Council Policy

2.12 Environment Grant Guidelines

1. Program Philosophy

Council recognises the important contribution community organisations make in improving the environment. Council has developed this Environment Grants Program to provide funding to support programs and projects that are of environmental benefit to our community.

Council offers a number of other grant programs targeted to specific priorities and objectives:

PROGRAM	ADMINISTERING BRANCH
Community Support Grant Program Guidelines	Community Development and Facilities
Cultural and Arts Support Grant Program Guidelines	Library and Cultural Services
Sport and Recreation Grant Program Guidelines	Parks and Recreation Services
Event Support Grant Program Guidelines	Tourism and Events
Sports Tourism Event Grant Program Guidelines	Tourism and Events

These guidelines apply to the Environment Grants program only. Details of the other grants are available on Councils website www.toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au, or by contacting the Council's Customer Service Centre. If you are not eligible for support under this program, please check the guidelines for Council's other grants programs.

2. Program Objectives

The Environment Grants Program seeks to achieve the community's vision for a *"highly valued, diverse, liveable and sustainable environment"* by providing support for projects that aim to achieve one or more of the following:

- Control of pests on Public Lands.
- Control of pests on Land used for Community Purposes.
- Habitat improvement on Public Lands.
- Habitat improvement on Land used for Community Purposes.
- Provide support for Landcare Initiatives.
- Provide support for Community Bushcare Initiatives.

Preference will be given to applications that:

- Produce measurable environmental outcomes.
- Establish a community and or environmental need.
- Demonstrate collaboration and partnership.
- Are not duplicating existing projects or activities.

Grants will be given in an equitable, accountable and transparent manner that produces community benefits while complying with regulatory and reporting requirements.

3. Support and Assistance

Council may run grant workshops to provide information and assistance to community groups prior to each funding round. Appointments are also available for community groups to meet with a council officer to discuss the application process and to identify alternative grant opportunities if required.

Guidelines, application and acquittal forms are available from Council's website www.toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au, along with the latest grant information and priorities.

Interpreter services can be made available for people who have difficulty communicating in English, through the "Telephone Interpreter Service" (TIS).

TOOWOOMBA REGION
Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

4. Timelines

The opportunity to apply for grants will be available twice annually. These dates will be promoted in the media and on Council's website. Applications must be postmarked before 5 pm on the closing date advertised.

Advertising	Closing Date	Notification to Applicants
February	March	April
July	August	September

5. Funding Amounts

Financial Assistance

Grants of up to $5000 are available through the Environment Grants Program. Grant funds are limited in individual amounts and total funds available. Funding is for programs and projects including 'seed funding' to cover the costs of initial planning for larger projects.

Council officers can give advice and assistance in developing funding strategies, including advising on additional external funding for larger projects.

6. Applying for a Grant

Applications to the Environment Grant are made by completing the *Community Grant Application Form (ref #3775301)*, giving details of the project and attaching information regarding:

- The need for the project and who will benefit. A Community Benefit Statement referencing the program objectives; any relevant feasibility studies or statistical analyses, (results of a community survey or needs analysis can assist in demonstrating this):
- Planning undertaken, including concept plans, budgets, cost estimates and/or quotes;
- Support for the project, including letters of support, partnership agreements or intentions;
- Confirmation of other funding and evidence of the organisation's own contributions (in-kind or otherwise);
- Evidence if support has been sought from other funding schemes.

6.1 Who can apply

Organisations can apply for an Environment Grant if they:

- Operate or provide services within the Toowoomba Regional Council area;
- Are a not-for-profit community organisation;
- Are an incorporated legal entity, or are sponsored by an incorporated legal entity; and
- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

6.2 Who can not apply

- Individuals
- For-profit companies, trusts and other organisations
- Unions and student guilds
- Research foundations
- Professional associations
- An organisation that has been granted approval for support through a Toowoomba Regional Council program for the same project
- Organisations that have not acquitted previous Council grants

TOOWOOMBA REGION
Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

6.3 Eligible Projects / Components

Eligible projects are those which meet the program objectives (refer section 2.0)

A wide range of support will be considered based on the merits and community benefit of the project, including but not limited to the following components:

- Assistance towards fees and compliance costs associated with undertaking approved projects.
- Assistance towards the procurement of goods and services associated with delivery of an approved project.
- Assistance towards feasibility studies, needs analyses or community consultations.
- Assistance towards planning, professional and application fees in preparing grant applications for larger projects.
- Assistance towards publicity and promotion of approved projects.

6.4 Ineligible Projects / Components

Environment Grants will not fund:

- Loan or other debt repayments
- Recurrent administration and running costs, such as:
  - Regular wages
  - Regular office expenses
  - Rent, mortgage repayments or land purchases
  - Equipment that has a short life or needs regular replacement
  - Rates, utilities, energy, insurance or regulatory expenses
- Projects with a commercial purpose
- Projects which are of a private as opposed to community benefit. (**Note**: For larger projects of both private and community benefit, only the portion of the project which is of community benefit shall be eligible for funding)
- Projects already funded by other Toowoomba Regional Council Grant programs
- Prize money, trophies, raffle prizes or fundraising

7. Assessment Process and Criteria

Environment Grant applications will be considered against the program objectives, eligibility criteria and selection criteria.

