



Yarra Ranges Grants
2025 Annual Grants Guide
Community Development

Create a vibrant
Yarra Ranges
together!





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1. Acknowledgement

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region.

We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.

2. Introduction

The Annual Grants program harnesses community energy and ideas to promote a more connected and healthy Yarra Ranges.

These grants help groups and organisations respond to opportunities, creative inspiration and local needs to deliver outcomes in communities.

Grant funded projects leverage local knowledge, nurture networks, and support organisations, community groups and artists to promote community wellbeing.

To be successful, applicants need to meet the eligibility requirements, demonstrate alignment with strategic priorities, meet the selection criteria and demonstrate a willingness to work collaboratively.

3. Key Dates

Grant round opens	15 May 2024 yarraranges.smartygrants.com.au
Online Grant Information Sessions (Valley, Hills, Urban & Upper Yarra)	9 May 2024 1pm - 2.30pm & 6.30pm - 8pm (Online)
Applications close	17 June 2024 (3pm)
Funding announcements	November 2024
Grant celebration/networking event	December 2024
Grant payments	30 days after funding agreement is returned
Grant projects to commence	1 January 2025

4. Grant Categories and Priorities

The Grants for Community program provides funding in the following categories:



1. Festival and Events



2. Arts and Heritage



3. Community Development



5. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants need to meet the following eligibility requirements:

Applicants need to be:

- An incorporated not-for-profit community group*/organisation with an ABN; OR
- An unincorporated not-for-profit community group/organisation (you must be auspiced by an incorporated organisation); OR
- An individual/artist, in the Arts & Heritage funding category only (must be auspiced by an incorporated organisation);
- Organisations, community groups and artists/individuals applying for a grant must demonstrate how their project will directly benefit residents of the Yarra Ranges. Applicants based outside the region can apply if the project outcomes benefit and occur in Yarra Ranges.
- Applicants must commit to obtaining all necessary permits related to the funded activity, particularly for festivals.
- Applicants must have successfully completed all reporting requirements for previous Yarra Ranges Council grants and have no outstanding debts with Council. If unsure, please contact the Grants Team.
- Applicants must provide evidence of at least \$10 Million Public Liability insurance.
- **Child Safe Standards** compliance is required if projects involve direct or incidental contact with children.
- Applicants agree to acknowledge funding from Yarra Ranges Council in promotion, consistent with Council's branding guidelines.
- Applicants must consent to providing evidence of how funds were spent and outline project benefits through an acquittal process.
- Purchase of food associated with community relief projects is capped at \$500.
- The grant activity must take place during 2025.
- Applicants must submit all supporting material when applying. Late submission of supporting documents will not be accepted.
- **Applicants must talk through their project ideas with a Council Officer before applying. Please see contact details at the end of this document.**

2024 Successful Grant Recipients

Applicants are encouraged to view last year's successful grants to see the range of projects funded.

A list of funded 2024 projects is available [here](#)

* Please refer to the definition of a community group as it relates to our Grants Program in the Jargon Buster section of these guidelines.

Funding will not be granted for:

- A program, service or activity that is primarily considered the responsibility of State or Federal Government; for example, the core business of schools, hospitals or other services.
- Activities that take place outside the Yarra Ranges (including touring costs).
- A new building, capital works or facility maintenance works.
- Ongoing staff salaries or administration costs not specific to the project.
- Purchase of equipment only. Funding for equipment will be considered for a small component of the project (up to 30% of the requested grant amount).
- Activities that take place at inappropriate venues; for example, gambling venues.
- Activities that are sponsored by gambling businesses.
- Political organisations will not be funded.
- Applications with the singular purpose of promoting religion.
- Training, study or academic research in Australia or overseas.
- Applications that are solely for attending forums, workshops, conferences or for organising conferences.
- Overnight camps/activities for children and young people
- Competitions, prizes, award exhibitions or exclusively fundraising events.

Programs cannot be funded retrospectively (i.e. they cannot have already occurred).

Major Council Partners are not eligible to apply and have been notified. This **does not** refer to 2023-27 Partnership Program recipients.



