
Cessnock City Council Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program Guideline

Date Adopted 18/05/2022 Revision: 1

1. GUIDELINE OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. This guideline aims to provide a framework for seeking funding under Council's Visitor Economy (Tourism) Grants and Sponsorship Program.
- 1.2. The objectives of the fund is to support projects that grow the visitor economy throughout the Cessnock Local Government Area (**LGA**), achieving job growth and long term economic security for the community.
- 1.3. The funding is to provide measurable outcomes and economic benefit to the Cessnock LGA in line with the Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan and Council's goals set in the [Community Strategic Plan](#).

2. GUIDELINE SCOPE

- 2.1. This guideline applies to Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program applications for projects and events to take place within the Cessnock LGA.
- 2.2. Council will accept Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program applications between \$5,000 and \$25,000.
- 2.3. The total amount of funding available under the Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program will be determined annually by the elected Council and in line with the [Operational Plan](#) and [Delivery Program](#).
- 2.4. Council's Visitor Economy (Tourism) Grants and Sponsorship Program does not cover:
 - 2.4.1. General donations to charities, as these may be provided through other means;
 - 2.4.2. Activities that could be perceived as benefiting a political party or party political campaign;
 - 2.4.3. Waiving of fees for development applications, health inspections, health approvals, street closures and other approvals or statutory charges; and
 - 2.4.4. Financial assistance under the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) (**Act**).

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Council will accept applications that meet all of the criteria noted below:

- 3.1. All funded activities are to be held within the Cessnock LGA;
- 3.2. The application form is to be completed in full;
- 3.3. The applicant is a legally constituted organisation, which has been created by law, such as an incorporated association or a company, limited by guarantee;
- 3.4. The applicant has an Australian Business Number (**ABN**);
- 3.5. The applicant is acting on their own behalf and not fundraising for another unnamed party;
- 3.6. The applicant has complied with all terms and conditions of any previous grant, support or sponsorship received from Council;
- 3.7. The applicant agrees to comply with all the terms set within the funding offer and/or agreement should the application be successful;
- 3.8. The applicant will obtain all regulatory approvals for the activities proposed; and
- 3.9. No program will be funded more than twice.

4. CATEGORIES OF FUNDING AVAILABLE

- 4.1. There are three categories of funding available within the Grants and Sponsorship Program:
 - a) Visitor Economy Projects;
 - b) Events and Conferences (business and leisure); and
 - c) Sponsorships.

Visitor Economy Projects

- 4.2. Visitor Economy Projects are specific, planned activities that occur over a defined time frame and deliver a tangible outcome related to the visitor economy in the Cessnock LGA.
- 4.3. Outcomes and deliverables of such projects are to be definite and measurable.

Events and Conferences

- 4.4. An event or conference is one which will significantly raise the profile of the Cessnock LGA to visitors from outside the region and expect to draw at least 3,000 visitors to the event or result in 150 or more bed nights. The purpose of this category is to encourage businesses to hold an event or conference within the Cessnock LGA and in doing so attract overnight visitors to the region.

Sponsorships

- 4.5. Sponsorship funding is for other activities besides projects, major events or conferences.
- 4.6. A sponsorship prospectus or proposal should be attached to the application which describes the proposal benefits to Council and the community.

5. APPLICATION DATES

- 5.1. Each financial year, round one applications will be accepted from 1 – 31 August. If funds remain available after round one, an additional secondary round of applications will be accepted from 1 – 28 February in the following calendar year.
- 5.2. Funding applications received in round one will be assessed during September each year. Applicants will be notified of the outcome no later than 31 October each year.
- 5.3. Funding applications received in round two will be assessed during March each year. Applicants will be notified of the outcome no later than 30 April each year.

6. APPLICATION DETAILS

How to apply

- 6.1. Applications must be made via the online application form located on the [Council Grants and Club Grants webpage](#).

For further information or clarification, contact Council's Economic Development Unit (EDU) by emailing economic.development@cessnock.nsw.gov.au or calling 02 4993 6720.

