



DATE ADOPTED: 25 JUNE 2019

VERSION: 7

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy is to:

- provide clear guidelines on the criteria by which Section 356 Community Grant applications will be assessed and funding allocations determined
- provide a clear process which allows Council to conduct a meaningful comparison of requests for grant funding and donations

POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to Maitland City Council's overarching Section 356 Community Grants which offers access to financial support for local non-profit community based organisations, groups and individuals to assist with projects that meet community needs and benefit residents in the community.

POLICY STATEMENT

Section 356 Community Grants are designed to assist in the establishment of projects in Maitland that foster community partnerships, meet community needs and are deemed to benefit the community.

The purpose of this policy is to enable Council to support local projects put forward by organisations/groups and individuals. In doing so, the policy aims to:

- provide an accessible and equitable application and assessment process for organisations and individuals seeking grant funding and donations from Council.
- secure an open and transparent decision making process for requests for grant funding and donations from Council, and
- ensure the Section 356 Community Grants Policy and Guidelines are developed in alignment with Sections 356 and 377 of the Local Government Act 1993.

1. PRINCIPLES

The following principles provide a foundation that will guide all practices associated with the assessment, allocation, management and administration of grants under the Section 356 Community Grants Policy.

Fairness and Impartiality

Ethical behaviour will guide all dealings with applications received for funding.

Transparency of Process

Processes and procedures for the management and administration of Section 356 Community Grants are created and implemented in a transparent and open manner.

Security and Confidentiality

Standards of integrity and professional conduct govern the management of information obtained through the application lodgment and assessment process.

Management of Conflicts of Interest

Identify potential conflicts of interest in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct Policy and the Department of Local Government's Pecuniary Interest guidelines.

Priority of Need

Support the allocation of funds across a broad spectrum of the community where initiatives consider unmet community needs for residents that live within the Local Government Area (LGA).

Best Value for Community

Factors influencing 'best value for community benefit' including the number of people that will benefit from the grant, planning and organisational capacity of the organisation/ group or individual and lifespan and the longevity of the outcomes of the grant.

Financial Sustainability

Applications that demonstrate long term sustainability and/ or contribution of funds by applicants where possible will be considered favourably as part of the assessment process.

2. POLICY

- This Policy supports financial assistance to the three programs under the banner of the Section 356 Community Grants, namely the Annual Community Grants Program, Commemorative and Recognised Days Grant Program and the High Achievers Grant Program.
- Within these programs there are eight categories;

SECTION 356 - COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMS

Programs	Category	No. of rounds per financial year
Annual Community Grants Program	Community Development Culture and Local Studies Environment and Sustainability Leisure and Recreation	One
Commemorative and Recognised Days Grant Program	Commemorative Days Recognised Days and Weeks	Two
High Achievers Grant Program	Creative Arts High Achievers Sports High Achievers	Open all Year

- Each financial year Council will make provision in the budget to provide grant funding to qualifying organisations, groups and individuals who meet the criteria set out in guidelines related to this policy.



- Council's Section 356 Community Grant Program budget will be distributed to the following funding programs:
 - 60% Annual Community Grants Program
 - 25% High Achievers Grant Program
 - 12% Commemorative and Recognised Days Grant Program (6% split)
 - 3% Discretionary

Funding from the annual levy on the Hunter Valley Steamfest tickets is in addition to the above distribution and will only fund projects within the Environment and Sustainability category of the Annual Community Grants program.

- All Program guidelines, application and acquittal forms pertaining to the Section 356 Community Grants will be available on Council's website on the 'Community Grants' page. Interested individuals and organisations/groups must complete an application form in line with the funding round timelines, which will be assessed based on the guidelines and assessment criteria.
- Applicants will not be guaranteed funding support nor can any application be funded to the full amount requested if that amount exceeds the grant limit. Council reserves the right to vary grant funding allocated during the approval process.
- At the beginning of each Council term of Council, a panel of three Councillors will be nominated for the Annual Community Grants Program assessment panel. The nominations will be for the term of Council.
- In the event of a Councillor being absent at the Annual Community Grants Program panel assessment due to unforeseen circumstances, assessment will be completed out of session by the panel who will reconvene for final recommendations.
- Applications for Commemorative Days will be assessed by the delegated Council Officer in accordance with the program guidelines.
- Applications for Recognised Days will have a preliminary assessment by the delegated Council Officer, with the final assessment completed out of session by the panel members in accordance with the program guidelines.
- Applications for the High Achievers Grant Program will be assessed by the relevant Committees of Council and Advisory Boards being the Maitland Sport & Recreation Advisory Board, Friends of the Library Committee or the Maitland Regional Art Gallery Members Committee.
- All assessed and recommended applications will be presented to Council in a report with recommendations for adoption and thereafter applicants will be notified of approved funding allocations.

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

BUSINESS GROUP:	Planning Environment & Lifestyle
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Group Manager Planning Environment & Lifestyle
COUNCIL REFERENCE:	Ordinary Council Meeting 25 June 2019
POLICY REVIEW DATE:	Three (3) years from date of adoption
FILE NUMBER:	10/5/18
RELEVANT LEGISLATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) Section 356 and 377
RELATED POLICIES / PROCEDURES / PROTOCOLS	Nil



POLICY HISTORY

VERSION	DATE APPROVED	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES
1	April 2000	New policy adopted.
2	26/02/2002	Policy review.
3	28/06/2005	Policy review and name change.
4	12/09/2006	Amendments due to DLG Circular.
5	05/05/2012	Review and change to name to include Sport & Arts High Achievers Grant.
6	23/06/2015	Policy review and name change.
7	25/6/2019	Policy review and category changes.

