



GLEN EIRA  
CITY COUNCIL

- BENTLEIGH
- BENTLEIGH EAST
- BRIGHTON EAST
- CARNEGIE
- CAULFIELD
- ELSTERNWICK
- GARDENVALE
- GLEN HUNTLY
- MCKINNON
- MURRUMBEENA
- ORMOND
- ST KILDA EAST

# SOCIAL COHESION GRANTS GUIDELINES 2026

**APPLICATIONS OPEN THURSDAY 26 2026**

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE 5PM, THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2026**



# COMMUNITY GRANTS — SPECIAL GRANTS ROUND

## SOCIAL COHESION GRANTS GUIDELINES 2026

APPLICATIONS OPEN THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2026  
APPLICATIONS CLOSE THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2026

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Glen Eira City Council acknowledges the Boon Wurrung/Bunurong and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Owners and Custodians and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to land and waterways Council extends its respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Council honours the rich histories and cultures of First Nations peoples and recognises and values the important contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in enriching our community. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to a Reconciliation Action Plan which is underpinned by the principles of self-determination. We work towards improved outcomes and long-term generational change, and to consolidate Glen Eira as a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We are committed to achieving equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live healthy and prosperous lives and to improve life outcomes for current and future generations.

Glen Eira resides on country that always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

## INTRODUCING OUR ONE-OFF SOCIAL COHESION GRANTS ROUND

Council's one-off Social Cohesion Grants round supports not-for-profit community groups and organisations to deliver projects and activities that directly benefit the Glen Eira community. The program advances the Council Plan priority of strengthening community safety, social cohesion, health and wellbeing.

One-off grants of \$5,000 to \$10,000 are available to support free, publicly accessible activities and projects delivered within Glen Eira between July and December 2026, with all projects to be completed by 31 December 2026.

The Social Cohesion Grants program:

- enables community organisations to deliver public, place-based and community-led initiatives that bring people together in positive and meaningful ways;
- encourages projects, activations and dialogue-based events that activate local places, reduce barriers to participation and support civic engagement;
- supports initiatives that promote respectful, inclusive, accessible and connected communities, where people feel safe, healthy and supported; and
- encourages activities that strengthen social cohesion, promote inclusion, foster understanding across Glen Eira's diverse communities, and build a sense of belonging and whole-of-community connection.

The program is guided by Council's *Community Grants Policy* and is funded through Council's Annual Budget. This is a competitive grants program, and not all applications will be successful.

## KEY DATES

Program announcement	26 February 2026
Applications Open	Thursday 26 February 2026
Information session 1 (Night)	6.30pm–7.30pm, Thursday 5 March 2026
Information session 2 (Day)	1.30–2.30pm, Wednesday 11 March 2026
Applications close	Thursday 26 March 2026
Applications assessed	April–May 2026

Notification of Outcomes	Mid-June 2026
Acceptance of funding agreement	By 19 June 2026
Payments	By 30 June 2026
Project delivery	1 July 2026 to 31 December 2026
Acquittal due	15 January 2027

## STRATEGIC FOCUS

The strategic documents that identify Council's key directions and strategic focus are:

### Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision

- > We work together
- > Planning for community resilience
- > Inclusive and healthy community
- > Maximise and diversify our green and natural spaces
- > We are proactive in meeting challenges and innovating using evidence-based methods
- > Promote and develop our creative potential, celebrating our diverse identities through art and other cultural expressions