6. Community Development



6.1 Overview

Yarra Ranges Council's Annual Grants help community organisations to deliver projects that build more inclusive, healthy and connected communities. These grants are for not for profit organisations to help harness community strengths, opportunities and aspirations, and respond to local needs with confidence and creativity.

What is Community Development?

Community development recognises the many strengths in communities, tapping into the wisdom and experience of communities to build resilience. It draws on the principles of justice, equity, inclusion and respect. Importantly, in the context of Council grants, community development is also about connecting with others and building a sense of belonging through funded projects.

This includes initiatives that focus on the participation of diverse groups within our communities, including: people living with disability, unpaid carers and families, people across ages groups/life stages, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+, women and girls, and those experiencing social isolation.

For community development enquiries please contact our

[Urban Community Development Officer](#)

[Hills Community Development Officer](#)

[Valley Community Development Officer](#)

[Upper Yarra Community Development Officer](#)

For enquiries about disability access and inclusion please contact our [Disability Inclusion Officer](#) or call 1300 368 333

The following areas reflect key priorities in our communities. Some projects may support the ongoing recovery from the pandemic and storms/natural disasters. Your application should tell us how your project will address one or more of the following priorities .

Health and Wellbeing

Council invites applications that address the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Plan.

One of the most powerful ways to support good health and wellbeing is through building social connections and a sense of belonging. Almost all grant projects aim to do this in some way.

Council encourages applications that are locally focused, creative and respond to

health and wellbeing issues. We invite strength-based projects that tap into local skills, knowledge, and energy to meet needs and take up opportunities to build more connected and vibrant communities.

For example: Yarra Ranges residents can increase social connection through participation in group activities. This can be particularly important for people who may be more vulnerable or isolated.

This category looks to foster connected and healthy communities through projects that:

- Build and enable mental wellbeing by supporting strong and sustainable social connections.
- Promote and support physical health.
- Nurture thriving local communities.
- Build our food system, increasing access to healthy food and skills to grow and cook food.
- Build respect and inclusion.
- Increase participation of people living with disability.
- Welcome people from all backgrounds.
- Build disaster resilience by strengthening social connection and networks, and increasing knowledge, skills, and planning for emergencies.
- Include people from diverse cultural backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and LGBTQIA+ community members.

Applicants can find out more by exploring Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy [here](#).

Applicants applying for projects that focus on Health and Wellbeing must first speak with the Health and Wellbeing team.

*Please contact Rachel Giddens
r.giddens@yarraranges.vic.gov.au
or ph 03 9294 6882*

Environment

This category supports environmental sustainability.

Priority will be given to applications that address one or more of the following:

- Nature Conservation: projects that restore, protect and enhance local biodiversity.
- Environmental Stewardship: initiatives that raise community awareness about environmental issues, fostering conservation and sustainability understanding.

- Climate Resilience: projects that improve community resilience and adaptation to climate change and extreme weather.
- Water Resource Management: initiatives that conserve water, improve water quality, and/or protect freshwater ecosystems.
- Innovative Sustainability: projects that use innovative tech and practices for sustainability, such as waste reduction, energy efficiency and sustainable transport, with clear impact measurement outcomes.

Applications can find out more by exploring Council's Environmental Strategy [here](#).

Reconciliation

Projects in this category will strengthen the relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Priority will be given to applications that address one or more of the following:

- Celebrate and protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.
- Break down stereotypes and discrimination.
- Increase understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing.
- Enhance community driven initiatives that contribute to community wellbeing, economic participation, and cultural strengthening.

Applicants applying for projects that focus on Reconciliation must talk with a member of [Council's Indigenous Development team](#) before submitting an application.

Young People

If you are a not-for-profit organisation, you can apply. Your program must support Yarra Ranges young people aged 12 to 25 years.

The need for your program must be identified by young people. This can be done by a co-design process, data, research, or consultations with young people.

