GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

ACCESS AND INCLUSION COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

2025/2026 GUIDELINES

GREATER
SHEPPARTON

About this grant program

Greater Shepparton City Council has a proud history of working in partnership with the community to meet local needs and expectations. One of the ways the Council supports the community is through the Access and Inclusion Grant Program. This program aims to deliver funding to support community groups and not-for-profit organisations to improve access and inclusion for people with disabilities.

This program exists to reduce barriers for inclusion by providing small grants to purchase equipment, to deliver inclusive activities or for minor building works that improve accessibility for the community.

Funding Amount Available

For the 2025/2026 Financial Year, there is a total funding pool of **$5,000** available. Individual grants of **up to $1,500** are available for successful applicants to conduct activities or deliver their projects during the timeframes below.

Council strongly advises you to contact the Community Wellbeing Department prior to making an application to discuss your proposed activity and eligibility. You can contact Council's Coordinator – Diverse Communities via telephone on 5832 9527 or via email at communityadmin@shepparton.vic.gov.au

Expected timing for this grant program
Applications will be accepted until 12.00 pm on the closing date.

Applications open:	Monday 14 July 2025 at 9:00 am
Applications close:	Monday, 18 August 2025 at 12:00 pm
Notification of outcome:	September 2025
Activity timeframes:	1 October 2025 to 1 June 2026

How to Apply

Applications for this grant program must be submitted via Greater Shepparton City Council's SmartyGrants online portal. You can access this portal via the following link:

https://greatershepparton.smartygrants.com.au/

Who can and can't apply?

All applicants' activities must be primarily based in Greater Shepparton.

APPLICANT TYPE	YES	NO
Not-for-profits, incorporated bodies, co-operatives or associations	x	
Registered charitable organisations (refer to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission)	x	
Unincorporated bodies with an auspice	x	
Schools and learning institutions – only for activities that are not curriculum based, and the primary benefit is for the wider community	x	
Applicants that have received funding from this grant in the current financial year that are applying for more than one activity		x
Individuals without an ABN		x
Individual / Sole Traders (entity type with Australian Business Register)		x
For profits, commercial entities, registered businesses		x
Applicants with outstanding acquittals for grant funding from Greater Shepparton City Council (including auspices)		x
Applicants with outstanding debts or arrears to Greater Shepparton City Council or in legal proceedings with Council		x
An organisation involved in legal proceedings relating to winding up its operations or experiencing insolvency or bankruptcy (this includes any legal bankruptcy – related actions against the organisations directors or officers).		x

What if you are NOT incorporated?

If you are a not-for-profit organisation, you can still make an application by using an auspice. An auspice is an organisation that meets our eligibility criteria and agrees to support your application.

If you're successful, the auspice receives the grant money on your behalf so you can undertake the project work.

If you are intending to make an application using an auspice you must obtain written approval from your proposed auspice before you submit your application and attach this to your application form.

Insurance

Applicants must have Public Liability Insurance with a minimum amount of $20 million. The Certificate of Currency for this insurance will be required as part of the application process.

Applicants using an auspice would include a certificate from the auspice organisation. A policy statement or receipt of payment is not an acceptable substitute for the certificate of currency.

Permits and Approvals

Activities may require permits and approvals.

These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying for the grant, however obtaining these approvals will be a condition of the funding.

You must also be able to demonstrate that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals in your application.

What if my activity does not proceed?

If you are successful in obtaining a grant and your activity does not proceed, you must contact the Coordinator – Diverse Communities at Greater Shepparton City Council in a timely manner to discuss the circumstances of the activity not proceeding and organise returning the grant funds provided.

Failure to notify Greater Shepparton City Council of your activity not proceeding will deem future applications for all grants available ineligible.

Program Objectives

The objectives of this program are to:

- ensure community facilities are accessible by all members of the community.
- provide opportunities for inclusive, family-friendly activities that strengthen relationships and reduce isolation within the disability community.
- promote accessibility, inclusion, and equity through small-scale community-based projects or events.
- build community capacity through collaboration and partnerships across service providers, community groups, and local networks.

The capacity of an organisation to manage the project will be assessed, and preference will be given to applicants who can demonstrate the required skills, planning, or partnerships to successfully deliver their project.

Funded activities will:

- occur in Greater Shepparton between the timeframes stated above
- provide an inclusive, safe, and accessible outcome for the community of Greater Shepparton
- demonstrate effective partnerships (i.e. with other groups and/or across interest groups)
- deliver value for money
- be well-developed and have reasonable indicators of success for the outcomes expected
- acknowledge Greater Shepparton City Council as the sponsor of the project receiving funding.

In addition, funded activities **may include but are not limited to**:

- minor upgrades to community facilities or equipment.
- delivery of inclusive, family-oriented community events or workshops.

