

Mount Alexander Shire Council

Events Grants Program Guidelines 2026



Acknowledgement of Country

Mount Alexander Shire Council acknowledges the Djaara people as the Traditional Owners of the land and pays respect to Elders past and present.

About These Guidelines

These guidelines explain:

- The purpose of the Events Grants Program
- Who can apply
- What can be funded
- How applications are assessed
- What is required after funding is awarded

Applicants are encouraged to read this document carefully before applying.

Program Purpose

The Events Grants Program supports public events that deliver measurable benefits to the Mount Alexander Shire community.

The program prioritises:

- Community connection, participation and social cohesion
- Activation of townships and strengthening local identity
- A diverse and locally connected arts and cultural environment

Events may also contribute to:

- Local economic activity and support for businesses
- Visitor attraction and tourism outcomes
- Environmental sustainability

Note: Tourism and economic outcomes are considered where relevant, but must demonstrate clear benefit to the local community.

Key Information

- Applications are competitive and funding is not guaranteed
- Events must be public and held within Mount Alexander Shire
- Only one application may be submitted per individual event
- Applicants may apply for multiple separate events each year
- Multiple applications may be considered during final funding allocation
- Funding decisions consider equity across applicants and townships
- Quick Response Grants are available for eligible time-sensitive events

Key Dates

Round 1

Events January – June

Applications open in August

Round 2

Events July – December

Applications open in March

Quick Response Grants

Open year-round until funds are exhausted.

Funding Streams

Tier 1 – Local Community Events

Up to \$1,000

Small-scale events that support:

- Community participation and connection
- Volunteer involvement
- Local identity

Tier 2 – Community and Regional Events

Up to \$3,000

Events with:

- Strong community participation
- Local business engagement
- Broader township or regional reach

Tier 3 – Strategic Events

Up to \$5,000

Events that deliver:

- Strong community and cultural outcomes
- Measurable local economic and visitor benefits
- Contribution to the identity and profile of the shire

Quick Response Grants

Up to \$500

For small or time-sensitive events with simplified application and reporting.

Multi-year Funding

Up to **two Tier 3 events per year** may receive funding for up to three years.

These agreements:

- Are open and competitive
- Include clearly defined outcomes and performance measures
- Require annual reporting and review

Recipients must demonstrate:

- Ongoing community value
- Strong governance and delivery
- Progress toward long-term sustainability

Who Can Apply?

- Not-for-profit organisations
- Community groups (auspiced if required)
- Schools
- Local businesses

- Commercial event organisers
- External organisations delivering events within the shire

Commercial and External Applicants

Eligible where they demonstrate:

- Clear community benefit
- Strong local partnerships
- Measurable local economic contribution

Priority may be given to community-led and not-for-profit applicants where funding is limited.

Who Cannot Apply?

- Applicants with outstanding acquittals
- Events outside the shire
- Private or closed events
- Activities that are the responsibility of other levels of government
- Applicants who already receive funding from Mount Alexander Shire Council for the same event, or where an existing agreement prevents additional council funding
- Applicants who have failed the previous year to meet compliance requirements for a funded event within established timelines (for instance, failure to submit traffic management plans or road closure permit applications within required timeframes)

What Can Be Funded

- Event production and delivery
- Safety and risk management
- Accessibility improvements
- Waste and sustainability initiatives
- Marketing and promotion
- Venue and equipment hire
- Equipment purchases
- Local supplier engagement

What Cannot Be Funded

- Ongoing operational costs (eg, rent, utilities, insurance, wages, etc.)
- Capital works or land purchase
- Private events
- Prizes, gifts or competitions
- Catering
- Activities better suited to other Council grant programs
- Applications that are late or incomplete (if you have submitted in error, contact us at events@mountalexander.vic.gov.au before the closing date)
- Events or activities that are religious or political in nature, or that support, promote, or condone discrimination based on race, disability, age, gender, or sexuality

Before You Apply

Ensure you have:

- ABN, Statement by Supplier or auspice agreement
- Event budget
- Quotes for funded items where applicable
- Completed previous acquittals
- Evidence of partnerships or support if referenced in the application

Supporting Documentation

Documentation requirements should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the event.