Application information

- 6.2. The accurate completion of the application form is the sole responsibility of the applicant. Council can only accept applications completed in full by the advertised closing date, on the prescribed application form.
- 6.3. Funding applications should make clear the requests for cash, with an actual value attributed to each of these components.
- 6.4. Each individual project or event is to have its own budget, which will itemise the level of funding requested under the grant and sponsorship within this funding program. Where possible quotations should be included to substantiate the costs.
- 6.5. The application must:
 - 6.5.1. Include applicant details;
 - 6.5.2. Specify the location of the project or event;
 - 6.5.3. Include a detailed description of the project or event;
 - 6.5.4. Outline strategic alignment to the Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan, the Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2036 or Council's goals set in the [Community Strategic Plan](#);
 - 6.5.5. Demonstrate, with evidence, the cost component being covered by the applicant, if any;
 - 6.5.6. Outline the reason funding is needed to deliver the project or event;
 - 6.5.7. Outline the community and economic benefit realised if the requested funding is received; and
 - 6.5.8. Detail how the applicant will measure the success of the project or event.

Application attachments

6.6. The following documentation needs to be attached to the application form:

Application Attachment:	Projects	Events	Sponsorships
Copies of current insurance policy confirming public liability cover and naming Cessnock City Council as an interested party (if successful)	✓	✓	✓
Detailed costings and quotations	✓	✓	✓
Evidence of co-contribution	If required	If required	If required
Detailed project management plan	Optional	N/A	N/A
Detailed event management plan	N/A	✓	Optional
Copies of necessary approvals	If required	✓	If required
Sponsorship proposal	If required	If required	✓
Risk management plan	Strongly encouraged	Strongly encouraged	Strongly encouraged

7. ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Assessment Criteria

7.1. Applications will be assessed against the following assessment criteria and weightings:

Weight	Assessment Criteria Description
20%	Alignment to Council's adopted strategies and plans.
20%	Job creation within the Cessnock LGA.
20%	Value for money.
15%	The number of visitors, residents and businesses supported by the project, or the number of bed nights booked as a result of the project.
10%	How the project boosts visitation from Tuesday to Thursday during off-peak periods.
5%	Project co-contribution amount.
5%	Measures and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) provided by the applicant for the project.
5%	Acknowledgement for Council's support as part of the project.
100%	Total

Assessment Process

- 7.2. Council's EDU will conduct a preliminary assessment of the applications to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria listed in clause 3.
- 7.3. Council's EDU will assess the applications against the assessment criteria provided in section 7.1. A score out of 100 will be documented against each application.
- 7.4. Council's EDU will make a funding recommendation to the elected Council for a decision by way of a Council report.
- 7.5. The elected Council will review the funding recommendations, determine the successful funding applications and the amounts by way of a Council resolution.
- 7.6. Applicants will be notified of the outcome in accordance with sections 8.1 and 8.2.

8. AGREEMENTS AND PAYMENTS

Application Outcomes

- 8.1. Successful projects will result in a written formal offer issued by Council's Economic Development and Tourism Manager or their delegate.
- 8.2. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.
- 8.3. Council's decisions are deemed final.

Agreements

- 8.4. Prior to the release of any funding, successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant or sponsorship agreement with Council. Alternatively, terms of the funding may be set out in a letter of offer.
- 8.5. The agreement or letter of offer will itemise the approved amount, approved expenses, reporting milestones and a purchase order number for the successful applicant to raise an invoice which is to be made out to Council.
- 8.6. The agreement or letter of offer may include any specific conditions determined in the assessment process and other considerations made by Council.

Payments

- 8.7. Payments will be made to successful applicants in accordance with the milestones agreed with the applicant as documented in the agreement or letter of offer.
- 8.8. For organisations registered for Goods and Services Tax (**GST**), Council will add GST to the payment amount where applicable.

9. KEEPING COUNCIL INFORMED

- 9.1. Council must be advised if anything is likely to affect the project, event, sponsorship or organisation. This includes any key changes to the organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect the ability to complete the project, carry on business and pay debts due.
- 9.2. Council must be informed of any changes to:
 - 9.2.1. Project scope;
 - 9.2.2. Contact details;
 - 9.2.3. Addresses; or
 - 9.2.4. Bank account details.

- 9.3. Should the organisation become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement then immediate contact must be made with Council.

