



Yarra City Council  
**Grant Guidelines 2027**

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**Yarra City Council acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We acknowledge their creator spirit Bunjil, their ancestors and their Elders.**

*Cover image credit: “Banksia” by Lichen Kelp, from video work 'Passiona Anemona' for CLIMARTE's emerging 'COOL: How We Did It project', <https://climarte.org/project/cool-how-we-did-it/> 2025 grant recipients.*

National Relay Service  
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|                   |                    |                    |                      |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Languages</b>  | 中文 9280 1937       | Italiano 9280 1931 | Tiếng Việt 9280 1939 |
| العربية 9280 1930 | Ελληνικά 9280 1934 | Español 9280 1935  | Other 9280 1940      |

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## Introduction

### What is the purpose of these grants?

The Yarra Community Grants Program funds community-driven projects that improve access to, and the quality of, social, economic and cultural life across the neighbourhoods, shared spaces and communities of the City of Yarra.

### Principles

Projects funded through the program must align with the following three principles:

**Promote Access and Equity** — Actively remove barriers and promote fair access, ensuring that people from diverse backgrounds and with varying needs can participate and benefit.

**Deliver Local Benefit** — Provide clear and tangible benefits to the municipality— supporting its people, neighbourhoods and public spaces—while fostering local development, wellbeing and inclusion.

**Enable Participation** — Promote community engagement to foster wellbeing and social, cultural and economic participation while enabling connections between community members to strengthen social cohesion.

### What size are the grants?

There are three levels of grants:

#### [Small \(up to \\$4,000\)](#)

Small grants are suited to short-term, low-cost initiatives – typically volunteer-led and involving fewer than 50 participants – such as social events, recurring community gatherings, or pilot activities with minimal logistics and reporting requirements.

#### **Medium (\$4,001–\$20,000)**

Medium grants support multi-activity projects or short-term programs with moderate staffing, engagement, and evaluation needs.

#### **Large (\$20,001–\$40,000)**

Large grants fund more intensive, longer-term or partnership-driven initiatives that involve formal governance, significant coordination, and the potential for broad or sustained community impact.

## Key dates for the 2027 Yarra Community Grants Program

|                                                   |                            |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <a href="#">Grant Information Sessions</a>        | 22 June– 29 July 2026      |
| Grant round opens (for medium and large grants)   | Friday 17 July 2026, 9am   |
| Applications close (for medium and large grants)  | Friday 28 August 2026, 5pm |
| Applications open for Small Grants*               | Thursday 1 October 2026    |
| Announcement of grant outcomes (medium and large) | Wednesday 16 December 2026 |
| Successful applicants' funds paid                 | From January 2027          |
| Projects commence                                 | From 1 January 2027        |

\* The Small Grants (up to \$4,000) do not have a set application close date. They will open on Thursday, 1 October 2026, and stay open until their individual stream funding pools have been allocated. Each stream has an allocated funding pool, and some streams will be exhausted before others.

## Grant Streams

The grants program has seven funding streams:

- [First Peoples' Partnerships](#)
- [Healthy Communities](#)
- [Local Economy](#)
- [Creative City](#)
- [Environment, Conservation and Climate](#)
- [Safe Neighbourhoods](#)
- [Connecting Yarra](#)

Each stream is described in more detail, after the [Overall eligibility criteria](#).

### Please note:

These Guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the Grants Administration Guide.

**Previous grant approval does not indicate likely success in future rounds.**

The Community Grants Program is competitive, and funding decisions are made independently each round based on application, current priorities, demand and available funding.

## Overall eligibility criteria

Applicants must meet all the following eligibility requirements. Ineligible applications will not be assessed. **Check each stream for specific eligibility criteria.**

### Eligible applicants

- Applicants must live, work, be located in, or demonstrate a clear connection to the City of Yarra.
- Applicants must have an active ABN<sup>1</sup> (Australian Business Number).
- Applicants (excluding individual artists) must provide a financial statement. [See further information about financial statements.](#)
- Not-for-profit community groups and arts organisations, collectives, or groups that meet all other eligibility criteria but do not have an ABN can be auspiced by an eligible incorporated organisation or a [Neighbourhood House](#).
- Applicants must be a not-for-profit, incorporated group **or** meet **one** of the following specific exceptions:
  - Be a registered charity, public benevolent institution or have DGR status.
  - Unincorporated not-for-profit community and arts groups can have their applications auspiced by an eligible incorporated organisation or [Neighbourhood House](#).
  - Individual artists or arts-related businesses operating under an active sole trader ABN can apply as individuals under the [Creative City](#) stream and must successfully demonstrate that their project will run on a not-for-profit basis.
  - In limited circumstances only, be a local public or statutory body, such as a government kindergarten or school, SES unit, TAFE, university, Landcare group, Friends of group, or environmental volunteer group operating on public land.
  - Sole traders operating as a business can apply under the [Local Economy](#) and [Safe Neighbourhoods](#) streams (and must meet specific eligibility criteria for these streams).
  - Businesses and creative industries operating as for-profit businesses can apply under the [Local Economy](#), [Creative City](#) and [Safe Neighbourhoods](#) streams and must successfully demonstrate that their project will run on a not-for-profit basis (plus meet specific eligibility criteria for these streams).
  - Be a Social enterprise (as registered with Social Traders).
  - Applications with an active sole-trader ABN listed on their application will be ineligible and will not proceed to assessment, except for those submitted under the [Local Economy](#),

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<sup>1</sup> Applicant names must match the entity (legal) name for the ABN, or a registered business name or trading name associated with the ABN and the name on the bank account provided for payment. The ABN entity name can be checked when entering your ABN into the application form.