Smaller community events may only require:

- Basic event information and budget
- Quotes for funded items
- Simple schedules or promotional material

Larger or higher-risk events may also require:

- Event plans and risk assessments
- Site, traffic or emergency management plans
- Marketing, accessibility or sustainability plans
- Economic or visitation data
- Letters of support, sponsorship or partnership documentation

Assessment Process

Applications are assessed through the following process in the order set out below:

1. Eligibility check
2. Officer assessment against the criteria and weighting
3. Panel review
4. Recommendations finalised
5. Applications weighed against council funding priorities
6. Applicants notified

Stage 1 - Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible, applications must:

- Be for a public event held within Mount Alexander Shire
- Be submitted before the closing date
- Include all required supporting documentation
- Demonstrate appropriate planning relative to the scale of the event
- Meet relevant insurance, safety and compliance requirements
- Have satisfactorily completed any previous Council grant acquittals

Applications that do not meet eligibility requirements may not proceed to assessment.

Stage 2 - Assessment Criteria and Weighting

Eligible applications will then be assessed against the following criteria.

Community and Strategic Outcomes – 80%

Criteria	Weighting	What we look for
Community Connection, Participation and Township Activation	20%	Community participation, attendance, volunteer involvement, contribution to township identity
Arts, Culture and Creative Sector Support	15%	Support for local creatives, cultural participation, contribution to creative economy
Inclusion, Equity, Accessibility, and First-Nations engagement	15%	Inclusive design, diverse participation, equitable access across the shire
Climate and sustainability outcomes	7.5%	Commitment to delivering events which support a healthy climate and encourage a local circular economy
Local Economic and Visitor Outcomes	7.5%	Benefit to local businesses, visitor activity, contribution to local economy
Local Partnerships	5%	Partnerships with local organisations and businesses

Organisational Capability – 20%

Assessment includes consideration of:

- Event planning and governance
- Financial viability and realistic budget
- Risk management
- Delivery capacity
- Diversity of income sources

Stage 3 - Additional Considerations

Where applications are assessed as being of equal merit, Council may consider:

- i. Community and not-for-profit organisations over commercial or for-profit applicants
- ii. Township equity, including prioritising townships that have not recently received event grant funding

Important Assessment Note

Applicants are not expected to meet every criterion equally. Assessment will be proportionate to the scale, complexity and nature of the event.

Additional Criteria for Tier 3 Strategic Events

Economic and Visitor Impact

- Visitor numbers and origin
- Local economic contribution
- Overnight stays

Community and Cultural Significance

- Contribution to the identity of the shire
- Cultural value
- Level of community participation

Governance and Delivery

- Experience and capability of organisers
- Ability to deliver at scale

Financial Strength

- Multiple income streams
- Reduced reliance on Council funding over time

Sustainability and Ongoing Value

- Long-term viability
- Ongoing community benefit
- Capacity to continue delivering outcomes

Funding Priorities

When demand exceeds available funding, Council may prioritise:

- Strong community participation, volunteer involvement and demonstrated local benefit outcomes
- Local applicants, locally delivered events and partnerships with community organisations, businesses or creatives
- Geographic distribution of funded events across the shire over time, including township equity considerations
- A balanced mix of small community-led events and larger strategic events that contribute to the broader event ecosystem

- Well-planned, financially viable and realistically deliverable events with appropriate governance and risk management measures
- Respectful engagement with First Nations communities where appropriate, including consultation, partnerships, cultural programming or opportunities for Djaara and other First Nations participation

Funding Agreements and Payment

Successful applicants will receive a funding agreement outlining the approved funding amount, conditions of funding, reporting requirements and any special conditions relevant to the event.

Funding agreements must be signed and returned before payment can be processed.

Applicants may also be required to provide:

- A valid tax invoice
- Updated event documentation where relevant
- Evidence of required permits, approvals or insurance prior to the event taking place

Council reserves the right to withhold or withdraw funding where:

- Event delivery significantly differs from the approved application
- Required compliance documentation is not provided within established timelines
- The event is cancelled or substantially changed without Council approval

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing and may request feedback on their application.

Reporting and Acquittal

Tier 2 and Tier 3

Must include:

- Attendance and participation data
- Economic outcomes (where relevant)
- Community outcomes
- Accessibility and sustainability outcomes

Tier 1 and Quick Response

Simplified reporting focusing on:

- Participation
- Community benefit
- Basic expenditure

How to apply

Apply online via www.mountalexander.smartygrants.com.au

Contact

Mount Alexander Shire Council

Phone: (03) 5471 1700

Email: events@mountalexander.vic.gov.au