- inclusive recreation or art activities that engage both individuals with disability and their siblings or carers.
- cultural or community gatherings that improve social connection and celebrate diverse experiences of disability.
- educational or skill-building programs tailored to people with disability and/or their families.
- collaboration between community organisations, disability advocates, and community groups to promote access and equity.

The following activities will NOT be funded:

- applications from agencies or departments of Australian and Victorian governments
- applications from schools or educational institutions, unless the proposed project can demonstrate significant involvement of and benefits for the wider community
- personal financial assistance
- travel or accommodation costs not essential to the project
- events and activities not held within the activity timeframes
- events and activities held outside the Greater Shepparton municipality
- applications received after the closing date
- applicants who have previously been funded by Council and have failed to comply with the financial, project monitoring and/or reporting requirements
- projects that are clearly a duplication of an existing service.
- Prizes, gifts or fundraising activities
- funding is NOT available for ongoing expenses or for projects which have already commenced or have been completed.
- projects and activities that are discriminatory in any way or contravene any legislation.

Budget

The budget must include details on all income (all sources of funding which will be used to deliver the project, including the requested amount from this grant) and all expenditure (costs involved in the project). Income and expenditure must be equal. Below is an example of the budget table within the application form.

Please provide a copy of quotes with your application for expenses exceeding $1,000.00.

Income	$	Expenditure	$
Council Event Grant	$2,000.00	Face Painting	$80.00
Market Stall	$600.00	Community group payments	$500.00
Cars and Public Entry	$1,000.00	Bar	$560.00
Bar	$800.00	Canteen and BBQ	$1,750.00
Canteen and BBQ	$2,000.00	Jumping Castle	$250.00
	$	Musicians	$500.00
	$	Music equipment hire	$250.00
	$	Prizes for Colouring Competition	$60.00
	$	Prizes for Car Competition	$550.00
	$	Marque Hire	$300.00
	$	Craft Table	$100.00
	$	Flyers Printing	$700.00
	$	Folding of Flyers and distribution	$100.00
	$	Advertisement	$700.00
	$6,400.00		$6,400.00

It is also necessary to detail the in-kind contributions, if any, that will be made to the activity in the In-Kind section of the application form. Below is an example of this table within the application form.

If you have volunteers working on the project, include their contribution at the following values:

- $25.00 per hour for unskilled labour
- $40.00 per hour for qualified trades person
- $65.00 per hour for machinery hire, including driver

In-Kind

Please include details of any contributions to the project that you would normally pay for, but are being received at no cost to the project.

If you have volunteers working on the project, include their contribution valued at:

- $25 per hour for unskilled labour
- $40 per hour qualified trades person
- $65 per hour machinery hire including driver

Person or organisation*	Task	Hours/Rate	Amount In-Kind*
Committee	Labour set up and remove display	10 hrs/$25	$250
Recreation Reserve	Loan of tables and chairs		$100
Joe Blough	Sound equipment and tech support	4 hrs/$40	$160
Mary's Newsagents	Photo copy flyers		$100
			Total* $610
			Add Row

If your organisation is registered for GST, the budget should be filled in GST exclusive. If your organisation is not registered for GST, you should fill in the budget GST inclusive. Please refer to the www.ato.gov.au website for further details.

How will applications be assessed?

All applications received will go through the following assessment process:

- Eligibility checks against criteria for the funding of this program
- Panel Assessment with broad representation from Council Departments

The Assessment Panel will consider the following when reviewing each application:

- Does the activity clearly meet the goals and purpose of the program, including improving inclusion, access, and wellbeing for people with a disability and their families?
- Does the activity provide value to a wide range of individuals within the Greater Shepparton community, especially those living with disability and their support networks?
- Is the project well planned, realistic, and able to be completed within the funding period?
- Is there clear evidence that the project is supported by the community, including letters of support, partnerships, or collaboration with other organisations?
- Will the activity be inclusive and accessible for all participants, regardless of ability, culture, or background?
- Does the intended activity align with one or more of the following strategic documents:

    - Greater Shepparton City Council Plan 2021-2025
    - Universal Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026
    - other Council Strategies.

The Council Plan and other Strategies can be accessed at www.greatershepparton.com.au

After panel assessment, a funding recommendation will be submitted to the relevant Department Director for final approval.

Notification of outcome

All applicants will be notified as to the outcome of their application via the email address provided in the application.

Please refer to the timetable on the Council's website for the expected notification date.

An organisation may submit only one application for this program per funding round.

If your application is successful

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Enter into a funding agreement and adhere to the conditions of the agreement.
- Spend the grant money in accordance with the conditions stated in the funding agreement and the application.
- Return any unspent funds upon completion of the activity, or at the end of the agreement, unless prior written approval is obtained to use the funds differently.
- Complete in full detail an acquittal form to the satisfaction of Council.