### Glen Eira Council Plan 2025-2029

- > Community safety, cohesion, health and wellbeing
  - Our community feels safer
  - Our vibrant arts and culture programs strengthen the cohesion of our community
  - Our community has a strong sense of connection and belonging
  - Our community has improved physical and mental health and wellbeing
  - Our community benefits from the promotion of healthy lifestyle and the prevention of harm and ill health.
- > Diverse, welcoming and accessible places
  - Our green open spaces and community facilities are well used, well located and accessible
  - Our places are safe, healthy and versatile
  - Our vibrant and clean activity centres support a thriving local economy
  - Our places are well connected by a variety of transport options
  - We have diversified housing options while maintaining local neighbourhood character
- > Environmental stewardship
  - Our urban greenery and biodiversity are enhanced
  - Our air and waterways are healthy
  - Council and community emissions are reduced
  - Waste to landfill is reduced
  - Our community is actively engaged in Caring for Country and the natural environment
- > Innovative and financially sustainable.
  - We are financially secure and sustainable
  - Our community is informed and engaged
  - Our community has trust and confidence in our decisions
  - Our services are highly valued, well designed and responsive to community and customer needs
  - Our technology enables us to
  - achieve our strategic priorities
  - Our workforce is capable,
  - informed and engaged

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **Who can apply?**

To be eligible for funding community groups and organisations must:

1. service the Glen Eira community;
2. be based in Glen Eira
3. be not-for-profit;
4. be incorporated;
5. have an ABN; and
6. hold Public Liability insurance (minimum \$20 million)

If you do not meet these criteria, you are not eligible to apply.

**Only one application per organisation will be accepted.** If you submit more than one, we will only assess the first eligible application received.

Applications prepared by professional grant writers must be submitted by the organisation applying for the grant.

### **Partnerships**

Partnership applications are encouraged and may involve two or more eligible organisations. The lead organisation must apply on behalf of the partnership and outline the role of each partner in the application. The application must include a letter of support from the authorised delegate of each partner, confirming their role in the project. Organisations that apply as part of a partnership are not eligible to also submit a separate application in their own name. The funding range for partnership projects will be from \$5,000 up to \$10,000.

### **Examples of eligible activities and events:**

- > Community festivals, events or cultural celebrations.
- > Public forums, events or activities that promote dialogue, inclusion and understanding.
- > Creative or arts-based projects, including exhibitions, performances or temporary installations.
- > Community-led, place-based activations within activity centres, neighborhoods or public spaces.
- > Grassroots initiatives that support connection, participation and cross-community engagement that will be delivered between July to December 2026.

### **Who cannot apply?**

- > For-profit organisations.
- > Individuals or sole traders
- > Unincorporated associations.
- > Organisations that have not met the terms and conditions of previous Council grants.
- > Organisations that are the funding responsibility of other levels of government.
- > Organisations whose sole or dominant purpose is of a political nature.
- > Organisations or groups who meet outside of Glen Eira.
- > Organisations in receipt of gaming machine revenue.
- > Registered public and private schools, preschools, TAFE institutes and universities.

### **What will not be funded?**

- > Applications that seek to make up a shortfall due to budget cuts by other levels of government.

- > Private exhibitions run by individual artists for the sale of artwork.
- > Activities of a religious or worship nature, including services, proselytising or religious instruction.
- > Ongoing staff salaries. This excludes the employment of temporary specialised project positions.
- > Hire of venues that are outside of Glen Eira.
- > Capital works projects.
- > Activities and events held in a licensed gambling venue.
- > Purchase of alcohol.
- > Professional grant writers fees.
- > Prizes and awards.
- > Retrospective projects.
- > Operational costs that should be covered by member fees.
- > Events that charge entry fees or restrict broad community participation.
- > Events held outside of Glen Eira that benefit the Glen Eira community.
- > Activities that duplicate existing programs.
- > Food and catering that exceeds more than 20% of the grant funding
- > Advertising that exceeds more than 20% of the grant funding.

## HOW DO I APPLY

Grant applications are made online by completing an application form through SmartyGrants. To complete your application, you will need access to a computer, the internet and an email address.

All sections of the application must be completed. If anything is missing, your application will be ineligible and will not be assessed.

**STEP 1: Go online to SmartyGrants** Open the online application form link at <https://gleneira.smartygrants.com.au/>

**STEP 2: Select the application form** Select *Social Cohesion Grants Application Form 2026–2027*.

**STEP 3: Preview the form (optional)** Choose 'Preview the form' to view the *Social Cohesion Grants Application Form*.

### **STEP 4: Start an application**

Choose 'Start a submission' then 'Login' to SmartyGrants using an existing account or 'Register' a new account.