[Creative City](#) and [Safe Neighbourhoods](#) streams (and must meet specific eligibility criteria for these streams).

- Applicants must have acquitted all previous grants and have no outstanding debts to Yarra City Council.
- Applicants must be able to provide [public liability insurance](#) (with a suitable level of coverage<sup>2</sup>), if their application is approved. This is requested at the funding agreement stage, if your application is approved.
- Where applicable, applicants must have a Working with Children Check, WorkCover, and superannuation coverage.
- Relevant applicants must, as required by law, implement and adhere to [FairWork legislation](#) for all contractors, performers and project staff.
- Relevant applicants must, as required by law, implement and adhere to the [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#).

## Eligible projects

- Applicants must be locally based and/or apply for a program, service or activity of benefit to the Yarra community.
- Applicants can apply for funding for more than one project. Multiple applications for the same project will not be considered. Only one application will be considered per project.
- Projects must meet any other specific requirements outlined for the individual stream (see [Grant stream descriptions and objectives](#)).
- Projects must be completed by 31 December 2027, unless otherwise agreed through a Project Variation.

## Eligibility restrictions

- Do not submit an application for the same project to different streams. If you believe your application crosses multiple streams, please contact the Grants team for advice.
- Do not submit an application for the same project from multiple organisations.
- If an application has been lodged in the wrong stream, the Grants team may transfer it to a more suitable stream. If this occurs, you will be advised by email. Stream changes are made only to ensure applications have the best chance of success. Some applications may fit under multiple streams. The Grants team can help you decide which one is best if you are unsure.

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<sup>2</sup> For professional indemnity insurance: Yarra City Council seeks a minimum of \$10,000,000 Professional Indemnity Insurance for contractors and suppliers engaged to provide advice and a minimum of \$20,000,000 in Public Liability Insurance.

## Ineligible applications

- A program or activity that is primarily the responsibility of State or Commonwealth Government, including core school curriculum activities. State government entities may apply only where the proposed activity demonstrably falls outside their responsibility.
- Activities that take place outside the City of Yarra, including touring, unless they form part of a larger project with a clear and direct public benefit to the Yarra community.
- Applications submitted by individuals or entities operating under a sole trader ABN, except where expressly permitted under the [Local Economy](#), [Creative City](#) and [Safe Neighbourhoods](#) streams.
- Staff salaries or administration costs that are not directly attributable to the funded project.
- Travel, accommodation or touring costs.
- Requests for funding for capital works, fixed installations, building works, facility upgrades or infrastructure, except where expressly permitted under the Safety Infrastructure Exception in the [Safe Neighbourhoods](#) stream.
- Requests for funding for equipment purchases, except where expressly permitted under the [Limited Equipment Exception](#) in these Guidelines.
- Requests for funding for consumable materials or supplies that are not directly required for, and proportionate to, the delivery of the funded project, including stock, inventory or items intended for ongoing or repeated use beyond the project.
- Routine or cyclical maintenance, building maintenance, preventative maintenance, resurfacing, or replacement of end-of-life fixtures, fittings or equipment, except where expressly permitted under the [Limited Equipment Exception](#) and supported by evidence that repair is not reasonably viable.
- Any form of competition or event where grant funds are proposed to be used for prize money, cash awards or similar prizes.
- Exclusively fundraising events.
- Projects solely for training, study, academic research or assessed coursework.
- Applications for retrospective funding, including projects that have already commenced or where expenditure has been committed before funding approval.
- Requests for funding to cover Council venue deposits.
- Projects that promote religion or have a proselytising purpose.

## Limited Equipment Exception

The equipment exclusion above does not apply to a specialist equipment item where the applicant demonstrates that **all** the following criteria are met:

- The item is functionally necessary to deliver the funded community activity, and the activity could not reasonably proceed, or would be significantly compromised in delivering its intended community outcomes, without it.
- The equipment is not the primary purpose of the grant, and the application demonstrates a broader community activity program.
- The item is used directly in participant-facing or community-facing project delivery, not for administration, communications, office operations or general organisational capacity.
- Hire, borrowing, repair, shared access, or lower-cost alternatives have been considered, but they are not reasonably available or do not represent value for money.
- The primary benefit of the item will be to the Yarra community.
- The applicant will retain responsibility for ownership, storage, insurance, maintenance, repair and replacement at their own cost.
- The item is not fixed to or integrated with a building, facility, or venue, and does not constitute a facility upgrade or capital improvement.
- The request is proportionate to the scale and outcomes of the project.

