

Arts and Cultural Grants – Guidelines

VENUE HIRE IN-KIND



City of Stonnington Arts and Cultural Grants 2025/2026 Guidelines Annual Grants (Venue Hire In-Kind)

Timeline:

Applications Open	Tuesday, 11 February 2025
Grant Information Session	Tuesday, 4 March 2025
Applications Close	Thursday, 17 April 2025, 12 noon AEST
Assessment Period	April – May 2025
Council Endorsement	May - June 2025
Applicant Notification	June – July 2025

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Overview

The **Arts and Cultural Annual Grants program (Venue In-Kind)** reflects the City of Stonnington's vision to be vibrant, imaginative and creative. Spanning a broad range of art forms and practices this grant supports inclusive, innovative, engaging, empowering, resilient and environmentally friendly projects. Collectively these place value on the importance of our creativity and cultural identity and strengthens the social, community and economic development of the City of Stonnington.

The Arts and Cultural Annual Grants program (Venue In-Kind):

- provides one year in-kind support for arts organisations, cultural organisations, community groups, emerging artists, and established artists to deliver appealing and contemporary cultural and creative projects
- connects communities through equitable, inclusive and accessible creative arts practice, activity, participation, location and attraction
- embraces and supports the knowledge, experience and cultures of different groups including First Nations people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people living with disability, and LGBTIQ+ people
- raises the profile of arts and cultural activity throughout Stonnington
- recognises the importance of utilising environmentally sustainable practice at project development and delivery stages
- promotes the City of Stonnington as an exciting, attractive, safe, bold, and desired creative destination for community residents and those outside the boundaries
- supports arts organisations, cultural organisations, individuals, and groups to sustainably grow and succeed
- encourages shared connections and networking between members of the local arts and culture ecosystem
- supports promotion and celebration of arts and cultural programs with a wide audience
- evaluates the outcomes and impacts that creative arts and cultural projects have at personal, social, and economic levels.

About Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Venue Hire In-Kind)

The Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Venue In-Kind) are open to all arts organisations, cultural organisations, community groups, emerging artists, and established artists wishing to deliver arts projects within Stonnington. Eligible art forms include: theatre; cabaret; dance; visual art; circus/physical theatre; live art; music; digital media/film; interdisciplinary/ hybrid; and, arts festivals. The total funding pool for our five Arts and Cultural Grants Program is up to \$440,000 per year.

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Please refer to the criteria below to see if you or your organisation is eligible to apply. Our grants are available to individuals and organisations from across Australia but must be delivered within the City of Stonnington.

- Please note this grant provides in-kind support only. A separate application is required to be completed if you are seeking financial support (please see [terms and conditions](#))

Please note this grant provides venue hire in-kind support for the following approved City of Stonnington venues only (excluding consumables and/or on-costs):

- Prahran Town Hall
- Prahran RSL
- Prahran Square
- Phoenix Park Community Centre
- Malvern Town Hall
- Malvern Community Arts Centre
- Malvern Banquet Hall
- Grattan Gardens Community Centre

Visit the Stonnington website for more information on [Venue Hire](#).

Eligibility for Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Venue Hire In-Kind)

To be eligible for the City of Stonnington's Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Venue Hire In-Kind):

- applicants must be an 'arts organisation', 'cultural organisation', 'community group', 'emerging artist' and/or 'established artist'
- applicants must be over the age of 18 years
- applications can be made up of a partnership of incorporated not-for-profit organisations
- applications can be made by schools, TAFEs or Universities, provided they have not-for-profit status
- Applicants must propose a funding request that does not exceed \$20,000 in venue hire in-kind support.
- Applicants must propose a project for an approved City of Stonnington venue between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026.

Commented [FW1]: My apologies, I forgot to ask about inclusion of these during the meeting. So, I have left them in blue so they stand out and you can remove them or change it to black text.

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- Applicants must have no pending acquittals or debts to the City of Stonnington.
- Applicants must provide proof of current Public Liability Insurance of no less than \$20,000,000.
- Applicants that have previously received a grant from the City of Stonnington for a project can re-apply if it can be demonstrated that further funding will enable ongoing development and/or scalability of the existing project.

Please note:

- To ensure that there is a wide diversity in the types of projects funded, the City of Stonnington aims to avoid duplication of similar projects. During the assessment process applications will be competitively assessed to help ensure that projects of a similar nature are not repetitively funded (please refer to [Assessment Process](#) for more information).

