

Council Policy NB-P-27

Grants and Partnerships (Financial Assistance) Policy

Policy Statement

Northern Beaches Council recognises and respects the vital contribution of community and business in developing and delivering projects and programs that contribute to a vibrant and sustainable community.

The Policy provides an overarching framework for Council to support community and business providing financial assistance to deliver projects and programs that build the social, cultural, environmental, and economic life of the Northern Beaches and further the achievement of the outcomes and vision of Northern Beaches Community Strategic Plan - 2040.

Forms of application

Financial assistance under the Grants and Partnerships (Financial Assistance) Policy is in the form of a grant or sponsorship.

A grant is financial or in-kind support provided by Council to eligible organisations and individuals through formal programs for a defined purpose and outcome within a specific time frame. Council provides support in the form of both open competitive grant programs and financial assistance grants.

Sponsorship is financial or in-kind support provided by Council to eligible organisations to support an activity in return for specified benefits. Sponsorship is a commercial arrangement and does not include selling advertising space, joint ventures and unconditional gifts, donations, bequests or endowments.

Requests for donations are not supported as they are discretionary with no agreed outcome or expected return.

Administration of Programs

The Policy provides the framework for an equitable, open and orderly process for providing assistance to the community. It allows for greater accessibility to funding and support, while ensuring transparency around the provision of financial assistance across the Northern Beaches. It also provides for greater recognition of the contribution Council makes to supporting organisations that contribute to social, cultural, environmental, and economic life of the Northern Beaches. From time-to-time Council will establish programs in the Operational Plan or by resolution to support the delivery of this Policy. These programs will either be:

1. Open competitive grant programs where funding is untied. The governance framework for each open competitive grant program will be documented in program guidelines and administered by the responsible Executive Manager. These guidelines will be publicly available and contain details on:
 - Objectives of the program
 - Priority areas for funding
 - Assessment criteria
 - Eligible organisations and activities
 - Assessment process

The outcomes of each program and the guidelines will be reviewed annually to allow for refinement of the program guidelines ahead of the next round of grants.

2. Financial assistance grants where funding is tied to a specific organisation and purpose. This includes funding provided to community libraries, surf clubs and the social services sector to support their operations. Financial assistance grants will be reviewed at the end of the funding agreement. The allocation of funding to organisations for the financial assistance program will be determined through a Council resolution.

Principles

The following principles guide Council's grant programs:

- a) **Priority:** We will ensure outcomes of grant programs are aligned with Northern Beaches' Community Strategic Plan 2040 as well as other key Council social, economic, environmental strategies and plans. Funding is allocated to priority areas to meet identified community needs.
- b) **Partnerships:** We build and maintain constructive relationships based on mutual respect and transparency. We value the resources and skills that community groups, businesses and others provide the community. Programs are responsive and may adapt to changing community needs and circumstances over time.
- c) **Inclusion and Equity:** We support inclusion and equity in our community.
- d) **Value for money:** We seek the best mix of projects to meet the needs of the community, business and visitors and maximise outcomes for the local government area. We support projects that represent good value for the level of cash or value-in-kind support requested.
- e) **Good governance:** We commit to decision making in the public interest, and effective and efficient grant management processes. The application and acquittal requirements will be proportionate to the size of the grant awarded and the expected outcomes of the grant program. We will ensure there are systems and opportunities to support applicants and provide timely feedback. We will endeavour to provide feedback within 10 working days of a request for feedback being received.
- f) **Transparency:** We will ensure that grant processes are transparent and fair. Applications are assessed objectively against the assessment criteria. Conflicts of interests are to be declared as part of this process.

Scope

This Policy provides a framework for the provision of financial assistance in accordance with section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

For the purposes of this Policy, Council views in-kind support as financial assistance due to its indirect monetary value.

This Policy applies to any individual, organisation (for-profit or not-for-profit) or community group applying for assistance from Northern Beaches Council.

It does not apply to funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy which provides the opportunity for the Mayor and Councillors, to respond to requests for financial assistance from individuals and community groups, community organisations and small local businesses involved in community projects.

References and related documents

- NSW Local Government Act 1993 s356 and s377
- Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy
- Management of Beach and Water Safety Policy, Northern Beaches Council
- Social Sustainability Policy, Northern Beaches Council
- Grant guidelines for open competitive grant programs
- Northern Beaches Council Policy Framework NB-P-01

Definitions

Grant Financial or value in-kind support provided through formal programs for a defined purpose and outcome within a specific time frame. Council provides this support in the form of both open competitive grant programs and financial assistance grants.

Sponsorship Any commercial arrangement in which Council provides financial or in-kind support to an eligible organisation to support an activity in return for specified benefits. Sponsorship does not include selling advertising space, joint ventures and unconditional gifts, donations, bequests or endowments.

In-kind support

In-kind support can be an arrangement where Council foregoes revenue in full, or a percentage on items which are subject to a fee in Council's Fees and Charges. This may include park hire, venue hire, garbage bins and Council services. Staff time and resources may also be included as in-kind support.

Responsible Officer

Executive Manager Strategy and Performance

Review Date

May 2028

Revision History

Revision	Date	Status	TRIM Ref
1	26 Mar 2019	First draft Community Grants and Partnerships policy	2019/096261
2	25 June 2019	Draft to Council for adoption (unchanged following exhibition)	2019/096261
3	29 March 2023	Initial draft developed for internal review	2023/209092
4	13 March 2024	Amended draft following Public Exhibition	2024/185795
5	28 May 2024	Adopted Council meeting 28 May 2024 and policy reference allocated – NB-P-27	2024/387702