## Grant stream descriptions and objectives

### First Peoples Partnerships

Yarra City Council acknowledges the First Peoples of Australia, whose connection to the land and waterways now known as Yarra extends back tens of thousands of years.

We have a strong commitment to the local First Peoples' communities and are always exploring approaches that centre community strengths, foster mutual learning, and celebrate the cultural richness of First Peoples.

The grant objectives are to:

- Support First Peoples-led ideas. Applicant organisations **must** be First Peoples-led (organisations driven and managed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples).
- Invest in First Peoples-led projects that advance self-determination through wellbeing and economic prosperity.
- Enable initiatives that celebrate and strengthen First Peoples' cultural expression, ceremony, and living heritage.
- Resource First Peoples-led truth-telling projects that deepen awareness of history, culture, and ongoing connection to Country.

### Eligibility criteria specific to this stream

Before applying through this stream, consider the following points:

- What are the project impacts?
- How will the project be evaluated?
- Is it a collaboration?
- Who are the project partners?

Applicants must also meet the [Overall eligibility criteria](#).

Also see [Special requirements/Working with First Peoples](#).

## Healthy Communities

The Healthy Communities grant stream supports community-led projects that strengthen wellbeing, inclusion and participation in community life across Yarra.

The aim is to support people of all ages and backgrounds to be healthy, connected and included, particularly where people experience disadvantage, isolation or barriers to participation.

Projects should contribute to community health, wellbeing, equity, inclusion, connection, participation or local community capacity.

The grant objectives are to:

- Support community health initiatives that promote physical activity, nutrition, mental wellbeing and healthy lifestyles.
- Strengthen community-led projects that improve food security, local food systems and access to affordable, nutritious food.
- Enable inclusive sport, recreation and physical activity programs that encourage active living across all age groups.
- Support early years programs, family wellbeing initiatives, ageing well activities and lifelong learning opportunities.
- Support children, young people and families to build confidence, connection, participation and belonging through mentoring, informal learning support, homework clubs and other community-based learning activities.
- Empower under-represented groups to participate in and shape community life, fostering greater equity and inclusion.
- Build the capacity of organisations that assist people experiencing disadvantage, isolation or barriers to participation.
- Foster neighbourhood-scale leadership and engagement initiatives that strengthen community resilience and connection.

### Eligibility criteria specific to this stream

There are no specific eligibility criteria for this stream, see the [Overall eligibility criteria](#).

## Local Economy

The Vibrant Economy grant stream supports business and community-led projects that strengthen local economies, activate retail precincts and increase participation in Yarra's commercial areas. The aim is to support a resilient, inclusive and thriving local economy, where businesses, workers and communities benefit from increased activity and investment.

Yarra is home to more than 16,000 businesses and includes [12 retail precincts zoned as commercial activity centres](#). These precincts range from major shopping streets and dining destinations to smaller village-style centres with strong local identity. Together, they play a vital role in supporting local economic activity, employment, community connection and cultural expression across Yarra.

Projects must focus on practical, locally delivered initiatives that create visible or measurable benefits for businesses, precincts, and the wider community, rather than on individual business improvements that lack broader public or local economic benefit.

The grant objectives are to:

- Support initiatives led by small to medium enterprises that activate retail precincts (bring more people into local shopping areas and encourage them to spend time there through events, promotions or collaborative activities) and strengthen local economies.
  - Small enterprises are businesses with up to and including 20 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.
  - Medium enterprises are businesses with 21–50 FTE staff.
- Strengthen destination marketing initiatives (promotion and storytelling that encourage people to visit a specific precinct) that increase visitation, raise the profile of activity centres and attract investment.
- Support projects that build business capability (the skills, knowledge and systems businesses need to operate successfully, such as marketing, financial management or digital tools), foster innovation and encourage entrepreneurship.
- Advance economic resilience (the ability of businesses and precincts to adapt to change and remain viable over time) by supporting partnerships that diversify and grow local enterprise opportunities.
- Encourage projects that create local jobs and training opportunities, peer to peer learning and networking support, particularly for young people, migrants and disadvantaged groups.
- Encourage collaboration between businesses, community groups and other local stakeholders to deliver tangible, on-the-ground improvements in defined precincts or activity centres.

### Eligibility criteria specific to this stream

In addition to meeting the [Overall eligibility criteria](#), applications to this stream must:

- Demonstrate collaboration between multiple businesses or stakeholders wherever possible, particularly where the project relates to a defined precinct or shared outcome. Evidence of

collaboration and/or partnership\* is required – such as letters of support or copies of email correspondence about your project.

