

Northern Beaches Council has established the COVID-19 Community Response Grants program to support those adversely affected by the impact of COVID-19 on the Northern Beaches.

The program will address immediate needs within the community arising from COVID-19 by funding eligible community organisations and charities to continue to deliver, expand and introduce new programs, initiatives and services to the Northern Beaches community.

This short-term grant program relates specifically to measures that are required due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and is intended to fill the gap for community groups requiring support alongside federal and state government initiatives.

Scope of Program and Eligibility

Funding Available

- \$5,000 - \$15,000 is available per organisation

Eligibility

Applicants must be a registered charity or not-for-profit organisation servicing people and communities within the Northern Beaches Local Government Area, with the funding being expended in the LGA. Unregistered community groups formally sponsored by a registered not-for-profit or charity are also eligible.

Businesses and individuals are not eligible through this grant program, however Council has implemented initiatives to provide relief to local businesses through the 'Covid-19 Business Support Plan and Community Care Package', resolved by Council on 24 March 2020, alongside federal and state government initiatives.

General Exclusions

Council does not provide grants and sponsorships to projects that:

- Duplicate existing services or programs unless there is a demonstrated additional need.
- Have already occurred (no retrospective funding).

Funding is not provided for:

- Operational expenses (such as rent, ongoing staff wages, insurance, utilities, day-to-day general office supplies etc.) that are not directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Built infrastructure proposals which require a Development Consent.
- Council does not provide fee waivers or free use for in-house design, printing and distribution service, hall or reserve/field hire, street closures, or cleansing and waste service for events. These costs must be included in the application budget.

Program Structure & Timeline

To ensure grants are directly supporting organisations impacted by COVID-19, funds must be allocated to projects deliverable over the next six months (to be used by 31 December 2020, unless otherwise agreed). At that time, the program will be reassessed in line with the latest health, financial and community advice.

Applications open Friday 22 May 2020, with grants awarded on an ongoing basis up until 1 December 2020. Applications will be reviewed and assessed regularly (this may be reviewed as the crisis urgency lessens) commencing Friday 5 June. Organisations will be notified as soon as possible as to the outcome of their application, and successful applicants will be provided with a funding agreement and payment details.

Funding will be provided as a one-off payment to successful organisations. A program evaluation and financial acquittal will be required at the end of the project, or by the end of February 2021 at the latest.

Applying for the COVID-19 Community Response Grants does not make organisations ineligible for Council's annual grants program, which are still in operation in a modified form.

Details can be found on northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Assessment Criteria and Process

Grant Criteria

All grant requests must be in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council's annual grant program is in place to address other projects not specifically related to this crisis.

Northern Beaches Council will consider Rapid Response grant requests to:

- Assist organisations serving vulnerable populations with basic needs (including food supplies, financial hardship, accommodation, and social isolation etc.) where they have seen an increase in demand due to COVID-19.
- Expand current service delivery or establish new services to support community members impacted by COVID-19, particularly around increased levels of unemployment.
- Assist organisations experiencing volunteer gaps due to quarantines, loss of volunteers and social distancing.
- Projects that address increased homelessness issues, particularly rough sleepers.
- Projects that address increased social isolation.
- Projects that address mental health impacts of COVID-19.

Assessment Criteria

1. Has a clear rationale and addresses identified community need within the Northern Beaches Council Local Government Area.
2. Addresses at least one of the Grant Criteria above.
3. Demonstrates value for money with the capacity to manage the funds requested, and budget details.

All eligible applications will be assessed by an internal assessment panel on an ongoing basis. Applications will be reviewed regularly commencing Friday 5 June 2020. Applicants will be advised of the outcomes of their application as soon as possible. Successful applicants will be provided with a funding agreement and payment details.

Funding is limited and only applications meeting the assessment criteria will be recommended for approval to the CEO, who will have final sign-off.

Submitting a Grant Application

Applications are made online via SmartyGrants, which can be accessed via the Northern Beaches Council Grants Program on northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Applications can be submitted any time from 22 May 2020 and will be awarded up until 1 December 2020, unless the total program funds have been expended prior to that. Grant making decisions will usually be made within two to four weeks of the application date.

Funding Agreements

Successful applicants and Council must sign a Funding Agreement with terms and conditions prior to any funding being provided. The Agreement will include:

- Project ID and title of the project for which the funding is being provided;
- The amount of cash funding to be received;
- Arrangements regarding completion of the project and submission of the project acquittal;
- Terms and conditions for the implementation, evaluation and reporting on the project.

Payment Arrangements

Funding will not be provided until a signed copy of the funding agreement and a valid invoice has been received by Council. Applicants must finalise the agreement within one month of receiving the letter of offer from Council. Failure to sign the agreement may result in Council withdrawing the grant offer.

Program Reporting and Acquittal

A program evaluation and financial acquittal will be required at the end of the project, or by the end of February 2021 at the latest. A reporting template will be provided by Council.

Contact Details

For questions regarding COVID-19 Community Response Grants, contact us on (02) 8495 6283 or rapidgrants@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au