

Grants Policy



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1 Purpose

- 1.1 Manawatū District Council provides community funding to strengthen local resilience, support community connection, protect the district's identity and environment, and contribute to the wellbeing of residents.
- 1.2 Funding is one of the tools Council uses to support community-led initiatives that align with Council's outcomes and strategic priorities. Council recognises that strong communities are built through local leadership, volunteerism, participation, and shared responsibility.
- 1.3 This Policy provides the governance framework for how Council allocates community funding in a fair, transparent, accountable, and legally compliant manner.
- 1.4 Funding is discretionary and subject to budget availability through the Long-Term Plan (LTP) and Annual Plan (AP) processes.

2 Funding Objectives

- 2.1 Council allocates funding to:
 - Support strong, resilient, and connected communities
 - Enable initiatives that deliver clear public benefit
 - Contribute to social, cultural, environmental, and economic wellbeing
 - Encourage participation, inclusion, and accessibility

3 Legislative and Strategic Framework

- 3.1 This Policy operates in accordance with:
 - Local Government Act 2002 (including sections 10, 14 and 77)
 - Privacy Act 2020
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
 - Council's Long Term Plan
 - Council's Significance and Engagement Policy
 - Council's Delegation Manual
- 3.2 Funding decisions must comply with applicable legislation and Council's adopted policies.
- 3.3 Nothing in this policy overrides statutory obligations or trust deed requirements.

4 Policy Principles

- 4.1 Council commits to the following principles when allocating funding:
 - Fairness: Applications will be assessed impartially against published criteria.
 - Transparency: Funding opportunities and decisions will be publicly communicated

- **Accountability:** Recipients are accountable for the appropriate use of public funds. Council is accountable to the community for prudent expenditure.
- **Effectiveness:** Funding will support initiatives that deliver measurable community benefit.
- **Equity and Accessibility:** Council will consider barriers to funding opportunities.
- **Complementarity:** Council funding is intended to complement, not replace, other funding sources.

5 Eligibility Principles

- 5.1 Council funding is generally intended for organisations and initiatives that deliver a clear community or public benefit and align with Council priorities.
- 5.2 Funding is not intended for private or commercial gain without clear public benefit, or for activities that are primarily the responsibility of central government.
- 5.3 Detailed eligibility criteria are set out in the Community Funding Guidelines

6 Scope

- 6.1 This Policy applies to all Council-administered community grants, including:
- Contestable grants
 - Non-contestable grants
 - Multi-year funding arrangements
 - Strategic partnership funding
 - Funding approved through the Long-Term Plan or Annual Plan processes
 - Statutory or trust-based funds administered by Council
- 6.2 Funding approved through the Long-Term Plan or Annual Plan processes is subject to this Policy unless otherwise specified by Council resolution or required by statute or trust deed.
- 6.3 External funds administered on behalf of other entities (for example, the Creative Communities Scheme) operate under the rules of the funding body but are managed within this governance framework where applicable.

7 Governance and Decision-Making

- 7.1 Delegation
- Decision-making authority for each fund is set out in Council's Delegations Manual and the Community Funding Guidelines.
 - Council will maintain Community Funding Guidelines that set out detailed criteria, processes, and requirements for each funding programme.
 - Council retains authority for:
 - Adoption or amendment of this policy
 - Adoption of funding budgets through the Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan

- Approval of strategic or multi-year partnership funding where required

7.2 Decision-Making Framework

- Funding decisions will be made having regard to this policy, including the Funding Objectives, Policy Principles and any applicable criteria set out in the Community Funding Guidelines.

7.3 Council Discretion

- Council:
 - May approve or decline any application at its discretion.
 - Is not obliged to allocate the full funding pool.
 - May set conditions on funding.
 - May prioritise applications based on strategic alignment and available budget.
- Funding does not create an entitlement or ongoing right to funding.

7.4 Finality of Decisions

- Funding decisions are final.
- Applicants may request feedback to support future applications.

8 Accountability and Risk

8.1 Council will apply accountability measures proportionate to the level of funding and risk. This may include due diligence, funding agreements, reporting requirements, and appropriate actions where conditions are not met.

8.2 Council may suspend or terminate funding, require repayment, or decline future applications where funds are misused, information is misleading, or conditions are breached.

9 Conflict of Interest

9.1 All elected members and staff must comply with:

- The Elected Members Code of Conduct
- The Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968

9.2 Any person involved in funding decisions must declare actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. Conflicts must be recorded and the individual must withdraw from discussion and decision-making.

9.3 Applicants must disclose any relationships with elected members or staff that may create an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

10 Health and Safety

10.1 Grant funding does not transfer health and safety responsibilities to Council.

10.2 Recipients remain responsible for compliance with all applicable legislation, including health and safety requirements.

11 Privacy

- 11.1 Personal information will be used solely for assessing and administering grants.
- 11.2 Information may be publicly disclosed where required for transparency purposes, including recipient name, amount, and purpose.
- 11.3 Council will manage personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

12 Transparency and Public Reporting

- 12.1 Council will:
 - Publish summaries of grant allocations
 - Disclose recipient name, amount, and purpose (except where privacy or trust deed requirements apply)
 - Maintain appropriate records for audit purposes
- 12.2 Non-contestable or direct grants must be established by formal Council resolution.

13 Monitoring and Evaluation

- 13.1 Council will periodically review its funding programmes to ensure they:
 - Deliver intended community outcomes
 - Provide value for money
 - Remain aligned with Council priorities.
- 13.2 Evaluation findings may inform future funding decisions, priorities, and policy updates.

14 Funding Framework

- 14.1 Council provides:
 - Contestable grants
 - Non-contestable (direct) grants
 - Multi-year funding arrangements
 - Strategic partnership funding
 - Statutory or trust-based funds
- 14.2 The creation of new funding streams or material changes must be approved by Council through the Long-Term Plan or Annual Plan process.
- 14.3 Operational details for each fund are set out in the Community Funding Guidelines.

15 Policy Review

- 15.1 This policy will be reviewed at least three years or earlier if required due to legislative, strategic, or structural changes.