- Be connected to a defined location or precinct within the City of Yarra, with priority given to projects located within designated [activity centres](#), and demonstrate a clear benefit to the local economy, businesses or community.
- Provide a project plan with key milestones, project stakeholders listed and marketing outcomes.
- Clearly explain how the proposed project meets one or more of the grant objectives outlined above.
- Where the applicant is a business:
  - Be currently operating a business within the City of Yarra.
  - Hold an active Australian Business Number (ABN).
  - Not be a large enterprise (businesses with more than 50 full-time equivalent staff are not eligible).
  - Apply as the lead applicant and demonstrate partnership\*, shared outcomes or formal support from participating businesses and/or community representatives.
  - Evidence of partnership\* or collaboration can include letters of support or copies of emails detailing the collaboration.
- Where the applicant is an online business:
  - Demonstrate a clear and direct connection to Yarra, and a tangible benefit for Yarra, such as participation by local businesses, activity within Yarra precincts, or outcomes that support the local economy.

\*A partnership is a group of businesses working in collaboration to co-create a project/outcome.

If partners are suppliers, evidence is required demonstrating how they will contribute to your project/outcome.

Applicants must also meet the [Overall eligibility criteria](#).

## Creative City

This stream supports the creation and presentation of arts and cultural projects, events, activities and works within the City of Yarra. Our vision is for arts and culture to be integrated into our city so that they can be an everyday experience enjoyed by our community, whether as makers, audience members, or participants.

The grant objectives are to:

- Support the creation, development, exhibition, and performance of new artistic works by artists, arts organisations or creative enterprises across all career stages and art forms.
- Strengthen cultural festivals and events that celebrate Yarra's diversity and foster community leadership and participation, encouraging new and innovative models in event delivery.
- Activate public spaces through accessible, inclusive, and innovative arts and events programming.
- Support new creative partnerships that enable connections within the community and across a range of sectors.
- Encourages creative projects that are artist-led, community collaborations that strengthen cultural participation, drive cultural enrichment and deliver experiences that promote social connection.

### Eligibility criteria specific to this stream

- Individual artists, arts organisations or creative enterprises operating under an active sole-trader ABN<sup>3</sup> can apply under this stream. Creative enterprises must successfully demonstrate that their project will run on a not-for-profit basis.
- Artist CVs will need to be submitted with the application.

Applicants must also meet the [Overall eligibility criteria](#).

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<sup>3</sup> Applicant names must match the entity (legal) name for the ABN, or a registered business name or trading name associated with the ABN and the name on the bank account provided for payment. The ABN entity name can be checked when you enter your ABN in the application form. Applications with an active sole-trader ABN listed on their application, except for those submitted under the Vibrant and Resilient Local Economies and Creative City Stream, will be deemed ineligible and not assessed.

## Environment, Conservation and Climate

This stream supports local community projects that protect and improve Yarra's natural environment, reduce waste and help people respond to environmental challenges such as heat, extreme weather and a changing climate.

The stream prioritises practical, community-led projects that care for local places, support conservation, protect biodiversity, increase greening and cooling, reduce waste, and help residents and community groups take everyday actions that benefit the environment.

The grant objectives are to:

- Support local conservation projects that protect, restore or improve natural areas such as parks, waterways, habitat areas and biodiversity corridors.
- Support projects that care for urban wildlife and improve habitat for native plants and animals.
- Expand urban greening and cooling through activities such as tree planting, community gardens, habitat planting and small-scale green infrastructure.
- Improve the quality, accessibility and amenity of parks, waterways and natural green spaces.
- Support waste reduction, reuse, repair, recycling, composting and circular economy initiatives that help reduce waste going to landfill.
- Support local food, gardening and composting projects that strengthen community connection and reduce environmental impact.
- Help residents, community groups and neighbourhoods prepare for and respond to environmental and climate-related impacts such as heatwaves, extreme weather and other shocks and stresses.
- Support practical community education, action and advocacy that improve environmental outcomes in Yarra.

### Eligibility criteria specific to this stream

There are no specific eligibility criteria for this stream, see the [Overall eligibility criteria](#).

## Safe Neighbourhoods

The Safe Neighbourhoods grant stream supports community-led, place-based projects – that is, projects designed and delivered by local people and organisations, focused on improving specific streets, laneways or public spaces within Yarra.

The aim is to improve safety, accessibility and amenity in ways that make neighbourhoods cleaner, more inclusive and more welcoming for everyone.

Projects must focus on practical, visible improvements in clearly defined locations, such as shopping strips, public spaces, or shared community areas, rather than on broad strategies, research, or internal business improvements.

The grant objectives are to:

- Encourage local activations and physical improvements, such as small-scale events, installations or upgrades, that improve the look, feel and use of public spaces, strengthen neighbourhood identity and help people feel more comfortable spending time there.
- Support initiatives that improve the presentation, care and usability of public spaces, including practical responses to common issues such as litter, waste management, graffiti and general cleanliness.
- Promote projects that enhance accessibility, wayfinding and inclusive design, meaning spaces that are easier to navigate and use for people of all ages and abilities.
- Improve perceptions of safety, recognising that people are more likely to use public spaces when they feel safe. Projects should be informed by Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), an approach that uses design – such as better lighting, clear sightlines and active frontages – to reduce opportunities for unsafe behaviour.
- Facilitate small-scale, place-based safety interventions led by local stakeholders, including environmental design measures such as improved lighting or closed-circuit television (CCTV), where these measures contribute directly to safety in shared public spaces.
- Encourage collaboration between businesses, community groups and other local stakeholders to deliver tangible, on-the-ground improvements in clearly defined public or community-accessible locations.

