within the City of Monash boundaries
- Maintain public liability insurance cover for a minimum of \$20 million
- Have no debts to Council and have completed all previous Monash funding acquittal requirements
- Be able to deliver the project by 30 June 2026

The grant will open on Monday 1 September 2025 and close on Thursday 25 September. This timeframe ensures applications will be open for 4 weeks. Officers will liaise with the relevant organisations to discuss potential activities which could be supported through this funding round.

Guidelines have been established to assist and guide applicants to ensure their eligibility (**Attachment 1**). Applications will need to provide information as required by the eligibility criteria, as well as a detailed plan for the program delivery and evaluation activities proposed. This will be required in addition to evidence of partnerships, the capacity for the organisation to undertake the program and how the funding will be spent.

Applications for the *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* will be submitted online, via the SmartyGrants portal.

An evaluation matrix will be developed, taking into consideration the guidelines, ensuring that the applications are considered and assessed in an equitable and transparent way. Full funding of \$52,000 will be provided to one successful application, with partnerships between organisations encouraged to apply.

All applicants will be advised the outcome of their application by mid-October 2025, with the successful application being formally acknowledged at the November Council meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* will be funded from the existing 2025/26 Monash Community Grants Program budget. The allocated budget for this program is \$52,000.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Whilst this is a stand-alone grant program the Monash Equality and Respect Grant aligns with the MCGP Policy, that is based on Council's values and strategic objectives outlined in the Monash Council Plan 2025-2029, in particular 'A Healthy, Safe and Connected Community'.

Monash Council has a proud history of working in partnership with community-based organisations to meet the needs of local residents and to deliver positive community outcomes. The funded activities in this program will support key Council plans, strategies and frameworks including but not limited to:

- The Council Plan 2025-2029
- Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029
- Monash Gender Equity Framework
- Community Safety Framework 2022-2026

CONSULTATION

Community consultation was not required.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Monash Equality and Respect Grant Program has strong social benefits. Not only does this grant align with strategic Council strategies and plans, but it furthers efforts in creating a safer, more respectful and empowered community. The grant will provide further opportunities for communities to come together to learn and challenge collectively, gender norms, promote respectful relationships, embody gender equality, and encourage more community-wide conversation and collective action to prevent family violence and violence against women. Providing the funding to a local organisation assists with building local capacity and ensuring cultural appropriate and inclusive programming. Overall, this grant funding will contribute to long-term cultural change and a more equitable and safe community for community members, regardless of gender.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* are entirely consistent with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 which segment broadly into the four themes of Freedom; Respect; Equality; and Dignity

In particular, the program supports:

- Right to life

- Right to protection of families and children
- Cultural rights
- Right to recognition and equality before the law;
- Taking part in public life/

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The *Monash Equality and Respect Grant* is a discreet program within the Monash Community Grants Program (MCGP). As these programs are both focused on having a direct and significant impact on the Monash community, revised a gender impact assessment (GIA) will be conducted in September 2025 as the previous Gender Impact Assessment was conducted in May 2024.

As per the GIA requirements, data will continue to be collected on how the program and the funded organisation/s address gender inequality, how inclusive/accessible it is and the anticipated reach of the program by gender.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council endorse *the Monash Equality and Respect Grant* guidelines to provide funding to local organisations that provide capacity building initiatives, with a particular focus on multicultural communities.

ATTACHMENT LIST

1. 2025 26 Monash Equality Respect Grant Guidelines [7.2.1.1 - 2 pages]



Monash Equality & Respect Grant Guidelines

Monash Council has had a longstanding commitment to, and leadership role in, promoting gender equity in our community and workplace. We are committed to the promotion of gender equity diversity and inclusion and actively work towards the prevention of violence against women and family violence in our community and our organisation. Our Council is a community where all should feel safe, respected and included.

To continue this commitment, Monash Council has established *The Monash Equality & Respect Grant* to support organisations working in the primary prevention of family violence and violence against women sector. Organisations that focus on capacity building initiatives; changing attitudes, behaviours and social conditions that prevent violence against women and family violence, are eligible to apply for this grant. Eligible organisations can apply for a one-off grant to deliver community education and capacity building programs on primary prevention, with a particular focus on reaching our multicultural communities. This grant is applicable to our existing grant funded groups as well as organisations not yet funded by Council. Capacity building programs funded through this grant may include topics such as:

- Understanding the link between gender inequality and family violence/violence against women
- Primary prevention of family violence and violence against women
- Responding appropriately to disclosures of family violence and violence against women
- Building the skills and confidence to be an active bystander.

The grant will open on Monday 1 September 2025 and close on Thursday 25 September. This timeframe ensures applications will be open for 4 weeks.

Funding of \$52,000 (excluding GST) is available to one successful applicant. Partnerships between organisations are highly encouraged, particularly where they broaden reach and impact. Joint applications should clearly outline each partner's role and contribution.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a Monash Equality & Respect Grant, applicants must:

- Have the primary purpose to deliver services or programs that focus on the primary prevention of family violence and violence against women
- Provide their services within the City of Monash boundaries
- Maintain public liability insurance cover for a minimum of \$20 million
- Have no debts to Council and have completed all previous Monash funding acquittal requirements
- Be able to deliver the project by 30 June 2026

Previous funding from other Monash Council grant programs has no effect on an applicant's eligibility to apply.

For a full list of eligibility requirements see the [MCGP Policy](#).



Assessment

Applications will be checked for eligibility, then reviewed internally by Council officers and assessed against the Assessment Criteria.

Assessment criteria

1. Demonstrated knowledge and experience as a service provider of primary prevention of family violence and violence against women
2. Evidence of an understanding of working with multicultural and linguistically diverse communities
3. The ability and understanding to meet the community group needs for the delivery of the project.
4. The proposed approach to developing, delivering and evaluating the project
5. The capacity of the organisation to undertake the project
6. Budget expenditure

How to apply

Visit www.monash.vic.gov.au/grants and click on *Monash Equality & Respect Grants*.

Applications are made through the [SmartyGrants](#) online portal.

Timeframe

- Applications will be assessed by an internal Council Officer Panel. Applicants will receive a response from Council mid- October.
- Once receiving notification of a successful application the project must commence and be completed by 30 June 2026.
- The successful applicant will be formally acknowledged at the November Council meeting.

What won't be funded

The Monash Equality & Respect Grant is guided by the overarching Monash Community Grants Program (MCGP) policy, which includes a list of items that are ineligible for funding. A full list can be found in the [MCGP Policy](#) and includes the following that will not be funded:

- Commercial/for-profit projects/services
- Travel
- Gifts and prizes
- Groups who meet in venues that have Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs)
- Projects/services that are inconsistent with Council's objectives or partisan political in nature
- Projects/services that duplicate other existing projects/services delivered by Council or already funded by Council

Acquittal

An online acquittal must be completed through SmartyGrants at the conclusion of the funded activity. Also, a post evaluation meeting between Council Officers and the successful funding organisation.

More information

For assistance or more information, email us at monash.grants@monash.vic.gov.au or call the Connected Communities Team on 9518 3555.