

2023-2027 Partnership Program Recommendations

Focus Area	Recommendation	Council Action	Source S – Partner Survey PRG – Program Ref Group R – Internal Review
Partnerships	Maintain current partnership program frameworks, including a 4 year funding cycle for funding certainty.	✓	S, PRG
	Develop centralised contact list for Council Staff/Departments	Develop YRC contact list to share with Partners	S, PRG
	Host quarterly partner meeting for relationship building, sharing, collaborating	Establish Partner network	S, PRG
	Resource dedicated centralised support coordinator role to facilitate collaboration, sharing of resources and information for all Partners	Whilst acknowledging benefit, limited due to resourcing available	PRG
Outcomes	Continue with four-year funding cycle	✓	S, PRG
	Continue to allow programs to be funded across multiple funding cycles when the need and potential outcomes are able to be demonstrated	✓	PRG
	Utilise program reporting data to celebrate partner/program achievements	Develop annual comms plan and spotlight partner achievements in collaboration with YRC comms team	S, PRG, R
	Facilitate end of year celebration/recognition event (staff/volunteers), showcase projects, network	Investigate incorporating annual event into partner network schedule.	S, PRG
	Develop a suite of storytelling products to promote Partner/Program outcomes	Develop case studies, annual report (to partners & Councillors)	PRG
	Investigate opportunities for mentoring and resource sharing between partners	To be determined	PRG
	Refine monitoring (6 month check ins) and annual reporting of program impact within the scope of the current program framework	Review and refine SmartyGrants reporting templates	S, PRG, R

	Develop consistent methodology for measuring /demonstrating outcomes	Develop standardised plan/report template resource	S, PRG, R
	Capacity Building	Align capacity building opportunities for Partners within the annual skill building program/network	S, PRG
Flexibility	Retain current program flexibility (developed during COVID-19 pandemic)	✓	S, PRG
	Conduct cross Council benchmarking	✓	PRG, R

The Assessment Panel Process

Community members are invited to sit on one of two panels: Creative Communities; and Connected and Healthy Communities. A Council Officer, independent to the grants process, is included on each panel to provide subject matter expertise and objective input. Council's role as the final decision maker concludes the governance process for the program.

Panel members are:

Selected based on their skill set, community knowledge and grant experience.

Supported in their role through an information session, provision of assessment resources including selection criteria, a scoring matrix, subject matter expert Officer insights and access to dedicated Officer support; and

Required to sign a Terms of Reference and Conflict of Interest Form (and are not involved in assessing or discussing applications where a perceived or actual conflict exists)

The assessment process concludes with a meeting where members discuss each project collectively, reach consensus and finalise the list of project funding recommendations for Council endorsement.

The assessment process is intensive and time consuming. As such, an honorarium and small gift of appreciation is offered to external, volunteer panellists in recognition of their contribution.

Panel members will be confirmed prior to the grant round closing. On occasion, panel members need to withdraw from the process and replacement members found. Yarra Ranges is fortunate in having a strong pool of potential members to draw on when this occurs.

Proposed Connected & Healthy Communities Assessment Panel

External Panel Member	Skills and Experience
Michael van Vliet	Community Grants Team Leader Social Strategy and Community Development City of Yarra 2018-2022 Partnership Program panel member
Chelsea Cooper	President, Montrose Township Group Chair, Montrose Community Emergency Management working group Board secretary, Japara Neighbourhood House Community engagement and strategic planning
Amin Sayed	Measurement and evaluation Manager, STREAT Experience in health, education, community and international development sectors Community Recovery, Maroondah City Council Yarra Ranges Council, relief and recovery grants

Internal Panel Member	Skills & Experience
Santha Press	Executive Officer, Partnerships & Community Building Extensive community development experience

Proposed Creative Communities Panel

External Panel Member	Skills & Experience
Liz Zito	Director of Partnerships, Regional Arts Victoria
Cliff Overton	Strategic Service Planner, Baw Baw Shire Council Former Business Improvement Consultant, Strategy and Transformation Team, Project Manager, Recreation & Active Living Team Yarra Ranges Council
TBC	
Internal Panel Member	
Jenny Davies	Executive Officer, Creative Communities