Community Grants Program 2021

Information and Guidelines

Photo: 2020 Community Grants Recipients & NRCF Team

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NRCF COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM 2021
INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

1. Who is NRCF?

Northern Rivers Community Foundation (NRCF) - ***We help you help others***
NRCF was established in 2004 to connect people who care, with local causes that matter, to enhance community well-being for the Northern Rivers region of NSW. NRCF strives to create a compassionate, generous and equitable community. We are dedicated to improving the lives of those less fortunate in our community by supporting social, environmental and cultural community organisations and groups across the 7 LGAs of the Northern Rivers.

2. Purpose of Grants Program

The Community Grants Program supports not for profit community groups or organisations in the 7 LGAs of the Northern Rivers that strengthen and enhance our regional communities. NRCF prefers to distribute small grants that reach across the region and impact many community services.

In 2021, NRCF will focus its community grant funding on the four priority areas of Disadvantage, Environment, Recovery & Resilience, and Housing & Homelessness. This allows NRCF to address these specific challenges, as well as focus community attention on the issues so we can collectively support opportunities for positive and impactful change.

The Recovery & Resilience grants stream specifically supports community groups or organisations that have been impacted by a recent disaster, such as a flood, bushfire, or the global pandemic of COVID-19. Natural disaster areas are defined by the Federal Department of Home Affairs 'Disaster Assist' Program: https://www.disasterassist.gov.au/find-a-disaster/australian-disasters. This grants stream is focused on funding solution-based responses to the current challenges faced, as well as encouraging community organisations to become more resilient and regenerative in their approach to natural disasters and crises.

3. Grant Program Goals

The Community Grants Program is a small grants program offering grants from $2,000 - $10,000 with an average grant recommendation of $4,000-$5000. We aim to deliver a grant program that:

o Connects the community and facilitates people and organisations to work together

o Provides a platform that fairly & equitably addresses grant applications

o   Is accessible to the whole Northern Rivers region

Specific goals for small grants:

o   To reach across the region and impact many community services

o   Small grants big difference: supporting grass roots organisations

o   Flexible funding

o   Small grants are accompanied by other non-financial support such as administration and marketing, capacity building and connections

o   Allow for innovation

o   NRCF as an early funder can bring credibility, capacity building, leverage and visibility

4. What sort of projects will be funded?

In 2021, in response to critical issues impacting the Northern Rivers community, the Community Grants Program will offer streams of funding that focus on four priority areas:

1) Projects that address the social, economic, cultural and/or educational disadvantage in our region.

2) Supporting the conservation of our natural environment, by conserving and restoring natural ecosystems, protecting threatened species, building community skills and education, and/or dealing with local pollution.

3) Recovery & Resilience: supporting smaller community organisations in their recovery from COVID-19 and/or recent natural disasters, specifically those organisations who have 'fallen through the gaps' in state & federal funding, such as volunteer driven organisations. Priority will be given to organisations who require funding to adapt their current project/service offering as a direct result of Covid or natural disasters.

4) Housing & Homelessness: projects that focus on the prevention of homelessness and/or provide accommodation and support services for those most vulnerable.

5. Community Impact Areas

This grants program does not restrict grant funding to specific impact areas. Grantseeker groups or organisations can work in a number of impact areas, such as:

Aged Services	Homeless Support
Health & Wellbeing	Conservation & Environment
Education & Training	Disability
Family	Indigenous community support
Arts & Culture	Multicultural Integration
Youth Programs	Animal Welfare & Wildlife Conservation

