



Economic Development Grant Program Guidelines

Introduction

This Economic Development Grant Program was created to support the delivery of projects that will have a positive impact on the local business environment and the local economy, and looks to encourage collaboration and partnerships between Council, business representative groups and the business community.

The Grants Program is guided by the [Economic Development Grants Policy](#), and should be read in conjunction with these Guidelines.

- It is expected that you read these guidelines before submitting your application.
- Contact the Economic Development Project Officer to check your eligibility and discuss the project prior to submitting an application.
- The word 'project' in these guidelines, refers to an initiative, project, a program or an event.

Timing

This Grant Program is open from 1 July each year and will close only when all grant funds allocated for that particular financial year are distributed.

Round opens:	1 July
Funding	The minimum grant amount is \$1000 and the maximum grant amount is \$5000
Project period:	Projects must be complete within 12 months of approval
Funding notification	Applicants will be notified within 30 days of application
Acquittal due:	Organisations will need to provide a financial acquittal within thirty (30) days of funded projects completion.

How much funding is available?

The delivery of the Economic Development Grants Program is subject to Council's annual budget

The minimum grant amount from Council is \$1,000 and maximum grant amount is \$5,000.

All applications will be assessed on a case by case basis. The grant round will close when all grant funds allocated for that particular year are expended..

It is expected that the applicant will make both a cash and in-kind contribution to the project. Contributions from your organisation could include:

- Applicant cash contributions
- Grants from other funding bodies
- Sponsorship, event/ticket income, expertise and
- In-kind support or volunteer labour valued at \$44 per hour.

Eligibility for grants

The grant program is available to organisations who are seeking a financial contribution to a project which will benefit the economy and small business community of Noosa Shire.

Who can apply?

- Not for profit incorporated business representative groups where the benefit of the project extends beyond their membership base.
- For profit businesses where the project is not run for the direct commercial profit of an individual business
- Consortia – not for profit business representative groups, for profit businesses, governments

Applicants and projects must:

- Primarily service the Noosa Shire business community
- Comply with all governance and financial requirements of the State and Commonwealth as at the closing date for the grant program
- Have an active ABN
- Have a bank account in the name of the legal entity.
- If not eligible, the applicant may apply under an eligible auspice (administrator). The auspice organisation will take legal and financial responsibility for the grant and the project being delivered. See the section on auspicings below.
- All applicants (including the auspice) must have:
 - Appropriate insurances and adhere to sound Workplace Health and Safety practices
 - No debt to Council, or have entered into scheduled payment arrangements that is being adhered to and
 - Met obligations of agreement and/or acquittal conditions for any previous Council grants

Auspicing

If the applicant is not eligible they will need to apply under the auspice of an eligible organisation. If that application is successful, the auspice organisation will take full legal and financial responsibility for the delivery of this project and the grant administration.

For example, the auspice organisation will:

- Sign the Funding Agreement
- Receive the grant payment on behalf of the applicant
- Be responsible for the acquittal report.

It is mandatory to provide an Auspice Agreement or at least a letter from the President, Chair, Secretary or Treasurer of the Auspice Organisation which indicates they understand and are willing to take on the auspice responsibilities.

Download the [Auspice Facts and Agreement format](#). It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the auspice agreement is completed, signed, and uploaded with the application.

Eligible projects for funding:

To be eligible to apply to the Economic Development Grant Program, applications must adhere to the terms and conditions set out in the Economic Development Grant Policy as well as the supporting Economic Development Grant Program Guidelines.

Additionally, applications must demonstrate value for money and projects must demonstrate a significant benefit to the Noosa business community. Council may determine priority funding areas on a year-to-year basis which will be identified in the Economic Development Grant Guidelines for that year.

Economic Development Grant Program seeks to support initiatives that:-

- Connect local businesses
- Build business capacity and skills
- Promote small business activity in precincts
- Encourage business innovation & entrepreneurship
- Contribute to the ease of doing business
- Enable partnerships and collaboration between businesses and/or organisations in the Noosa region
- Address a local workforce gap
- Assist in growing the reputation of Noosa as a preferred business location
- Contribute to the growth and development of existing and new industry to Noosa.