Commented [FW2]: Is that correct and appropriate - it was one of the recommendations so wanted to check.

Ineligible for Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Venue Hire In-Kind)

Who is ineligible to apply?

The City of Stonnington does not support grant applications that include:

- projects taking place outside City of Stonnington
- projects that have a party-political purpose or applications made by political organisations
- projects that do not occur within the grant period (either before or after)
- projects that rely solely on the City of Stonnington for funding (i.e. applicants cannot apply for 100% of total project costs)
- capital purchase of an asset (e.g. furniture, IT equipment) over the value of \$1,000.
- projects that have secured sponsorship from gaming, tobacco or alcoholic beverage companies
- activities of political, sexist, violent or religious nature
- an organisation's recurring operational costs, such as salaries, rent, and utilities or administrative project costs, such as salaries (excluding artist wages), rent and insurance
- projects which include fundraising, as grants for fundraising activities can be applied for through the City of Stonnington's Community Grants program
- funding for individuals to attend conferences, training or workshops funding for prizes, donations, awards, scholarships, or gifts.

Commented [FW3]: As per discussion during the meeting I've added this in re. capital purchase.

Commented [FW4]: As per discussion during the meeting, does this attend to the fundraising issue and is it correct to word it that way?

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Application Process

1. Read through these guidelines to get an understanding of what is required and assess whether the Chapel Off Chapel Venue In-kind grant is right for you.
2. Plan, research and gather information required for your application.
3. Questions can be addressed by calling the Arts and Cultural Grants Team on 8290 1228 or email acgrants@stonnington.vic.gov.au
4. Complete and submit an online application through SmartyGrants by **12 noon** on Thursday, 17 April 2025. **No late applications will be considered.**

Only one application per project will be considered.

What to Provide in Your Application

Providing relevant support documents is a critical part of an application which will be reviewed as part of the assessment process. All applications must include **both** support documents and artistic support material.

Venue Confirmation

In order for your venue hire to be confirmed, successful applicants must:

- return a signed copy of the Sponsorship Agreement
- return a completed Venues Booking Form
- meet with Arts and Cultural Grants Team, in person, to discuss your project and all requirements.

Support Documents

- Certificate of Currency (Public Liability Insurance of \$20,000,000).
- Full budget (via the budget template provided in the application).
- Project timeline (as part of the online application form).
- Marketing plan (as part of the online application form).

Artistic Support Material

Providing materials related to your art form/s helps the assessment team to better understand the project you're proposing.

Commented [FW5]: As discussed during the meeting, it would be easy to develop a simple marketing plan and project timeline embedded in the SmartyGrants application form. If you need assistance with this we, or the support team, can assist.

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- Please send examples of current, proposed or past works which relate to your art form:
 - images (up to 3)
 - show reels/moving image excerpts (up to 5 minutes, submitted as direct URLs, including relevant passwords)
 - script excerpts (up to 6 pages)
 - audio tracks (up to 2, submitted as direct URLs, including relevant passwords)
 - direct website links (up to 2).
- Key artist biographies (max 150 words per artist).
- Support letters (up to 2).
- Festival support letter (if the project is proposed as part of a festival).
- Reviews (up to 2 articles).

Please submit all artistic support material as one PDF file. There is a maximum file limit of 25MB, however we recommend that you try to keep files under 5MB.

Note: Successful applicants will not receive funds for venue hire fees in-kind, all payments will be managed directly by the Arts and Culture Grants Team, on behalf of the successful applicant.

Commented [FW6]: As discussed during the meeting I have lessened the number of some items and said 'up to ...'. If you think these numbers are appropriate this could be replicated in this grant and the two in-kind venue grants. Whereas you could revert to the original amounts for the over \$20K and triennial grants.

Commented [HM7]: Seems to be missing a significant portion of the document at the end??

Assessment Process

All applications go through the following assessment process:

- Eligibility criteria. The Council will review all applications against the eligibility criteria, and those that don't meet eligibility requirements will not progress to the next stage.
- Assessment Panel. A panel made up of Council staff, from various units, and external subject matter expert/s assess eligible applications and then make recommendations to the Council.
- Council decision. The Council reviews recommendations made by the Assessment Panel and makes the final decision on funding provided to successful applicants.