Programs that engage young people in the diverse locations of Yarra Ranges will be prioritised. These include Warburton, Healesville, and the small townships across the region.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Promote opportunities for young people to engage in their community, build social connections, and give young people a voice in decision-making.
- Target culturally diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, all ability and LGBTQIA+ community members.
- Strengthen respectful relationships and focus on building resilience and promoting gender equality.
- Increase soft skills and pathways to employment for young people.

Applicants must talk with the Youth Development Coordinator Dudu Orman on 03 9294 6134 or d.orman@yarraranges.vic.gov.au prior to applying.

Note: Council will not fund camps and overnight camps/activities for children and young people.

Early Years, Middle Years and Families

This category is for innovative projects that enhance the wellbeing and resilience of children and young people 0-14 years, and their families living in the Yarra Ranges.

Priority will be given to applications that address one or more of the following:

- Children, young people and their families have access to initiatives that are culturally safe and support connection.

- Design and deliver initiatives with a focus on improving wellbeing outcomes and promoting access to supports for children, young people and their families.
- Design and provide opportunities for children, young people and families to actively engage in their community and be involved in decision making.

Applicants must talk with the Early or Middle Years officer Loren Hedger l.hedger@yarraranges.vic.gov.au prior to applying.

Note: Child Safe Standards compliance is essential. **Council does not fund overnight camps /activities for children and young people.**

For more information about Child Safe Standards see [here](#).

For more information about Council Grants Child Safe requirements see attachments [here](#).

Healthy and Active Ageing

The Healthy Ageing category aims to promote innovative activities and initiatives that support individuals aged 50 years and over living in Yarra Ranges.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Provide opportunities for people aged 50 years and over to actively engage in their communities of choice.
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally diverse, LGBTQIA+, people living with dementia and all abilities.
- Address issues of ageism
- Improve outcomes for individuals experiencing social isolation and loneliness.

Applicants must talk with the Healthy and Active Ageing Officer Caroline Perry c.perry@yarraranges.vic.gov.au prior to applying.

6.2 Selection Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the desired outcomes and priorities for the Community Development Stream and following criteria:

Project Outcomes

30%

- How the project responds to community need/s
- Alignment with one or more Council key strategies or priorities
- Backed by evidence (data, letters of support) where appropriate
- Identifies short or medium term impacts of the initiative

Partnership and collaboration

25%

- Demonstrates strategic partnerships between existing and new groups, or across sectors
- Includes evidence of community engagement in project design and delivery
- Harnesses volunteer effort and builds community capacity to respond to local issues, needs and opportunities

Organisational capacity

15%

- Demonstrates capacity to effectively deliver the program or service, including evidence of strong governance (transparent, documented policies) and a well-defined project plan
- Clear measures of success are outlined

Budget

15%

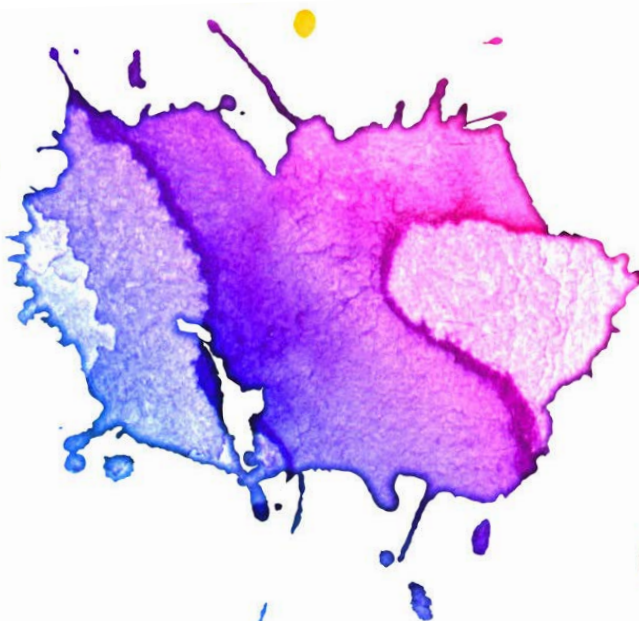
- Includes a clear and well documented budget
- Project is achievable within the proposed budget
- Project has funding and/or in-kind support from other sources, including a contribution from the applicant¹

Inclusion

15%

- Demonstrates consideration for inclusion including culturally and linguistically diverse groups, gender diversity, LGBTIQ+, people living with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

¹ Please indicate in your budget if you have applied for other funding and mark whether the funding is confirmed.



