



Grants and sponsorship

Terms of reference for Assessment Panels 2016
to 2020

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The City of Melbourne is committed to supporting organisations, groups and businesses to achieve their goals, particularly when they align with Council goals outlined in the Melbourne City Council, Council Plan 2013-2017. To ensure decisions are transparent and accountable, Council targets its support and resources to external organisations via a number of grants and sponsorship programs:

- Arts Grants
- Business Event Sponsorship Program
- Community Grants
- Events Partnership Program
- Small Business Grants
- Social Enterprise Grants

All applications for formal grants and sponsorship programs undergo an assessment process with a panel making recommendations to Council. Council make the final decision.

Purpose of assessment panels:

- To review, assess and provide objective, independent recommendations to Council in relation to funding for grants and sponsorship programs.
- To ensure that guidelines and assessment criteria endorsed by Council have been applied consistently and equitably for all applications.

Principles

- Council is committed to ensuring equity and transparency in decision making processes.
- Conflict of interest and pecuniary interests are declared prior to assessing applications, or immediately upon becoming aware of a conflict (whichever occurs sooner).
- Panels will be representative of the diversity within the community in relation to gender, cultural background, abilities and age to ensure diversity of views and perspectives.
- Privacy and confidentiality of Council and applicant information will be maintained at all times.
- Canvassing of panel members provides grounds for ineligibility for applicants.

To ensure that diverse perspectives are acknowledged and to provide exposure to local government decision making processes, panels may include observers where appropriate. Observers have a responsibility to adhere to the principles outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and may provide relevant advice to the assessment panel, though they do not have voting rights.

Responsibilities of panel members

- City of Melbourne values of integrity, courage, accountability, respect and excellence are to be demonstrated by all panel members.
- Adherence to the principles outlined in the TOR and full declaration of any conflict of interest.
- Provides objective advice to Council and undertake assessment using Council's approved assessment criteria.
- Complete assessment within the designated time frames.
- Attendance at briefing sessions and meetings either virtually or in person.

Appointment to assessment panel

The Council makes appointments to the assessment panels based on merit, skills and expertise in relevant grants and sponsorship program areas as outlined in the selection criteria (attachment 1).

External assessment panels are assessment panels that are made up of independent non Council officers. Currently the Arts Grants, Community Grants, Small Business and Social Enterprise Grants programs use external assessment panels to make recommendations to Council.

Internal assessment panels are assessment panels that are made up of City of Melbourne officers. Currently the Event Partnership Program and Business Events Sponsorship Program use internal assessment panels to make recommendations to Council.

The use of either an internal or external assessment panel is determined at the discretion of Council and is subject to change.

More detailed information about individual grants and sponsorship programs including their program assessment criteria are available from the [City of Melbourne website](#)¹.

External assessment panels

The following appointment process applies to external assessment panels:

- Council runs an advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process for interested members of the community to nominate for a position as external assessment panel member.
- Council will promote the opportunity to participate on the external assessment panel amongst broad professional and community networks to maximise the potential for diverse representation and appointment.
- Assessment panel member criteria to be addressed by interested applicants via an EOI form that is created in Smartygrants, the online database that is used to manage and administer all the grants programs across Council.
- EOI applicants reviewed by Council staff based on merit, skills and expertise and taking into account diversity principles.
- Nominated applicants presented to Council for approval at a confidential meeting.
- Panel members advised of outcome and appointed panel members to be noted on Council's website.

Internal assessment panels

Approval of panel members is based on the relevant selection criteria and is approved by relevant Manager. Internal assessment panel members are appointed on an annual basis per program.

Honorarium for external panel members

- Panel members are offered an honorarium that reflects the number of applications, time commitment and complexity of the grants and sponsorship program.
- Personal costs incurred (eg. parking, child care, catering) can be reimbursed.

As a guide, \$15 per application is offered as an honorarium, however each grants and sponsorship program determines the exact rate at the time of appointment to a particular panel. Note that the minimum rate to be offered per round is \$250 and the maximum rate to be offered per round is \$1500.

¹ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/grantssponsorship/Pages/AboutGrantsSponsorships.aspx>

Term of TOR

- The TOR are valid for a four year period and external panel members are appointed for a four year term from April 2016 to March 2020.
- During the four year term, appointed panel members they may be called upon either once or on multiple occasions to participate in the assessment process for an individual grants and sponsorship program round.
- Panel members may choose to participate or not based on their availability, conflict of interest and circumstances at that particular time.
- More external panel members than are required will be approved by Council. This is done to ensure there is an adequate pool of panel members to cover a four year period.

Council will endeavour to provide the opportunity for approved panel members to participate in an assessment panel at least once during the four year term. However, it may be that not all people approved by Council can participate in a grants and sponsorship external assessment panel. This may be due to the requirements of each individual grants round and the type of expertise required, panel member availability, the diversity of members required and potential conflict of interest.