**Important note:** Funding is available only for the installation of approved improvements. Applicants are responsible for all ongoing costs, including utilities, maintenance, repairs, replacements, insurance, and compliance. Council will not own, operate or maintain any infrastructure funded through this stream.

### Eligibility criteria specific to this stream

In addition to meeting the [Overall eligibility criteria](#), applications to this stream must:

- Be place-based, meaning the project relates to a clearly defined public or community-accessible location, and delivers a tangible improvement to safety, accessibility, cleanliness or amenity that can be clearly seen or experienced by the public.

- Where the applicant is a business:
  - Not be a large enterprise (businesses with more than 50 full-time equivalent staff are not eligible).
  - [Operate within one of Yarra's designated activity centres.](#)
  - Hold an active Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Where CCTV is proposed:
  - Demonstrate that the proposal responds to a clearly identified and evidenced local safety issue and is proportionate to that risk.
  - Focus on improving safety in the public realm, meaning shared or publicly accessible spaces such as streets, laneways or plazas, rather than private premises.
  - Ensure camera locations and coverage are directed toward public areas only.
  - Prioritise extending existing systems or contributing to coordinated local systems where possible.
  - Provide evidence that the CCTV system is, or will be, registered with Victoria Police's Community CCTV database.
  - Provide a privacy and governance approach that addresses:
    - necessity and proportionality of surveillance
    - signage and public notification
    - data storage, access controls and retention
- Where lighting is proposed:
  - Compliance with applicable privacy and surveillance legislation is followed.
  - Clearly demonstrate how the lighting will improve visibility and natural surveillance in public spaces.
  - Be minor, discrete and targeted, and not part of a broader building upgrade, renewal or infrastructure program.
  - Avoid creating glare, deep shadows, visual clutter or excessive light spill into neighbouring properties.
- All safety infrastructure proposals must:
  - Have written owner or landlord consent and all required approvals for installation and operation.
  - Demonstrate that installation details, costs and ongoing management arrangements are clearly understood.
  - Take full responsibility for ownership, operation, maintenance, repair, replacement and compliance of any equipment funded through the grant. Council is not responsible for damage, upkeep or replacement.
  - Not duplicate or replace services, maintenance activities or capital works that are the responsibility of Council or another public authority.
  - Align with relevant legislation, standards and recognised good practice guidance.

Applicants must also meet the [Overall eligibility criteria](#).

## Connecting Yarra (supporting community groups for social connection)

The Connecting Yarra grant stream supports small, community-led groups to meet regularly for ongoing group activities such as shared meals, music, games, conversation groups, informal learning activities, information sessions, gentle exercise programs or outings.

These activities provide simple, low-barrier ways for people to come together, build relationships and reduce loneliness, particularly for people who may experience social isolation or barriers to participation.

Groups must meet on a regular and ongoing basis, such as weekly, fortnightly or monthly, and provide consistent opportunities for people to connect in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Activities may also include informal recreational, learning, or support activities, where the primary purpose is participation, social connection, and belonging rather than structured training, formal education, competition, or skill development.

**This stream does not support organised teams, leagues or competitive sporting programs.**

This stream is intended to support informal, community-based activities rather than structured programs, formal services or one-off events.

Priority is given to groups supporting:

- First Peoples communities
- Multicultural and multi-faith communities
- Women
- Older people (seniors)
- LGBTIQ+ communities
- People with disabilities
- Young people (12 to 25 years of age)
- People experiencing social or economic disadvantage

Activities must be inclusive, culturally safe and non-discriminatory, and open to the relevant community the group is intended to support.

Applications should be written in plain language. You do not need to use formal or technical terms – simply describe your group and activities clearly.

### Eligibility criteria specific to this stream

In addition to meeting the [Overall eligibility criteria](#), applications to this stream must:

- Clearly describe your group and the types of activities you run.
- Demonstrate that your group meets regularly (e.g. weekly, fortnightly or monthly), including where and when activities take place.
- Provide information on how many people usually attend and who the group is for.

- Explain how your activities help people connect, feel included and build a sense of belonging.
- Indicate whether you use a venue, and whether it is hired or provided at no cost.
- Identify whether another organisation (such as a Neighbourhood House, community organisation or place of worship) supports or hosts your group.
- Provide enough information for Council to understand your group and activities. Applications that do not include sufficient detail may be deemed ineligible and will not proceed to assessment.

Need help applying?

If your group needs assistance with your application, please contact the Grants team:

- Phone: (03) 9205 5527
- Email: [yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au)
- Online: [Submit an enquiry online.](#)

Interpreter support can be arranged if required.