10. ACQUITTAL REPORT

- 10.1. Successful applicants must provide a final acquittal report to Council within the timeframe specified in the agreement or letter of offer.
- 10.2. An acquittal report template will be provided to the applicant for completion.
- 10.3. Acquittal reports are to be sent to Council's Economic Development and Tourism Manager via email to council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au . Reports are to include the following information:
- 10.3.1. Project or event income and expenditure;
 - 10.3.2. Evidence of how Council was acknowledged for the funding provided;
 - 10.3.3. Assessment of the benefits realised against the benefits anticipated or estimated in the application form; and
 - 10.3.4. Evidence of compliance with the terms and conditions of the agreement.

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 11.1. The Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program will be administered by Council's EDU in accordance with requirements of this guideline and the Act.
- 11.2. Council's Economic Development and Tourism Manager is responsible for ensuring that grants and sponsorships awarded do not exceed the budget allocated to the Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program.

Reporting

- 11.3. Council's EDU are responsible for drafting Council reports that provide funding recommendations, program outcomes, project status and expenditure details annually.

Records management

- 11.4. Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this guideline in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

Privacy and personal information protection

- 11.5. Council is committed to safeguarding the privacy of individuals.
- 11.6. The personal information collected and received in relation to Council's Visitor Economy (Tourism) Grants and Sponsorship Program will be used to administer this program, and in accordance with Council's [Privacy Management Plan](#) and [Privacy Statement](#) which can be found on Council's website.
- 11.7. This program involves the allocation of funding which means that transparency and openness is crucial to the administration of the program. Personal information collected for the purpose of this program may be disclosed to the general public in addition to any Council Official responsible for the facilitation of the program.
- 11.8. The supply of personal information is voluntary however if you do not supply required information, Council may not be able to process your application.

- 11.9. Personal information collected and received will be kept in Council's Information Management System in accordance with the relevant legislation. Council's address is 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock NSW 2325.
- 11.10. Individuals may access, correct or update their personal information by visiting Council's website, contacting Council's Privacy Contact Officer on 4943 4100 or by sending an email to council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Complaints

- 11.11. Complaints regarding any aspect of the Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program are to be lodged in accordance with Council's Complaints Handling policy.
- 11.12. When a complaint is lodged it is first assessed by administrative staff to determine the nature of the complaint and the appropriate Council Official to consider the matter.
 - 11.12.1. This assessment can occur prior to the specified addressee receiving the complaint unless a complaint is clearly marked confidential.
- 11.13. If you wish to make a complaint regarding the handling of your personal information this should be lodged as a privacy complaint in accordance with Council's [Privacy Management Plan](#).
- 11.14. Complaints lodged in accordance with Council's Complaints Handling policy may still be assessed and deemed to be a privacy complaint.
 - 11.14.1. Such deemed privacy complaints will be referred to the appropriate Council Official and dealt with in accordance with Council's Privacy Management Plan.

12. GUIDELINE DEFINITIONS

Bed nights	means the number of rooms or beds booked for overnight stays at Cessnock LGA accommodation providers
Council	means Cessnock City Council
Council Officials	means any councillor, member of staff of council, administrator, council committee member, delegate of council and council adviser

13. GUIDELINE ADMINISTRATION

Business Group	General Manager's Unit
Responsible Officer	Economic Development and Tourism Manager
Associated Procedure (if any, reference document(s) number(s))	N/A
Guideline Review Date	Three years from date of adoption unless legislated otherwise
File Number / Document Number	DOC2022/046657
Relevant Legislation (reference specific sections)	This guideline supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: <i>Sections 8, 8A, 8B, 8C and 377, Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)</i>
Relevant desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program	A sustainable and prosperous economy: <i>Objective 2.1 Diversifying local business options</i> <i>Objective 2.2 Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities</i> <i>Objective 2.3 Increasing tourism opportunities & visitation</i>
Related Policies / Protocols / Procedures / Documents (reference document numbers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records Management Policy (DOC2021/091598) • Community Strategic Plan • Operational Plan • Delivery Program • Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan (DOC2014/023731) • Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2036 (DOC2021/088990) • Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) • Complaints Handling Policy (DOC2018/048382) • Complaints Handling Procedure (DOC2019/123194) • Standard Operating Procedure Complaints Handling (DOC2019/127723)

14. GUIDELINE DELEGATIONS AND AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Function	Business Unit / Role(s)
C3	Authorised expenditure of money	<i>Economic Development and Tourism Manager</i>

15. GUIDELINE HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	18-05-2022 / GMU12/2022 Resolution GMU12/2022	New guideline adopted