All applications are treated with the utmost of confidentiality and, due to privacy restrictions, will not be disclosed to any person outside the grants team and assessment panel.

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Assessment criteria

Applications are assessed on a weighted average scoring system, as shown below:

Theme	Criteria (what we are looking for)	Weighting (%)
Artistic merit	Extent to which the project's purpose, artistic approach, and desired outcomes are clearly described.	30%
	Extent to which the project embraces and celebrates innovation, originality, high standards, lessons learned, accessibility, social differences, and equity.	
	Demonstrates previous or emerging strengths in arts and cultural ability and achievements and engagement with relevant artists. This includes submission of support letters and relevant artistic support material.	
Capacity and viability	Shows strong financial and operational management planning, through provision of a realistic budget (including other sources of income and reasonable artist fees), project timeline plan and marketing plan.	20%
	Shows planned resource and support confirmation, through details of tentative venue booking(s), contingency planning, project collaborator(s) if required (e.g. artists, partners) and public liability insurance.	
Community engagement and reach	Extent to which the project will enhance social cohesion, wellbeing, and a sense of inclusion through participation and/or attendance by members of diverse communities.	20%
	Extent to which the project event is likely to attract attendance from local community members, state-wide and/or national audiences.	
Benefit and value	Demonstrates the project will be respectful of environmental sustainability.	20%
	Extent to which economic returns on investment are possible, through partnerships with local businesses.	
	Extent to which the project may lead to potential career advancement, skill development and/or creative practitioner network development.	
Alignment with Council Plans and Values	Shows alignment with the City of Stonnington Council Plan.	10%
	Shows alignment with the City of Stonnington's creative and cultural identity.	

Commented [FW8]: Your weighting seems very plausible and beneficial for all the grants. So, I have inserted the weighted numbers here.

What Happens After the Assessment Process?

Applicant Notification

- Unsuccessful applicants will be advised by post or email in July 2025

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- Successful applicants will be contacted and required to enter into a contractual agreement with the City of Stonnington in accordance with the City of Stonnington' Grant Policy.
- Successful applicants will be responsible for contacting the selected venue and enter into relevant hire agreement

Commented [CC9]: Could we add something along the lines of 'it is the responsibility of the successful applicant to contact Chapel Off Chapel and enter into relevant hire agreement'

Commented [RB10R9]: Done

Payment

To receive the first payment, successful applicants must:

- return a signed copy of the Sponsorship Agreement
- meet with Arts and Cultural Grant Team, in person, to discuss your project and all requirements.
- Successful applicants will not receive funds for venue hire fees in-kind, all payments will be managed directly by the Arts and Culture Grants Team, on behalf of the successful applicant.

Commented [FW11]: I've just highlighted this in case the legal department accepts a change to the agreement/ contract.

Commented [RB12R11]: Can we change this to Arts & Cultural Grant agreement ?

Changes to Your Project

The City of Stonnington requires written notification of any proposed changes to the concept as originally submitted, including date changes should they occur before the activity is complete. Subsequent to any changes, the City of Stonnington retains the right to withdraw its support and request repayment of any funds.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Grants provided by the City of Stonnington to organisations that are GST registered and have an Australian Business Number (ABN) will generally be subject to GST. Where this is the case, the City of Stonnington has decided to 'gross up' the base grant by 10 per cent and forward the full GST inclusive amount to the organisation.

The organisation will then be obligated to forward the GST proportion of the grant (one-eleventh) to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

If organisations have any doubt about their GST obligations, the City of Stonnington strongly recommends they seek guidance from the ATO on 13 24 78.

City of Stonnington Council Plan 2021-25

Our vision for Stonnington is to be a safe, inclusive and creative city; one where we celebrate our people, history and culture, and embrace a healthy and sustainable way of life.

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In 2021 the City of Stonnington adopted '[Future Stonnington](#)' which incorporates two important documents:

- the Stonnington Community Vision 2040 – articulating the community's aspirations for the future
- our Council Plan 2021-25 – how we will strive towards this vision over four years.

Developed with our community, the Council Plan 2021-25 is one of the most critical pieces of work we will undertake in the four-year term. It must consider our Community Vision, the challenges and opportunities we face as a city, as well as the functions and obligations required of councils by law.