7. Application Process

7.1 How to apply

Applications for Grants for Community can be made by completing an online application form at yarraranges.smartygrants.com.au

The form will be made available once the grant round is open.

Please ensure that applications and all supporting material are submitted by 3.00pm on 17 June 2024. Submissions will not be accepted after this time.

If you have difficulty using the online application form, please contact the Grants Team for assistance on 1300 368 333.

If you are having difficulty accessing SmartyGrants or require support please contact SmartyGrants directly on (03) 9320 6888 or service@smartygrants.com.au.

7.2 Budget

The Annual Grants program is a significant investment by Council and there are reporting requirements to account for this use of public funds.

Applicants are required to provide a budget aligned with outcomes for the project. Budgets need to balance and demonstrate planning, be realistic and justified for the proposed application. A quote is required for each expense item that exceeds \$750.00 (only for expense items requested as part of this grant).

If your organisation is registered for GST with the Australian Tax office, Council will add 10% GST to the grant which must then be paid to the Tax Office as per usual GST processing. If you have a project auspice, they will process the GST on your behalf.

7.3 Supporting Documentation for Applications

All applicants must upload the following supporting documents as part of their submission through SmartyGrants:

- Most recent Annual Report, including annual financial statement. If an application is being auspiced, these will need to be provided by the auspicing organisation.
- A copy of the certificate of cover of the applicant's public liability insurance. (\$10million Public Liability). If an application is being auspiced, this may be provided by the auspicer.
- Evidence of partnerships, such as a letter of support (on letterhead) from individuals/organisations detailing their contributions and why they support, the project.
- You may also wish to include any evidence (reports or other documents) that demonstrate the need and support for the project.
- If an application is auspiced, an auspicing agreement signed by both parties, must be uploaded with the application.

7.4 Yarra Ranges Council Venues & Open Spaces

Yarra Ranges Council has a variety of venues & open spaces available for community use.

PLEASE NOTE: If your project or event requires the use of a Yarra Ranges Council venue or open space you will need a quote to include with your application within the budget. Please note in kind support is only available on some venues. If available this will be confirmed when you place your booking.

Quotes may take up to two weeks so please prepare early.

Availability and enquiries for Councils Cultural Venues, Community Halls can be made [here](#)

A full list of Open Spaces can be found on councils website [here](#)

All Phone enquires: 9294 6681

7.5 Unincorporated Applicants & Auspice Organisations

Applicants that are not incorporated must have their application 'auspiced' by an eligible incorporated organisation.

The auspice organisation is legally responsible for the funds and enters into a Funding Agreement with Council.

Information on the auspicing body will need to be provided in the application, including their ABN, financial report, and contact details.

It is important that the auspicer and the applicant enter into an agreement to ensure clarity around roles and expectations of each party. Applicants can allocate a small auspicing fee as part of budget in the application.

Please note that unincorporated applicants must still demonstrate that they have experience delivering similar projects.

Further information on auspicing arrangements can be found at: www.nfplaw.org.au/auspicing

7.6 Assessment and Approval

All applications undergo a pre-assessment eligibility check conducted by a Council Officer.

All eligible applications are assessed by an independent panel of community members and Council officers with subject matter expertise.

Please note: it is not appropriate to ask Councillors to provide letters of support or lobby them about a grant application.

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will receive formal notification.

Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to seek feedback from Council Officers.

7.7 Funding Agreement and Payment Arrangements

Funding agreements will be finalised and distributed within six weeks of Council approval. It is essential that all grant recipients and auspicing bodies enter into a funding agreement before the project commences and funds are released. Grant payments will be made within 30 days of the completed funding agreement being returned to Council.