If your application is NOT successful

In the event your application is unsuccessful, you will be notified in writing and will have the opportunity to discuss the outcome with the Program Coordinator or Grants Coordinator.

In some cases, the assessment panel may consider your application more suited to one of Council's other grant programs. If your application is more aligned with another funding program, Council will contact you and let you know.

If an application is made to an alternative funding stream within Council, only one funding application may be considered per financial year for the same activity.

If there are funds remaining in the grant pool, we may choose to offer a second round of funding. Whilst unsuccessful applicants are eligible to reapply, we would recommend revising the application prior to ensure it fits the objectives of the program and assessment criteria before doing so.

Diversity and Inclusion

Council acknowledges, celebrates and supports the diversity of the Greater Shepparton community, as a tool to ensure activities and programs are inclusive of all. It is therefore important applicants demonstrate a range of diversity strategies within their application.

Below are examples of ways in which you may demonstrate inclusion of all in your program/activities. Please note, these are examples ONLY and we encourage your group to develop a range of inclusion practices unique to your application.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- migrant and refugee communities
- people with a disability
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer, Asexual communities (LGBTIQA+)
- women, young people and seniors
- provision of accessible facilities such as parking, toilets, ramp access and accessible seating
- gender inclusion
- information available in accessible formats, such as large print, alternative language, plain English, the use of interpreters, such as Auslan for people who are Deaf
- availability of a broad range of foods
- ensuring all published materials avoids acronyms and jargon
- take religious and cultural occasions into consideration when planning events.

Council Officers are available to support you with identifying, capturing and reflecting diversity within your application through the following contacts:

Please contact Customer Service on 5832 9700 and ask to speak to the relevant Officer. Alternatively, you can contact the relevant Officer via council@shepparton.vic.gov.au.

Greater Shepparton City Council will consider the equitable reach of this funding program during the assessment and final decision-making processes.

Gender Equality

Council has a duty to promote gender equality through the Gender Equality Act 2020.

Gender equality means ensuring all individuals, regardless of gender, have the same rights, opportunities, and access to resources. It focuses on eliminating discrimination and fostering equal participation in all aspects of society.

This can be done by:
- inclusive programming: Ensuring event activities cater to the interests and needs of all genders.
- balanced representation: Striving for gender diversity among speakers, performers, volunteers, and participants.
- accessibility & outreach: Using marketing materials and event promotion methods that encourage attendance by all genders.
- safe & welcoming spaces: Creating an environment free from discrimination, where all seniors feel comfortable and respected.

Applicants to Council's grant programs are encouraged to demonstrate evidence of how your organisation considers and promotes gender equality within their policies, programs and services.

Sustainability and Environment

When planning your event, consideration should be given to how you can avoid negatively impacting on our environment and promote sustainability.

Applicants to Council's grant programs are encouraged to consider sustainability outcomes and the impact of their project on carbon emissions and minimise carbon emissions i.e. by using recycled products, reducing or eliminating waste, using local products or using renewable energy.

Advertising and Promotion

All media, promotional and social media assets will require approval from Council's Communications and Engagement department prior to distribution.

This will include providing logo recognition of Greater Shepparton City Council on all your promotional material relating to the event including, but not limited to posters, apparel, event programs and any other reasonably requested intellectual property.

To access the current branding guidelines, please contact the Coordinator – Diverse Communities via telephone on 5832 9527 or via email at communityadmin@shepparton.vic.gov.au

Council also requires the opportunity to provide signage to be displayed at high profile locations at the event. This could include fence banners and/or tear drop flags. Event organisers will be responsible for the collection of items from Council, installation at the event and then return to Council.

Event organisers are strongly encouraged to promote their events on Council Calendar of Events page and Shepparton & Goulburn Valley. This can be completed via the following links:

https://greatershepparton.com.au/whats-happening/suggest-event
https://sheppandgv.com.au/events/promote-your-event

Final Acquittal

You will be required to report back to Council when your project is completed. The acquittal process is important because it enables Council to continuously evaluate the success of the program.

You must report back to Council within the timeframe provided in your funding agreement. The financial acquittal is an income and expenditure statement for the grant confirming funding has been spent on the activity in accordance with the funding agreement.

Council officers may request meetings with you to check the progress or undertake an independent audit of the records of the applicant as they relate directly to the grant.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to maintain accurate financial records for the grant and make them available in the event of an audit by the Council into the use of the grant. An organisation which fails to submit their acquittal documents is deemed ineligible to apply for any future funding from Council, until their acquittal is completed and approved by Council.

Contact Details

Greater Shepparton City Council
Community Wellbeing – Coordinator – Diverse Communities
Phone: (03) 5832 9527
Email: communityadmin@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Website: greatershepparton.com.au

CONTACT US

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