The City of Stonnington has developed this Council Plan centered on three strategic directions representing our broad aspirations in achieving the community's vision:

- A thriving and unique place
- An inclusive and healthy community
- A people-centered and future ready city

The following Council strategies, plans, services and ongoing activities support the Council Plan and may also be considered when preparing your application.

- [Creative Stonnington: Arts and Culture Strategy 2023-2026](#)
- [Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2026](#)
- [Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025](#)
- [Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#).

Commented [NW13]: Link to the Creative Strategy once endorsed

Terms and Conditions

Applicants are required to comply with the following terms and conditions. Council has the right to exclude an application if these terms and conditions are not adhered to.

- Canvassing or lobbying of Councillors, employees of the City of Stonnington or assessment panel members in relation to any grant application is prohibited during the application process. No further consideration will be given to an application submitted by an applicant that canvasses or lobbies a Councillor, City of Stonnington employee or assessment panel member in relation to their application.
- An Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Venue In-Kind) application can be submitted along with an application for either an Arts and Cultural Grant (Over \$20,000) or an Arts and

Commented [FW14]: As noted in Section 10, consider including the following information:

- 10.2 - Conflict of interest (although that could also sit in the eligibility section as well)
- 10.3 - Intellectual property

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Cultural Grant (Up to \$20,000). It cannot be submitted with an application for a Triennial Arts and Cultural Grant.

- Upon successful application, applicants must sign a Sponsorship Agreement which details full grant obligations, and complete all other required documentation.
- Copyright of any works created during the course of the funding period remains the property of the successful applicant organisation or individual.
- The City of Stonnington has the right to request progress information such as financial records relating to the project at any time. This information must be provided within five business days.
- The City of Stonnington will not be responsible for shortfalls in project budgets if the grant recipient is unable to meet project costs.
- Receiving a grant from City of Stonnington in one financial year does not guarantee funding in subsequent financial years.
- Previously successful applicants are expected to outline long term planning, development and outcomes.
- Unsuccessful applications can be reviewed and resubmitted for future rounds of Arts and Cultural Grants. They will be reviewed against the new round of applications.
- Applicants must provide proof of current Public Liability Insurance of no less than \$20,000,000.
- The City of Stonnington must receive acknowledgement as a sponsor on all printed and digital promotional material.
- Applicants must present a completed application by the closing date and time, including attachments. No late applications will be accepted.
- The City of Stonnington retains the right to request the repayment of any unspent funds from any of the Arts and Cultural Grants.

Commented [FW15]: As per the meeting discussion, I've added this in. Let me know what you think?

Other Information

Features of a Strong Funding Application

Applications for Arts and Cultural Grants are very competitive and appeal to a wide range of organisations and individuals. A strong application should be clear and compelling, and respond to all key submission requirements and questions. The strength and vigour of applications may also be increased through:

Commented [CC16]: of organisations

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- attending the Grant Session as this provides a chance to learn tips and strategies and an opportunity to ask questions and hear from others
- reading the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) grants page on the City of Stonnington website
- checking eligibility, and whether an auspice agreement needs to be made
- reviewing the and [Council Plan 2021-2025](#), and other relevant strategies, to determine whether the project aligns with the vision, values, strategies, and objectives
- carefully considering whether the project is realistic, needed, and will appeal to targeted and/or diverse community members.
- ensuring that participating artists can be paid in line with their level of contribution
- understanding the importance of contingency and risk and thinking about issues that may affect your project
- determining what the desired project outcomes are, such as community, participant and attendee benefits, and how these impacts will be assessed.
- providing responses to questions which clearly show how the project aligns with items listed in the weighted merit criterion
- ensuring that relevant support documents are developed and collected, so these can be easily uploaded as part of the application process
- ensuring that relevant artistic support material is developed and collected, so these can be easily and appropriately uploaded as part of the application process
- contacting the Arts and Cultural Grants team to discuss the project idea and ask any application questions.

Contingency and Risk Planning

Contingency means thinking about what could unexpectedly change in relation to your project and pose risks. It means considering anything that could potentially go wrong, what you will do to minimise the risk and how you will manage it. Contingency planning may include financial and/or situational risks.

It's a good idea to consider risks and how you will manage these in your application, as it provides confidence to grant assessors that you'll be able to deliver your proposed project.

Contingency issues to consider?

Every arts and cultural project is different, and therefore many have unique risks. Although projects might differ, we've provided some possible contingency matters to consider.