8. Guiding Values

8.1 Good Governance

Yarra Ranges Council is dedicated to ensuring the Annual Grants Program is run in a fair and transparent manner. We commit to managing an effective grants program that responds to community opportunities, ideas and needs and is a sound use of public funds. This commitment is expressed through openness to constructive feedback and a desire for continuous improvement.

Successful grant recipients must have robust governance structures in place.

8.2 Child Safety Standards

The introduction of Child Safe Standards by the Victorian Government stipulates that all organisations that provide services for children or receive government funding are now covered by mandatory reporting requirements. Grant recipients that have direct and incidental contact with children during the course of their project, will be required to provide additional documentation if their application is successful.

8.3 Gender Equity

Yarra Ranges Council is committed to gender equity and works alongside our grant recipients towards achieving this.

Women, men and gender diverse community members can face different expectations and challenges based on social conditioning and subtle biases. Consequently, designing or delivering a project treating all people as the same may not necessarily result in equal inclusion and impact.

It is important that grant applicants apply a 'gender lens' when drafting their application. This involves considering the different needs and circumstances of people of all genders within the target group.

Further information on running gender-wise projects can be found at: fundingcentre.com.au/help/gender-lens. Alternatively, applicants are invited to contact Council's Gender Equity Officer on 1300 368 333 for ideas on integrating gender-aware practices into your organisation's work.

8.4 Environmental Impact and Sustainability

Yarra Ranges is renowned for its natural beauty and Council is committed to maintaining the health and significance of the region's environment.

All applications are encouraged to consider activities that improve sustainability and minimise unnecessary environmental impacts. For more information or support on this please contact Council's Sustainability Officer on 1300 368 333.

8.5 Diverse and Inclusive

Diversity is a strength within Yarra Ranges and something grant projects can promote. Grant submissions from groups and individuals of all backgrounds, cultures, age groups, genders and sexual orientation are strongly encouraged.

Including people with diverse needs

Council is committed to increasing access and participation by people with disability and their carers. Grant projects can lead the way in this.

Consideration of how projects will reach out and include people with a disability is encouraged e.g. promotion, physical access, including performers with disability and on your organising committee.

For practical ideas and considerations please contact Council's Disability Inclusion Officer or Indigenous Development Officer on 1300 368 333.



9. Acknowledgement of Council

Acknowledgement of support provided by Council should be made in accordance with the Yarra Ranges Council Acknowledgement Guidelines. Successful grant recipients will be provided with further information as part of the Funding Agreement package.

10. Acquittal

All Annual Grants recipients are required to report on the success, outcomes, lessons learnt, and financials through a final report. Any interesting stories or photographs are also welcomed!

A template will be provided by Council through SmartyGrants to support grant recipients with this process.

Successful recipients will be required to substantiate financial information. Please note you will only be required to provide receipts for expense items above \$750 as part of the acquittal process.

Please note that random audits may occur.



11. Key Documents and Contacts

Council has goals for improving the social connection and community wellbeing across Yarra Ranges. Grants are an important tool in realising these goals. It is important to consider how your proposed projects contributes to the overall achievement of these goals.

The table below details key strategy documents and the relevant Council Officer you can speak to about these community focused Council priorities. Council Officers can be contacted on 1300 368 333.

Council Strategy or Plan	Relevant Council Officer
Creative Communities Strategy 2019	Arts & Culture - Emma Buckley Festivals and Events - Treise Armstrong Public Art - Yolande Pickett Exhibitions - Bronwyn Ward Heritage - Sarah Sato
Community Development Officer contact details	Community Development (Hills) - Janette Scott Community Development (Urban) - Santha Press Community Development (Upper Yarra) - Michael Goodrich Community Development (Valley) - Kellie McPherson
Health and Wellbeing Strategy Plan	Community Mental Wellbeing - Rachael Giddens
Reconciliation Framework for Action 2013-2023	Indigenous Development - Garry Detez Arts focused Indigenous projects - Sam Piper
Environment Strategy 2015-2025	Sustainability - Kym Saunders
Child and Youth Strategy Youth Strategic Action Plan	Youth Development - Dudu Orman
Middle Years Strategic Action Plan	Early and Middle Years - Loren Hedger
Healthy and Active Ageing Plan	Healthy & Active Ageing - Caroline Perry
Equity Access & Inclusion Strategy	Disability Inclusion Officer - Amanda May

Need further assistance?