**Please note that this stream is for Small grants only, up to \$4,000.**

Community groups may apply for only one Small Connecting Yarra grant, or one Healthy Communities grant per grant round, in relation to their weekly/fortnight/monthly activities. Duplicate applications will not be assessed. Groups may apply under the Healthy Communities stream for a separate project or a special occasion – it must clearly be different to their weekly/fortnightly/monthly activities.

## Special requirements

### Working with First Peoples

Yarra is committed to upholding the rights of self-determination, supporting First Peoples-led decision-making, respectful partnerships and working alongside First Peoples to create meaningful and lasting change within our municipality.

Any project involving First Peoples must be able to demonstrate that those involved have given their free, prior, informed consent. This principle is explained in full [in Terri Janke's Indigenous Cultural Protocols and the Arts guidelines](#). The way the project supports this should be made clear in the grant application.

### All Yarra Council-funded events

All events must ensure compliance with the Live Performance Award 2020 and Fair Work Act 2009 for all Council-funded events. Funding agreements will include clauses requiring adherence to the Fair Work Act 2009 and the relevant award (i.e., the Live Performance Award 2020). Performers must be paid a minimum of \$250 (plus GST) for a 3-hour call.

Any suspected non-compliance should be reported to the grants team via email [yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au). Whether Council is directly engaging performing artists or funding a third party to deliver an event via a grant or other contribution, it is critical that there is full adherence to these legal obligations.

While maintaining the principle of the \$250 minimum rate for funded events, in cases of not-for-profit, community or volunteer performers, such as with large community/school group performances, this should be discussed with Council Officers and a case made in your application for an adjustment of artist fee proposals and structures to be considered.

The Live Performance Award 2020 (MA000081) covers a wide range of roles within the live performance industry, including musicians, stagehands, technicians, and various administrative positions. It sets minimum standards for wages, working conditions, overtime, penalty rates, and allowances for employees within the sector. Notably, performing artists must be paid a minimum of \$250 (plus GST) for a 3-hour call under this award.

## Preparing your grant application

When preparing your grant application, please consider the following:

- Begin your application as early as possible. We strongly recommend you submit your application before the due date. **The grant round closes strictly on Friday, 28 August 2026, at 5 pm (for medium and large grants).**
- **If you need help with your application, ask for this early.** Do not leave it to the last day. We answer all enquiries and questions in date order (oldest first). We cannot guarantee that we can help you in the last week before applications close if we have a backlog of enquiries. We are a small team and do our best to assist everyone in turn.

- We can help in-person with completing your application form to submit it online. This needs to be **by appointment** (to make sure we are available) until **5pm on Friday, 21 August 2026**. Interpreters can be booked if requested.
- Ensure that you state explicitly what your project/program is. Describe the event/activity/program so that it is clear what you want to do, how you want to do it, and why it is worth doing.
- Bear in mind that the assessors can change each year and may not be familiar with your organisation or your previous projects. Assessors are not given access to your grant history. Each application is assessed on its own merit.
- Be as precise as possible. The assessors are aware that your project may still be in the planning stage and that definite plans are not always possible until funding is secured. However, you can still clearly state what your intentions are and, if needed, adjust the project plan through a project variation if your grant is successful.
- If your project/program involves partnering with another organisation, it is useful to show some evidence of that partnership, such as a letter of support or copies of email correspondence discussing your project/program.
- If you are using an organisation to be your Auspice, talk to them early on to give them time to help you. You will need to submit a copy of their financial statement.
- All questions marked 'response required' must be completed.
- Make sure your application shows how you meet the grant objectives for the stream you are applying for.
- Explain the community need for your project/program. Share statistics or information about why your project/program is needed in Yarra.
- Clearly explain how you will complete the project/program. Assume that the Assessors will not know you or your organisation. Explain it in the application as if it were to a stranger.
- As noted earlier, **previous grant approval does not indicate likely success in future rounds**. The Community Grants Program is competitive, and funding decisions are made each round independently based on application, current priorities, demand, and available funding.

## Prepare your project budget

When preparing a budget for your project, please consider the following:

- It is important that all costs are realistic, justified and explained within your application.
- Ensuring that your budget is as detailed as possible helps the assessors understand the amount requested and demonstrates what the impact of reduced funding might be.
- If you have applied for other funding for your project, please note this in your budget and ensure it is clear if the funding is confirmed or unconfirmed.
- Including quotes in your support material, especially for significant items, may help assessors understand your costs.

- [See Budget Example](#) under the [Resources section on our website](#).

## Before submitting your application

### Information sessions

Council will hold **information sessions** for applicants seeking further information on this grant program and how to apply. Each session will include time for one-on-one discussions about your project. For further details, please visit the [Community Grants](#) page on the Yarra Council website and keep an eye on social media.

### Grant information session details

- 5 pm, Wednesday 22 July 2026. Online Webinar. [Register to attend online](#). This session will be recorded and [added to the City of Yarra website](#) afterwards.
- 6 pm, Wednesday 29 July 2026. In person, [The Learning Bank](#), 124 Victoria Street, Richmond. [Register to attend](#).