Projects may include, but are not restricted to, tactical activities and place activations that benefit the small business community, such as:

- Training & Skills Development Workshops
- School based programs for Workforce Development
- Mentoring
- Networking events
- Sector & ecosystem development
- Green & blue sustainable business practices
- Economic studies and business plans pertaining to the region
- Marketing & Communications Plans
- Promotion of local business
- Precinct activation

Ineligible Projects

Ineligible projects or programs include, but are not restricted to:

- Projects that do not contribute towards Council's key economic development strategies & plans
- Projects that do not have a clearly identifiable benefit to the Noosa Shire business community
- Projects, events or programs primarily run for commercial profit of an individual business
- Projects where most of the benefit will be outside the Noosa Shire
- Activities that have already commenced prior to the grant application being submitted.
- Payment of debt and loans
- Political activities and charitable fundraising
- Events that do not have a clearly identifiable benefit to the business community
- Items funded by other Council grants

Application

The Economic Development Grants Program opens for application on a nominated date and remains open until the end of the financial year in which it opened or until all funds are expended.

After reading these guidelines, organisations intending to apply must speak with a member of Council's economic development unit prior to making an application to ensure their organisation is eligible and that their project is a good fit. You can make contact by calling 5329 6500 or emailing economicdevelopment@noosa.qld.gov.au

Grant application forms are completed and submitted online. Step by step advice, sample forms and the link to the online application are found at www.noosa.smartygrants.com.au

Assessment Criteria

In assessing the grants, Council will:

- Ensure public monies are allocated in a fair and equitable way;
- Ensure best possible value for money;
- Check each application against eligibility criteria as set out in the Grant Guidelines;
- It is expected that the applicant will make both a cash and in-kind contribution to the project. Applicant cash contributions could consist of either direct cash injection, ticket sales, sponsorship, other grant funds.

Council will determine the total allocation of funds to the Economic Development Grants Program through its annual budgetary processes.

The number and types of grants approved will depend on the available program budget, corporate priorities and grant funding available.

To ensure that the Economic Development Grant continues to meet Council objectives and is responding to current economic conditions, Council will identify its funding priorities annually.

Council officers are available to provide advice to applicants and help develop grant applications. They will also assist organisations to identify additional and alternative sources of funding relevant to their project or event.

Grant applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

- The extent to which the project aligns with Noosa Council's
 - Corporate Plan 2023-2028 and
 - Economic Development (Smart Biosphere) Strategy 2021 – 2030, including enablers of economic growth and prosperity.
- The projects reach & outcomes, including the value and benefits of the project to the wider Noosa Shire business community.
- Networking and collaborative opportunities of the project.
- The quality of the application.
- The capability of the applicant organisation and capacity to deliver the project to budget and within agreed timeframes.
- The extent to which a funding need is demonstrated.
- The amount of funding available in Noosa Council's Economic Development Grant Program on date of receipt of application.

In assessing the grants, Council will:

- Ensure public monies are allocated in a fair and equitable way
- Ensure best possible value for money
- Check each application against the above-mentioned criteria

Assessment

- Council staff will assess applications against the Grant Guidelines and the assessment criteria using the following process:

Eligibility checking, application assistance and consultation	Economic Development Grants Officer
Grant Assessment	Assessment panel to include: 2 x Economic Development Staff or nominated representative 1 x Council staff (external to Economic Development)
Funding Recommendation Summary	Economic Development Grants Officer
Funding Approval	Director, or delegate

Applications may be part funded. If part funded, the applicant will need to fund the shortfall

Project Budget

It is important to provide a balanced, realistic and complete project budget with your application. Written Quotes may be requested for any budget items over \$1,000 as follows:

- Between \$1,000 and \$7,499 one (1) written quotation is required
- Over \$7,500 three (3) written quotations are required
- All amounts recorded in your budget and application are to be GST exclusive
- The budget must balance; that is total income relating to this project must equal total expenditure on this project
- Include the Supplier's name (if known) in the description of expenditure items
- In-kind support/volunteer hours are valued at no more than [\\$46.00](#) per hour. The basis of this calculation is taken from the biannual Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) average weekly earnings figures for Australia.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

- The grant amount requested must not include GST.
- The quotes provided may include GST but the actual figures recorded in the budget must have had GST deducted.
- If the applicant (or auspice organisation) is registered for GST then Council will add GST to the grant when it is paid.
- If the applicant (or auspice organisation) is not registered for GST then Council will not add GST to the grant when it is paid.
- For more information on GST refer to this [GST page](#) of Australian Taxation Office's website.

Notification

The outcome of the grant application will be notified within 30 days and applicants will be notified by email.

Successful applicants

Successful applicants will be emailed an approval letter and a Deed of Funding Agreement. The Agreement will include terms and conditions of the grant, any special conditions that have been attached to your grant and GST information.

Please complete, sign, and return the Deed of Funding Agreement prior to funding being released.

If the applicant is being auspiced, the Deed of Funding Agreement will be signed by, and payment will be made to the auspice organisation. Successful applicants are given instructions about the Deed of Funding Agreement obligations and invoicing Council for the grant payment as part of the approval letter. Refer to the Valid Invoice Check List.

Successful applicants have 12 months from the time of the notification of your success to complete the project and acquit the grant, unless otherwise negotiated.

Successful applicants will be required to:

- ensure continued compliance with these guidelines and the project plan submitted with the application
- deliver the approved project in accordance with the contents of the submitted applications approved by Council for the provision of a grant
- fully comply with the terms and conditions set out in the Deed of Funding Agreement (including special conditions) provided by Council to the successful applicants
- fully acquit the grant to Council in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement.

Council would not expect to wholly fund a project. Applicants are therefore required to contribute funding towards their own project.

Payment

Grants program funds must be claimed within 30 days of notification, except where an extension has been granted. If the applicant is being auspiced, payment will be made to the auspicing organisation.

Acknowledgement

All successful applicants are required to [acknowledge Council](#) in all published material and online communications associated with the funded project ensuring that Council's positive reputation is maintained at all times.

Council will actively promote the outcomes and accomplishments of grant funded projects and may produce communications featuring the project.

The Deed of Funding Agreement outlines that the successful application must 'acknowledge assistance from Noosa Council in press releases and promotional material, using Council's logo and the words 'Proudly supported by Noosa Council.' The Council's logos and instructions on their use are on the Noosa Council website on the funding acknowledgement page. The logos are to be used in any promotional material, media advertising and signage relating to the proposal during the funding period.

The acquittal will ask for examples of acknowledgment of Council e.g., social media, letter, or newsletter to supports or members, media releases, videos, signage, speeches, website etc.

Project Reporting and Acquittal

All grant money must be acquitted through the Smarty Grants on-line portal within thirty days (30) of the project's completion.

This will include:

- Brief overview of the project.
- Details of the project activities & outcomes
- Final project costings, including co-contributions
- Additional information such as photos, supporting reports, etc. can also be included. •
- Proof of having acknowledged Council in all published material and online communications associated with the project.

Applicants must notify Council if there are any changes to the project within the allocated funding period. Organisations will not be considered for further grant funding from Council if previous grant acquittal conditions have not been met.

Record Keeping

Some acquittals may be subject to an audit by Council. All grant recipients are required to keep accurate financial records. These records are to be made available to Council should the applicant be selected for an audit. Organisations will not be eligible to apply for future grant funding if grant acquittal conditions have not been met. A sample acquittal form can be found at www.noosa.qld.gov.au/council-grants.

Applicant Support

For further information or help completing online applications, please contact Council’s Economic Development Project Officer on (07) 5329 6500 or economicdevelopment@noosa.qld.gov.au. Office hours are 8.30 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). If you do not have your own computer, you can use those at any of Council’s libraries at no cost.

Grants Process