6. Eligibility

a)	Organisation Type	Recipients of grants can be: • Any not-for-profit group or organisation with a charitable purpose. You do not require DGR 1 status however you must prove your charitable purpose, ideally by being registered with the ACNC or through your organisation's articles of association. • A non-DGR not for profit group or organisation provided you partner with an eligible DGR organisation through an auspice arrangement.
b)	Gross Revenue Limit	NRCF distributes grants to small organisations with an annual gross revenue that is less than $5 million. *Rationale: NRCF acknowledges the valuable contribution that not-for-profit and community organisations of all sizes make to the Northern Rivers community. Through the NRCF Community Grants Program we seek to support and will prioritise smaller community organisations that often have a considerable reliance on grants and fundraising in order to continue their activities.* NRCF may consider funding organisations with annual gross revenue in excess of $5 million. If grant seekers are in this category and have an exceptional project worth considering, they will be able to contact our office before submitting an application.
c)	Location of organisation and/or its activities	NRCF prioritises local Northern Rivers community based organisations. However, NRCF will also consider funding from national community organisations, provided they have an independent Northern Rivers branch with annual gross revenue less than $5 million.
d)	Social enterprises	Social enterprises are supported where their activities are relevant to NRCF's priority funding areas, and as long as they are a not for profit group or organisation.
e)	Project dates	The grants are available to cover activities that operate for 12 months, from December 1, 2021 to November 30, 2022.
f)	Current NRCF grant recipients	An applicant who has a project currently funded by NRCF from a previous year's grants round, will be asked to acquit that project before applying for this grants round. If your project is

	not yet completed, you will be asked to submit an interim report. Please contact the office at grants@nrcf.org.au.

7. What this grant program does and does not fund

- **Emergency relief**: NRCF tends not to fund projects or programs for the purposes of one-off emergency relief assistance. However, NRCF does support capacity building projects for emergency relief programs. For example, a neighbourhood centre could not apply for funds to purchase food for their neighbourhood pantry, however they could apply to purchase and install a new freezer for the pantry. If an organisation or group would like NRCF to make an exception and apply for one-off emergency relief assistance, then they must detail why they have not been able to access support from traditional emergency relief organisations.

- **Core operational costs:** If you would like to apply for funding for wages or administration, please ensure the wages &/or administration costs specifically relate to the project you are applying for. Long-term, ongoing, core operational costs will not be considered for funding.

- **New projects:** It is not the intent of NRCF to support an organisation with ongoing funding for the same project. However, NRCF will consider a grant application for an existing project or program where it can be demonstrated that there is significant change in the project's activity area, client group or expected outcomes.

- **Part funded projects:** NRCF does not ordinarily part fund projects, meaning we do not offer less than the requested amount for funding. However the Committee reserves the right to offer part funding on a case by case basis.

- **Community or Partnership Support:** We prioritise applications that show external support for the project such as a letter of support from a community organisation that has had prior experience working with your organisation. If the delivery of your project relies upon external support, you must provide evidence of that partnership, such as a letter of support outlining the commitment to funding, and/or a delivery partnership.

- **Own cash contribution or in-kind support:** We cannot fund projects where the grant seeker is asking NRCF to fund 100% of the project. You are encouraged to contribute your own cash or in-kind support, or request support from community partners.

- NRCF only accepts one application per group/organisation.

- Ineligible applications include:
    - Incomplete applications
    - Applications that miss the submission deadline
    - Unsigned applications and/or letters of support
    - Applications without required supporting documentation
    - Requests for funding that include prizes, gifts, awards or trophies

- Projects or activities that have already happened
- Projects that take place outside the Northern Rivers of NSW
- Projects from political parties

8. Assessment & Essential Criteria

Assessment is undertaken by the NRCF Grants Committee. The Committee comprises NRCF board members and community representatives with extensive experience in the community grants process and who are knowledgeable about relevant local community issues.

- Applications will be checked to ensure that all details are correct. You will be notified by email if your application is not eligible.
- The Grants Committee meets within six weeks of the closing date to determine the funding of projects. Please ensure that the respondents listed for your project are contactable during September and October.
- The Grants Committee sends their funding recommendations to the NRCF Board. The Board makes the final decision on all funding

To meet the Essential Criteria, projects should demonstrate:

<u>Organisational or community need</u>

- Clearly describe the need that exists in your community and how you have identified that need

- Explain how the project addresses that need and supports the community

<u>Measurable impact</u>

- Project has set impact measurement goals and effective means to measure outcomes

<u>Project viability - strength & sustainability</u>

- Clear and realistic delivery plan to ensure effective and efficient delivery of project

- Project budget is accurate and realistic in terms of costs
- Evidence of support from project partners, including community consultation, commitment to funding and delivery support.

