COVID-19 Community Recovery: Community Adaptation and Resilience Building Grant 2021 Guidelines

This Grant program seeks to support small community groups and organisations to adjust to COVID-19 operating environment; address impacts amongst their membership or client group; and recover from the pandemic crisis.

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1. Introduction
The City of Stonnington is introducing this special community grant program to assist community relief and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, recognising restrictions on movements of people as having a significant impact on quality of life and social cohesion.

This special grant round recognises the pandemic has caused major disruption to lives and communities through disappearance of routine, loss of social connections and familiar communication networks, and closure of key social structures such as educational and leisure facilities, sporting and social clubs, neighbourhood centres, retail and dining opportunities, arts and cultural activities and community services. The closure or suspension of many businesses has also impacted employment and individual financial security.

This Grant Program seeks to address social consequences of this disaster on:

- **Physical health:** Decreased activity and loss of physical fitness; withdrawal from health and medical services; poor nutrition and food insecurity.
- **Psychosocial health:** Anxiety or uncertainty; loneliness; relationship breakdown; loss of confidence; loss of trust in society; new or exacerbated mental health problems and disorders.
- **Social issues:** Family violence; homelessness; rough sleeping; unemployment; increase in alcohol, drugs consumption; and gambling.

This grant is an opportunity for community led initiatives to address the pandemic’s social and economic consequences. At the heart of this funding program is the Council’s recognition that communities recover best when they are actively involved in the recovery process.

2. Why is Council offering this grant?
Since early April 2020, local agencies and council have collated data relating to the volume and type of support provided to residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. This grant program has been established as a direct response to the local needs expressed in this data.

Evidence shows that communities recover best when they are active participants in the recovery process. For this reason, higher weighting will be placed on applications demonstrating community involvement; community led programs; and / or capacity building1 initiatives.

Funding in this stream aims to support community groups, who are typically supported through Council’s annual community grants program, to adjust to the COVID-19 environment and contribute to community recovery from the pandemic. Applications, using an online form, are submitted through SmartyGrants. Successful applicants will be required to enter a funding agreement with Council.

3. Community Adaptation and Resilience Building Grants – up to $2,000
The Community Adaptation and Resilience Building Grants recognise COVID-19 has disrupted volunteering efforts (particularly where volunteers are aged 70 years+) and their contribution to the provision of affordable community services, cultural programs, social cohesion and community wellbeing. In response, many community groups and clubs have had to either close or ‘pivot’ to online technologies and other innovations to stay connected with members and residents.

COVID lockdowns and the impact of these on the recommencement of programs and services can be particularly challenging for community groups and small community organisations, which are often primarily dependent on volunteers. Additional support may be required to pivot to online offerings, establish COVID-safe ways of operating, and to make necessary adjustments that enhance participation of community members who may now require additional support.

Council funding will seek to support:

1 By ‘capacity building’, we are referring to initiatives that strengthen the skills and abilities of the Stonnington community to ensure that these recovery efforts have long-term, sustainable impacts.
- Initiatives that support community groups to adapt to COVID-19 requirements so that they can continue delivering their existing programs or activities.
- New initiatives that strengthen inclusion and support for vulnerable, socially isolated residents and those who require additional support to participate due to COVID.
- Small scale projects that address the economic, social and health impacts of COVID-19 pandemic (eg. increase in alcohol and other drugs consumption; family violence and financial hardship).

4. Eligibility for this grant program

Applicants for funds through the Community Adaptation and Resilience Building Grants Program must:
- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- Be not for profit and/or enacted under legislative provisions for charitable purposes; or
- Be incorporated or under the auspice of another incorporated organisation that will accept legal and financial responsibility for the project or activity. If under auspice arrangements, funds will be paid to the auspice organisation which will administer the funds and acquit them on behalf of the group under auspice.

In addition, all applicants must:
- Except for funding in 2020/21 grants programs; have acquitted previous Council grants, have no outstanding debts to Council and provided all information requested;
- Propose adaptation and capacity building activities directly addressing community recovery objectives;
- Offer accessible, inclusive activities and programs without discrimination or restriction;
- Have current Public Liability insurance of no less than $20,000,000;
- Complete online Smarty Grants application
- Have supplied all financial and other information that is requested;
- Provide responsive and high quality services;
- Have beneficial outcomes for the Stonnington community; and
- Take place within the City of Stonnington boundaries or, if external to the municipality, be an accessible service to Stonnington community.