Council reserves the right to increase the pool of external panel members and invite appropriate specialists to join a panel where required to ensure diverse representation and adequate skill sets are maintained. All panel members are still required to complete an EOI and address the selection criteria and their names are listed on the City of Melbourne's website.

Time commitment

The time commitment required per grants and sponsorship round is variable, depending on the number of applications received and the complexity of the program. Panel member's participation in large programs may require up to a week reading and assessment time, and an additional 1-2 days meeting time per grant round.

Support to assessment panels

- All assessment panel members are briefed on the context of individual grants and sponsorship programs, their role and the process of recommendation to Council.
- External assessment panels are supported by a relevant grants manager. Grants managers provide advice, support and background on applications.
- Panel members are provided with all necessary tools for assessment and ideally they have access to computers and internet. If this is not available, alternative arrangements can be negotiated.
- Assessments are done using Smartygrants and advice and support is provided to panel members on how to use the system.
- All assessment meetings are minuted by Council to ensure rationale for decisions are clearly noted and to ensure accountability.

Role of Convener in external assessment panels

All external assessment panels have a Council representative that takes on the role of convener. The convener, together with other Council staff in attendance at assessment panel meetings, has the following role and responsibilities during the meeting:

- ensure panel members are equal participants in discussion, assessment and decision making
- enable the discussion and support the panel to come to agreement

- to remain impartial to the outcome / recommendation
- keep the process moving
- provide oversight on the consistent and equitable application of the policy and guidelines and that funding allocation and rationale match.

Grants and sponsorship – assessment panel selection criteria for each grants and sponsorship program

Particulars	Arts grants	Community grants	Business events sponsorship program	Social enterprise grants	Small business grants	Events partnership program
Selection criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art form expertise across one or more art forms, reflected in current or previous employment • Specialist art expertise, reflected in artistic focus and practice – demonstrated through significant record of art activity/community visibility/engagement • Cultural diversity – demonstrated through cultural and linguistic background or strong association/affiliation with a marginalised or small community • In relation to the Indigenous Arts Grants, an Indigenous artist or community member of high standing who has been resident in Victoria for at least 3 years is required • Wide experience in a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of community sector • Knowledge and understanding of community development principles • Relevant expertise and knowledge of various sectors i.e. youth, indigenous, families and children, homeless, seniors, culturally and linguistically diverse communicates, disability, sport and recreation etc. • Experience in program development, planning, budgeting, delivery and evaluation would 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience within the events industry. • Knowledge / understanding of events in sponsorship (including ROI principals), logistics/operations, budgets, marketing/PR/tourism, and risk management. • Good local knowledge of the City of Melbourne and its event market, calendar and venues. • An understanding of environmental sustainability surrounding events is desirable. • Experience in the knowledge sector is desirable, including an understanding of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical experience and skills in running a small business • Experience in assisting small to medium sized enterprises • An understanding of Federal/State government business assistance programs • Experience in working successfully with disadvantaged persons including former refugees, homeless, disabled, indigenous or long-term unemployed persons. • Experience in leading, managing or participating in a not-for-profit organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive practical experience and skills in running a small business; • Knowledge and experience in assisting small to medium sized enterprises in selecting, entering and developing international markets (particularly for the export entry program); • Good local knowledge of the City of Melbourne's business community; and • An understanding of Federal/State government business assistance programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive experience within the events industry. • Knowledge / understanding of events in sponsorship (including ROI principals), logistics/operations, budgets, marketing/PR/tourism, and risk management. • Good local knowledge of the City of Melbourne and its event market, calendar and venues. • An understanding of environmental sustainability surrounding events is desirable.

Particulars	Arts grants	Community grants	Business events sponsorship program	Social enterprise grants	Small business grants	Events partnership program
	community, national or international context – demonstrated through work experience or engagement	<p>be advantageous in assessing applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in grants assessment desirable 	conferences, trade shows and conventions			
Numbers of assessors per round	Panels convened per artform - with up to 15 members across all art forms (Up to 4 artists per art form).	Minimum of 3 per round	2 to 3 members	2 to 3 members	2 to 3 members	3 to 5 members
When*	July each year	August	April	September	September	First round: April Second round: September
Program details	Visit City of Melbourne website <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small> for full details on all programs.	Visit City of Melbourne website <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small> for full details on all programs.	Visit City of Melbourne website <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small> for full details on all programs.	Visit City of Melbourne website <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small> for full details on all programs.	Visit City of Melbourne website <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small> for full details on all programs.	Visit City of Melbourne website <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small> for full details on all programs.

* Note that the dates are indicative of when the assessment panels will be required to meet and are subject to change.