<u>Organisational viability</u>
- Strength & sustainability of the organisation in terms of history & experience, in the field related to the project
- Organisation has adequate assets to support core programs and/or operations
- Confirmed community support for the organisation and its projects in the community

9. Other Assessment Criteria

Following this merit-based assessment, the decision on final grant distributions may also include:
- Geographic reach

- Impact area
- NRCF Sub Funds
- Funding for Capital (infrastructure or equipment) OR Project/Program (services)
- Any previous grant relationship with NRCF

10.   Submitting your application

The Community Grants program opens on **Wednesday, 4th August 2021**. Applications close at midnight on **Monday, 6th September 2021.** Applications can be submitted via email or post.

- Via Email: You may [download the application form from the website here](#), **anytime from 4th August**. Email the form and supporting documentation to grants@nrcf.org.au. You will need to provide the supporting documentation as separate attachments.

- Via Post: Applications must be **received** by post no later than **Monday 6th September 2021.** Please address to Community Impact Officer Kyla White, NRCF, PO Box 304, CLUNES, NSW, 2480.

- Late applications will **not** be accepted.

Applicants will receive acknowledgement of their submission via email only.

11.   The outcome of your application

- All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their submission by late October.

- Should your application be successful you will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Foundation. This Agreement will outline the nature of the partnership including how the grant shall be used and what reporting criteria are required for acquittal of your grant funds.

- If you have submitted the project in an auspicing arrangement with a sponsoring organisation, that sponsoring organisation will also be required to sign the Agreement and the grant money will be paid to the sponsoring organisation for the project.

- If your application is successful, NRCF will consider you as a partner in their Community Grants Program and will request your co-operation with:
  - Attendance at the NRCF Grant Giving event in November
  - PR and media events at the time of the grant announcement and during and/or after the completion of the project.
  - You will be asked to acknowledge the NRCF in speeches, publicity, social media and printed material in relation to the funded project.
- If your application is unsuccessful, you will have the opportunity to request feedback from NRCF.

12. Further support

The following links will assist you when writing your grant application:

https://www.fundingcentre.com.au/help/writing-grant

http://www.philanthropy.org.au/seek-funding/how-to-seek-funding/

For further information about NRCF's Community Grants Program or the application process, please contact the NRCF office on 0499 862 886 during business hours Monday to Thursday or email grants@nrcf.org.au.

To help you prepare for the application process, please find a list of sample application questions below.

13. Sample Application Questions

a) Please specify which priority area your project refers to (you may select more than one)

o   Social, economic, cultural or educational disadvantage
o   Natural environment conservation
o   Recovery & Resilience and,
o   Housing & Homelessness

b) Demonstrating need

- What issue or need exists in your community that you are trying to address?

- How has the need for your project in the community been identified?
  For example: research, community feedback, participant support. Please remember to attach any relevant Evidence of Support.

- Tell us about your project and how does it address this need you have identified?

- What do you specifically need the NRCF funding for?

c) Measurable Impact

What will be the impact of your project in the community?

- Who/What will benefit from your project?
- Describe the beneficiaries and how will they benefit?
- How many people will directly benefit and/or be involved working on the project?
- What other outcomes do you anticipate?

How will you measure if these outcomes have been achieved, both immediately following the project and in the long term?

d) Project Viability

- How will you deliver the project? List the key activities and dates.
- Please provide a Project Budget (NRCF will provide a sample budget)
- Please describe the external support that the project requires? E.g commitment to funding, delivery partners, sector and or community consultation

e) Organisational viability

- Please describe your organisation's capacity to successfully undertake the project.
- Please include your organisation's history & experience in delivering similar projects.
- Who will deliver your project?