5. Applications Not Supported by this grant program

Applications will be ineligible if:
- Project / activity is initiated for commercial purposes (to make a profit);
- Project / activity aims to provide financial support to an individual;
- Project / activity involves in organising carnivals, fairs and festivals;
- Project / activity is not aligned with the grant program objectives (see 3 above);
- Project / activity is the funding responsibility of State or Federal Government;
- Project / activity replicates a service already offered in Stonnington;
- Project / activity does not demonstrate community benefit or capacity building;
- Project / activity is the same or similar to a Community Grants Program funded activity;
- Project / activity involves in the purchase of minor equipment or capital works; and
- Funding is for a project or activity that has already commenced.

6. Submitting an application

1. Applications can be submitted at any time until the closing date, which is determined by the City of Stonnington at its discretion and when deemed appropriate. Applicants are advised to submit early to avoid disappointment.

2. Applicants should read these guidelines to understand requirements and eligibility to apply for COVID-19 Community Adaptation and Resilience Grant Program.

3. Plan, research and gather information required for your application. To be eligible for assessment applications must be completed in full with all questions answered and documents attached where requested.

4. Grant applicants should complete and submit an online application form through SmartyGrants.
5. Before you start your application please check that you have the following information and/or documents to hand and available to upload.
   - Australian Business Number (ABN).
   - Certificate of Incorporation or evidence of legislative provisions for charitable purposes.
   - AGM minutes including audited financial statements.
   - **Auspice applicants** must attach a letter of approval from the auspice organisation.
   - All applicants can provide any additional material in support of their application.

6. Online applications through Smarty Grants require applicants to have an email address. The Smarty Grants link is available here. Applications submitted via Smarty Grants will be acknowledged via a confirmation email.

For further assistance, please contact Council’s Community Development Officer on 8290 1255 or email massan@stonnington.vic.gov.au.

7. **Assessment Process**

**Community Adaptation and Building Resilience Grants** are assessed against the following criteria:

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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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| **Project Outline & community involvement** | 1. Project plan actively engages community in delivering community recovery goals and providing clear community benefit for Stonnington residents.  
2. The proposed project has minimum or no environmental impact (particularly in relation to waste, energy and water use). | 60% |
| **Capacity, Governance & Financial** | 1. Demonstrate a capacity to deliver the project.  
2. Demonstrate financial viability and sound management / organisational governance.  
3. Provide detailed budget outlining the project costs and how the Council funding will be efficiently used to deliver the project/service. | 40% |

8. **What Happens After the Assessment Process?**

**Community Adaptation and Resilience Building Grants**: Successful applicants are advised in writing and on-line, of the result of their application. Successful applicants will receive a letter outlining grant approvals and be required to sign a Recipient Created Tax Invoice (RCTI), to acknowledge agreement of the conditions contained in the letter. On the receipt of the RCTI cash payment will be processed.

Cash grants provided by Council to groups which are GST registered and have an Australian Business Number (ABN) will be generally subject to GST. Council will gross up the base grant by 10% and forward the full GST inclusive amount to the group.

The group will then be obliged to forward the GST proportion of the grant (one eleventh) to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). If groups have any queries about their GST obligations Council recommends they seek guidance from the ATO on 13 24 78.

9. **Other Information**

a. **Acknowledgement of the City of Stonnington Support**

Successful recipients of this grant are required to acknowledge the support of the City of Stonnington on any promotional or publicity material or at any official event associated with the activity. Contact Council’s Community Development Officer on 8290 1255 or email massan@stonnington.vic.gov.au to make arrangements regarding the usage of the Council logo in your publicity material.
b. Changes to Project Details and Progress Reports

If your application is successful and you wish to make a change to the original submitted application, Council requires written notification of any proposed changes to the original concept which has been approved. Council retains the right to withdraw support for the project and request repayment of any funding. It is recommended that you consult with Council earlier rather than later regarding any proposed changes.

If the Council grant is not spent, any remaining funds must be returned to Council.

c. Acquittal of the project

Groups are required to complete an Acquittal Form regarding the outcomes of the project. Applicants need to report on how the money received from Council was spent. The Acquittal Form will need to be completed via the Smarty Grants System and you will receive a reminder email close to the end of the project to complete the form. Details of the project must be outlined in full in the acquittal including the costs. Failure to submit the Acquittal will make any future applications ineligible. All applications are considered on their merit and funding cannot be seen as recurrent.

d. Promotional Stories

Council reserves the right to publicise any aspect of the activity associated with its Community Grants Program for the purpose of promotion and creation of media content. In doing so, Council will consider any sensitivities in project delivery or target audience to determine suitability of promotion. Recipients must assist Council with publicity as required.

e. Human Rights

All applications are considered and assessed in accordance with the obligations of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

“The City of Stonnington recognises and respects that everyone has the same human rights entitlement to allow them to participate in, and contribute to, society and our community. We recognise that all persons have equal rights in the provision of, and access to, Council services and facilities. We recognise that, at times, such rights may be limited, insofar as to strike a balance between individual rights and the protection of public interest.”