### Having trouble writing your application?

The Grants team are available to help applicants prepare their applications. You can call us on 9205 5527 to discuss your project and application.

We can also help you complete your application form in person so you can submit it online. This needs to be **by appointment** (to ensure we are available) until 4pm on **Friday 21 August 2026**. Interpreters can be booked if requested.

If you are having trouble accessing your SmartyGrants user account, please contact SmartyGrants directly via [service@smartygrants.com.au](mailto:service@smartygrants.com.au).

### Speak to a Council Officer

You may wish to talk to a Council Officer who can advise you on how to shape your application to give it the best chance of success. Please call Yarra City Council on 9205 5555 or [submit an enquiry online](#).

### Auspiced applications

Auspicings help small or new organisations that are not incorporated or that do not have an ABN to access grant funds. They accept legal and financial responsibility for the grant if successful.

An auspice organisation must be incorporated and have an ABN.

The auspice organisation must agree to be your auspice – talk to them about your grant application and ensure they agree to be your auspice. They may charge a fee to be your auspice (this could be anywhere from 5% to 20%).

You will be covered under their PLI (public liability insurance), and a copy of their COC (certificate of currency) will need to be supplied to Yarra City Council with the funding agreement if your grant is approved.

Applications can be submitted directly by groups being auspiced. However, the funding agreement for successful grants will be made between the auspice organisation and Council, and grant money will be paid directly to the auspice organisation. You will need to provide information from the auspice organisation, including their contact details, ABN, and most recent financial report.

### **Accessibility**

All applicants are encouraged to consider how their organisation and project will be accessible and inclusive of people with a disability. For ideas on how to make your program, project, or event more accessible, please see the [Accessibility Guide](#). For more information, please contact Laurice Younge, Access and Inclusion Officer on 9205 5414.

### **Environmental impact**

All applicants are encouraged to incorporate activities that improve the sustainable outcomes of their projects. For further information please contact Samantha Green on 9426 1450.

### **Examples of successful past grants**

Applicants are encouraged to view last year's successful grants to see the range of projects funded and realistic grant allocation amounts. [A list of past successful grants is available on our website](#).

## **Attachments and support material**

You may wish to include supporting material with your application. Some items that might be appropriate include:

- letters of support from partner organisations, confirming their intention to work with you on this project
- copies of email correspondence about your project/program/event or confirming collaboration
- letters of support from organisations consulted
- evaluations or assessments of previous programs or projects
- photographs of your project/program, if it has been run before
- links to short videos about your project

Do not ask City of Yarra employees or Councillors for a letter of support – this is a conflict of interest.

Please note that the maximum attachment size in SmartyGrants is 25MB. To avoid technical difficulties that may prevent you from submitting your application, we recommend keeping files to a maximum of 5 MB. Files can only be uploaded one at a time, and upload speeds will vary depending on your computer's specifications, your internet connection and the amount of traffic on the SmartyGrants server. If you do have concerns or encounter any issues, consider providing links to specific website pages or online/cloud file transfer services in the space provided instead.

## Financial statements

Applicants (excluding individual artists) must provide a financial statement (or the auspicing organisation's) most recent annual financial statement with their grant application. For most applicants, this will be the previous year's financial statement. Alternatively, you can upload the organisation's most recent profit and loss statement.

We understand that some applicants do not want to share their annual financial statement. If you are concerned about confidentiality, you can email a copy of this to us at [yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au), and we will ensure that the panel assessors do not have access to view your financial statement. We take confidentiality and privacy seriously, and your financial information will not be shared with anyone outside of the Grants team.

### **Applicants who do not provide a financial statement will be ineligible.**

All incorporated organisations are required by Consumer Affairs to prepare a financial statement every year and present this at their AGM. More information on financial statements can be found at [Financial statements and auditing requirements for incorporated associations - Consumer Affairs Victoria](#)

## Child safe standards

Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities for children (anyone under 18 years old) are required by law to implement Child Safe Standards to protect children from harm. Therefore, if your project/program will engage children as either participants or audience members, you will be required to demonstrate that you are complying with the Child Safe Standards by uploading a copy of your organisation's Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.

If your organisation does not yet have a Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, [a template document is available in the Resources section of our website](#).

Tailor this document to suit your organisation and activities, then attach the document to your application as evidence. Remember to ensure a copy is distributed to your organisation's members.

For further information on the Child Safe Standards visit the [Commission for Children and Young People](#).

## Public liability insurance

Applicants are not required to include a copy of their public liability insurance with their application. However, if the application is successful, Council requires grant recipients to provide evidence of public liability insurance with adequate coverage before payments can be processed. In most cases, this will be a copy of your public liability insurance certificate of currency. If you do not have public liability insurance, you will need to provide a copy of the public liability insurance certificate of the venue where your project will take place. Organisations that are being auspiced may be covered by the auspice body's public liability insurance and so will need to provide a copy of their certificate of currency.