- Can you progress with the project if the City of Stonnington offers you less funding than was requested in your application?

Commented [CC17]: for this set of guidelines include something about 'attending a site visit at Chapel Off Chapel if possible.'

Commented [RB18R17]: Have added in

Commented [RB19R17]: We also ask this in the application

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- Can you manage the financial aspects of your project if your event is reliant on ticket sales and you don't sell them all?
- What will you do if the venue you have booked suddenly can't host your event?
- What will you do if a pandemic emerges and you need to postpone your event, transfer it from being place-based to online delivery, or alter the dates?
- What if there is change in staff, artists, or partnership organisations?
- What if the employment rates for artists or other workers increases during the project period?

How to manage contingency and risks?

Some effective ways of planning for and managing contingency and risks over the course of your project is to diversify income and think ahead.

- Identify and define potential financial or situational risks to the project and prioritise them.
- Evaluate and assess each potential risk to identify:
 - Consequence – what are the outcomes if this happens?
 - Delivery impact – how will your project and/or event delivery be affected?
 - Financial impacts – will there be any additional costs or losses, will the budget need to be amended and do you have additional reserves to cover unfunded costs?
 - Responsibility – who will be responsible for managing any risks and how will any change decisions be communicated to everyone involved?
 - Probability – how likely is it that risks will occur?
- Consider the actions you will undertake to minimise the likelihood of risks occurring (although some may be out of your control).
- Consider who you can speak to for support and advice if a situation occurs (e.g. colleagues, mentors, partners, the Board).
- Create a Contingency and Risk Plan so you can monitor changes and activity undertaken.

Acquittal Process

- The complete Project Acquittal Report must be received within 30 days of the Project's completion or by 7 July 2026 whichever date occurs first.
- In the Project Acquittal Report you must answer all questions required, include final budgets, marketing material and photographs of your project (as photographs may be used to advertise the Arts and Cultural Grants Program in the future - please provide all photography credits).

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- The final 25% of the grant payment will not be made until the Project Acquittal Report has been received by City of Stonnington and is deemed to include sufficient information.
- The City of Stonnington retains the right to request the repayment of any unspent funds from the Arts and Cultural Grant.
- Failure to acquit the grant may result in the City of Stonnington requesting repayment of all relevant Arts and Cultural Grant funds.

Please note that if you are applying for any other funding types you must complete a separate grant application.

- Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Up to \$20,000)
- Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Over \$20,000)

Acknowledgement of the City of Stonnington

All successful applicants must provide the following acknowledgements to the City of Stonnington:

- Acknowledgment of the City of Stonnington as a sponsor on all printed and digital promotional material including letterheads, invitations, posters, flyers and signage, media releases, video and digital materials.
- An opportunity for a City of Stonnington representative to speak at key events.
- All promotional materials, including design artwork and media releases, are submitted to City of Stonnington for approval before publishing. City of Stonnington retains the right to request changes.
- Invitations to the opening or complimentary tickets to your project (where applicable) will be made available to key City of Stonnington representatives (x20 tickets or as negotiated).
- When the recipient's project is a festival, the City of Stonnington will be recognised as:
 - a major sponsor of the specific event or project, and
 - a general sponsor of the festival (in entirety).
- Promotion of any subsequent productions of the project (after the initial season/performance/viewing) will contain the City of Stonnington logo and written acknowledgment.
- The provision of the below materials for potential inclusion in City of Stonnington's e-news, social media content calendar or any other City of Stonnington publications:
 - A brief description of your event including key dates, times and features.

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- At least three publishable, high-res images (300dpi or greater).
- A website address.
- Social media links.

Other Funding Opportunities

The City of Stonnington offers other funding opportunities to the community. Details of these other opportunities can be found on our [Grants webpage](#).

How to Use SmartyGrants

To apply for an Arts and Cultural Grant you need to apply through our online system via SmartyGrants. The application link can be found on the City of Stonnington website.

For help on how use SmartyGrants and ways to make your online application easier please refer to the SmartyGrants [help guide](#). If you are still having trouble completing your application please contact our office before the application closing date.

Contact Details

For further information about the Arts and Cultural Grants or to discuss your application, contact:

Arts and Cultural Grants Team
City of Stonnington
acgrants@stonnington.vic.gov.au