For further information on the Annual Grants Program please contact a member of the Grants Team on 1300 368 333.

Privacy Statement

Yarra Ranges Council (Council) is committed to protecting your privacy. In compliance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) Council will use the Personal Information (name, address, phone number, email) collected from you is for the primary purpose of processing your grant application and related purposes such as providing information about other funding opportunities and events that may support you or your organisation. Information is held securely and used solely by Council for this specific purpose and/or a limited directly related purpose, and will not be otherwise disclosed without your consent or as required or permitted by law. Your personal information is only accessed by authorised persons and may be stored in Yarra Ranges Council records management database, used for statistical research, information provision, promotion or evaluation of Council's grant programs. If your application is incomplete, Council will not be able to process your grant application.

By submitting an application you consent to Yarra Ranges Council publishing the Group/ Individual name, project description and amount funded on Council's public website.

You may access your information by contacting the Grants Team on 1300 368 333 or grants@yarraranges.vic.gov.au. For more information, see Council's [Privacy Policy](#).



12. Jargon Buster

The following section breaks down some key terms when talking grants and grant requirements.

Acquittal – a written report submitted following the completion of a project. The acquittal should detail what was achieved by the project, lessons learnt and how the grant funding was spent. Council will provide grant recipients with an acquittal form.

Advocacy – is the act of promoting, supporting or arguing in favour of an idea, need, cause or policy.

Auspice – an organisation that receives and manages grant money on behalf of an unincorporated grant applicant. To be eligible and auspicing body must be incorporated and have a current ABN.

Community group – a group of people working collectively in a voluntary capacity to deliver accessible community activities for the benefit of the broader community.

To apply for Yarra Ranges Council funding, a community group must be able to provide evidence, on request, that they have:

- multiple people involved in planning activities (including the provision of contact details, details of relevant skills/experience to deliver the initiative)
- delivered at least one community initiative (exceptions may be considered in the case of an urgent need or newly established group)
- been in existence for at least 3 months (exceptions may be considered in the case of an urgent need or newly established group)

Capacity – refers simply to the skills or abilities of an individual or organisation to plan, deliver and achieve project outcomes.

Capacity building – is more than just training. It refers to the process by which communities, organisations or individuals strengthen competencies and abilities to identify and achieve their development objectives. It is an ongoing and dynamic process.

Evidence based – Provides the proof that a project or approach is best placed to respond to a community need. This may include research, community consultation or data.

Incorporation - is a voluntary process where a not-for-profit or community group can apply to become its own 'legal body'. This means that the group can enter into a contract, sign a lease or employ people. For further information please contact the Consumer Affairs Helpline on 1300 55 8181 or visit the Not-For-Profit Law Information Hub's [website](#).

In-kind support – is in place of monetary support. It could take the form of goods from businesses through to services and time from volunteers. Examples of in-kind support provided by Council include free training, networking and promotion opportunities.

Outcomes – are the changes, benefits or other effects that occur as a result of the project. Examples could include increased skills as a result of involvement in a project, increased confidence in nutritional meal preparation or increased event management skills.

Project – is a set of organised activities or steps that are planned to achieve a particular aim or outcome. It will have a start and end date.

Reconciliation – is about building positive relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider Australian community.

Social enterprise – is a commercially viable business with the clear and stated purpose of generating positive social or environmental impact. They exist primarily to benefit the community, rather than shareholders or owners.

Social disadvantage – People have limited/no access to the services, resources, opportunities and capabilities they need to learn, work, engage and have a voice.

SmartyGrants – is an online grants management platform. All Council grant submissions must be made through this system. The system is easy to use and supports the goals of an effective and efficient, transparent granting process.

Variation – is any change to the project compared to the original grant application, Council understands that sometimes variations are required; however these changes must be discussed with the Community Partnerships Officers before the completion of the funding period.





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