## Grant assessment criteria

To ensure a fair and transparent evaluation process, grant applications are assessed against specific criteria tailored to the proposed project's size and scope. The table below outlines how assessment criteria differ for small, medium, and large grants.

| Assessment Questions (for all streams)                                                     | Small | Medium | Large |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| How well does the project address the <a href="#">Grant Principles</a> ?                   | ✓     | ✓      | ✓     |
| How well does the project address the relevant stream objectives?                          | ✓     | ✓      | ✓     |
| How well does the project meet a clear community need?                                     | ✓     | ✓      | ✓     |
| How well does the budget accurately reflect the scope and scale of the project?            | ✓     | ✓      | ✓     |
| How well does the applicant demonstrate the capacity to successfully complete the project? |       | ✓      | ✓     |
| How well does the project demonstrate community benefit?                                   |       | ✓      | ✓     |
| How clear, specific, and realistic are the project's intended outcomes?                    |       |        | ✓     |
| How clearly defined and appropriate are the project's evaluation methods?                  |       |        | ✓     |

All medium and large applications are assessed by our independent panel members. Panel members are asked to disclose conflicts of interest (COI) or perceived bias at multiple stages. The Grants team manage a detailed Conflict of Interest Register. If an assessor has a declared COI, they do not assess or have access to any application/s associated with the COI.

Applications are scored out of 100, using the above Assessment Questions.

The averaged scores are used to rank applications within each stream and grant size category. They support panel discussions and help identify the relative strength of applications. They are not used to make automatic funding decisions.

At the panel meeting, panel members review the ranked list of applications, consider the available budget for each stream and grant size category, and discuss relevant issues arising from the applications. This may include alignment with stream objectives, evidence of need, budget reasonableness, project readiness, duplication, risk, value for money, and whether the application clearly explains the proposed project and its community benefits.

Following deliberation, the panel makes a recommendation on whether to fund, partially fund, or not fund each application. Where partial funding is recommended, this may be subject to the applicant confirming a revised project scope.

If a panel member has questions about your project/program/event, or your application does not fully explain what you are trying to achieve, they may give your application a lower score.

There is further explanation of the grant assessment process in the Grants Administration Guide.

## Outcomes

To support alignment with [Yarra's Community Vision](#) and the Community Grants Program Aims, Council has developed an Outcomes Framework.

As part of the application process, grant applicants must select outcomes and indicators from the Council-developed framework that best match their project goals. These will be used to measure success and must be reported on at the acquittal stage.

The [2027 Outcomes Framework](#) is on [the Resources page of our website](#).

## Successful applications

### What will happen if your application is successful?

If you are successful, a grant funding agreement which outlines the conditions of your grant will be sent to you (or your auspice organisation). You will be required to sign and return a copy of the grant funding agreement and provide a copy of your organisation's bank statement showing the account number, BSB number and name that match the applicant's ABN details. You will be asked to include a copy of your public liability insurance with the funding agreement. All payments will be made by electronic transfer.

**If Funding Agreements are not submitted by the due date, the grant will be forfeited.**

### What to do if your grant is not fully funded

If your application is successful but you did not receive the full amount of funding requested, and you would like to proceed with the grant, the grants team can discuss any changes you need to make to the project. The Grants team can also advise you whether you need to submit a project variation form outlining the changes being made.

## Acquittals

Each grant recipient is required to submit an acquittal form within two months of completion of the project.

The required acquittal form is attached to each successful application. To access an acquittal form, please [log into your SmartyGrants account](#), click on the 'My Submissions' tab and scroll down to the specific grant. You can then complete and submit the acquittal.

***\*Please keep receipts for expenditure items over \$250 to upload into your online acquittal.\****

To be eligible for a grant, organisations and/or individuals must have successfully acquitted all previous completed grants from Yarra City Council. Applications from applicants with outstanding acquittals will not be assessed.

## Promoting your project

If your grant application is successful, Yarra City Council reserves the right to contact you and your organisation for promotional purposes. This may include, but is not limited to, profiling your project on the Council's corporate website, social media channels, electronic and print newsletters and magazines and external media outlets. There will be information in the grant funding agreement about the promotion and use of the City of Yarra logos.

## Small Grants

If you require only a small amount of funding, you may wish to consider applying for a small grant.

Small Grants are designed for applicants seeking a smaller amount of funding to deliver a defined project.

Grants of up to \$4,000 are available across all seven funding streams.

Applications are assessed on a rolling basis, with outcomes typically advised within two months of submission, although timeframes may be longer during peak periods.

The small applications will open on Thursday, 1 October 2026, and remain open until available funds are fully allocated. Funding is distributed by stream, and some streams may close earlier once funds are exhausted.

The [Connecting Yarra](#) stream is for small grants only.

## Further questions?

[If you have other questions, please see the information on our website.](#)

We have compiled a list of helpful documents to assist you; [they are all together on our Resources page.](#)

If you have any questions, [submit an enquiry online](#), call Yarra City Council on 9205 5555 or email the Grants team at [yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:yarragrants@yarracity.vic.gov.au).