Not all applications that meet the criteria may be granted, as grants are competitive and approval will depend on; availability of funds, the number of applications, program priorities and geographical equity.

Council may give a lower amount than requested, and may place terms and conditions on which items may be funded by the grant.

Where the support requested is to add to other funding, an interim acknowledgement letter of support may be provided, to be confirmed when and if the other funding is approved.

Selection Criteria

Applications must provide:

- Statement of Project need and Community Benefit statement;
- Statement of how the project meets the grant objectives statement;
- Plans, budgets, scope, estimates and/or quotes;
- Evidence of landholder consent where the project will be undertaken on land which is not the property of the applicant;
- Letters of support, funding confirmation etc; and
- Evidence of other funding sought, and result

TOOWOOMBA REGION
Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

8. Receiving a Grant/Acquittal Process

Successful grant recipient organisations will be required to:

- Enter in to a Funding Agreement[1] with Council.
- Use the grant only for the purpose for which it is given, unless written approval is given for a variation.
- Obtain all appropriate permits, approvals, licenses, insurances and indemnities etc. relating to the project.
- Expend the funds within 12 months of being granted, unless written approval has been given for an extension.
- Acknowledge Councils' support as set out in the Funding Agreement.
- Acquit the grant on an Acquittal Form[2] as set out in the Funding Agreement, within six weeks of completion of the project.

Council reserves the right to request an audit of grant expenditure and to demand repayment of any funds granted, and/or refuse consideration of further support, if the conditions set out in the Funding Agreement are not met. Any unused funds must be returned to Council.

9. Lodging your Application

Grants are to be lodged by the advertised closing date.

LODGEMENT OF APPLICATION Late applications may not be considered. Applications must be postmarked before 5 pm on the closing date advertised. Faxed or emailed applications must be followed up with a hard copy of the cover and signature pages.	Post to:	Toowoomba Regional Council Community Grants Scheme PO Box 3021 Toowoomba Qld 4350
	Deliver to:	Any Toowoomba Regional Council Service Centre by close of business on the closing date
	Fax to:	4631 9292
	Email to:	info@tr.qld.gov.au

10. Frequently asked Questions

Q. Can we get help in developing our project and completing the application?

A. Yes, you can attend one of the regular Community Grant Workshops that are advertised, and/or make an appointment to see a Council Officer.

Q. Can I type direct into an electronic Word version of the application form?

A. Yes, the application form is available in both word and PDF versions from Councils website www.toowoombaRC.qld.gov.au

---

[1] DM#3781897

[2] DM #3781566

TOOWOOMBA REGION
Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

Q. What if our organisation doesn't have an ABN?

A. You can still apply, but you will need to provide us with a copy of the group/organisation's Certificate of Incorporation together with a Statement by a Supplier form from the Australian Tax Office. The Statement by a Supplier form is available online at

www.ato.gov.au/content/downloads/nat3346.pdf .

Q. What if our organisation is not registered for GST?

A. You can still apply if your organisation is not required to be registered for GST, but GST will not apply to any grant allocated.

Q. What if our organisation is not incorporated?

A. You can still apply, but the application must be auspiced by an incorporated organisation who will take full responsibility for the grant. Council staff may be able to assist in finding sponsors for applications with clear community benefits, or assist in getting your group incorporated.

Q. Does my project need to benefit all residents of the Toowoomba Region?

A. No. As long as there is a service/project/event being delivered in the Toowoomba Regional Council Local Government area and there is benefit to communities within this region.

Q. Can I get funding for more than one year?

A. No. You will need to apply for funding every year, and there is no guarantee of repeat funding.

Q. Can Council grants funds be used to 'top-up' other grant funds?

A. Yes. Council funds can be added to other non-council funds to make a better project, or can be used as seed funding at the 'front-end' to develop project plans and fund application fees etc.

Q. Can we submit an application electronically or by fax?

A. Yes, as long as it is received by the due date, and the original of the cover and signature sheet is posted.

Q If my application is unsuccessful; can I apply for the same thing next round?

A. Yes. However it is advised that you seek feedback as to why your application was unsuccessful in the first instance. It would also be very beneficial to attend one of the Community Grant Workshops, as this will enhance your chance of a successful application.

11.   Related Policies

 2.59 Community Grants Policy   (Ref DM # 6587676v1)

12.   Related Forms and Documents

Community Grants Application Form   (Ref DM #3775301)
Community Grants Funding Agreement (Ref DM #3781897)
Community Grants Acquittal Form   (Ref DM #3781566)

TOOWOOMBA REGION
Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

13. Policy details

Policy Category	Council Policy
Date Reviewed/Approved	10 December 2015
Endorsed by	Chief Executive Officer
Approval Authority	Council
Effective Date	10 December 2015
Policy Version Number	3.00
Policy Owner	Manager, Parks and Recreation Branch
Contact Officer	Principal Officer Conservation and Pest Management
Review Date	November 2018

14. Revision history

Policy Version	Approval Date	DM Reference
1.00	20 April 2011	3879744v7
1.01	30 November 2011	4900940v1
2.00	20 May 2014	5719295v1A
2.01	17 June 2014	5719295v1B
3.00	10 December 2015	6682132v1

TOOWOOMBA REGION
Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.