



New Community Grant Guidelines Endorsed

South Gippsland Shire Council's 2020/21 Community Grants Program will open on 1 July following the endorsement of updated guidelines at yesterday's Council meeting. The grant guidelines are reviewed annually to ensure that they continue to reflect program objectives and the needs of the community.

Following an internal review of the current guidelines it was recommended that the 2020/21 eligibility criteria be expanded to include Companies Limited by Guarantee and Social Enterprise and that the assessment panel be modified.

Changes to the assessment panel include the selection of an independent Chair and expansion of the panel to include at least two independent members (including the Chair). Information regarding the selection process for the assessment panel will be detailed in the amended guidelines.

Additionally, it was decided that during 2020/21, Council will undertake a comprehensive external review of the Community Grants Program, including benchmarking the grants program against others, engagement of a consultant to lead the review and community consultation process, and the establishment of a Community Grants Review Reference Group. It was also recommended that previous grant recipients be surveyed to determine their thoughts on the program including relevance, significance and success.

South Gippsland Shire Council Chair Administrator, Julie Eisenbise is pleased the updated guidelines have been adopted.

"Community Grants play an important role in helping South Gippsland groups and associations to fund a broad range of community initiatives. Each year we have large number of applicants participating in the program so it is vital that we have an open and transparent process to determine the successful recipients. Last year 69 grants were awarded to 68 groups with a total value of \$257,401. These dollars were then leveraged to support projects that were worth over \$770,000 dollars to the local community.

"The existing process has served the community well but it is always good to review programs to ensure they meet community expectations and are relevant to the applicants. The introduction of independent members to the panel will provide an added layer of transparency and new perspectives. I look forward to considering the next round of community grant applications," said Ms. Eisenbise.

The first round of the South Gippsland Community Grants program opens on 1 July and closes 31 August. To view the updated guidelines, please visit [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au /grants](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/grants) or phone our Grants Team for more information on 5662 9200. Recreation, community, arts and

cultural networks will be notified of the updated guidelines.

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