A new account set-up requires you to use your group's/organisation's email address as a username and create a password. Please ensure you record your login details. Once registered, you can then 'Login' and start an application.

SmartyGrants allows you to save your progress and return to your application at a later date and to also upload supporting documents.

## What do you need for your application?

1. Details of your project.
2. Budget for your project, including quotes for items of \$500 and above, for the items you are requesting funding.
3. A copy of your most recent annual financial report.
4. Details of your organisation, including incorporation number, GST status and ABN.
5. A copy of your Certificate of Currency for your Public Liability insurance (minimum \$20 million).
6. A copy of your facility hire booking confirmation (where applicable).

If your application includes a Glen Eira City Council facility hire, you will need to book your facility prior to submitting your grant application and provide accurate costs.

The incorporation number, ABN and Public liability insurance must be in the applicants' name.

## **Budget**

You are required to complete a detailed budget table as part of your application. Applicants are responsible for providing accurate costings for each line item. Line items valued at over \$500 must be supported by a quote. Failure to provide the required quote(s) will render the application incomplete and ineligible for assessment.

## **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

If your organisation is successful in receiving a grant and is:

- > registered for GST, you will be paid GST on top of the amount awarded
- > Not registered for GST, you will only receive the grant amount awarded – GST will not be added on top.

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) considers grants and sponsorships as taxable income. The ATO can help with information on tax, including GST. For more information, call 13 28 66 or visit ATO <https://www.ato.gov.au>.

## **Submission of applications**

You must submit your application by 5pm, Thursday 26 March 2026.  
Late applications will not be accepted.

For your grant to meet the eligibility criteria, you will need to:

- > include all required attachments and evidence;
- > complete all relevant sections of the application form;
- > ensure the application is endorsed by an authorised person; and
- > acquit all previous Glen Eira City Council grants.

## **Acknowledgement of applications**

You will receive an acknowledgment email after submitting your application. If you do not receive an acknowledgment, contact Council's Community Strengthening Team on 9524 3333.

## **NEED HELP?**

### **Information sessions**

Online information sessions will be offered to provide applicants with the relevant information about the application process and to answer questions.

Session dates:

- [Thursday 5 March, 6.30-7.30pm](#)
- [Wednesday 11 March, 1.30-2.30pm](#)

Community organisations are encouraged to discuss their project proposal with Council's Community Strengthening team on 9524 3333 or email [communitygrants@gleneira.vic.gov.au](mailto:communitygrants@gleneira.vic.gov.au)

If you require an interpreter or need more information in your language about this document, please contact Council's Community Strengthening Team to arrange a time on 9524 3333. If you are deaf, hearing or speech-impaired, we ask that you call us via the National Relay

Service and then ask for 9524 3333.  
Online: <https://internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au>  
Teletypewriter (TTY): 13 36 77  
Speak and Listen: 1300 555 727

## **ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

### **Assessment of applications**

Officers check eligibility, complete an assessment and make recommendations to the Social Cohesion Grants Assessment Panel, with final funding approvals made under delegated authority. The Community Grants program adheres to the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*.

### **Assessment criteria:**

Each grant application is assessed against the following seven criteria.

- > The extent to which the application aligns with Council's strategic focus (20%).
- > The extent to which the project is committed to strengthening social cohesion, promotes inclusion and fosters understanding across Glen Eira's diverse communities (20%).
- > Evidence that the project meets a community need and/or benefits the Glen Eira community (20%).
- > Clearly defined project aims, measures and outcomes (10%).
- > The capacity of the organisation to undertake the project and meet the conditions of funding (10%).
- > Capacity of the organisation to access other funding to deliver the project (10%).
- > The extent to which the budget is balanced, realistic and reflects the delivery of the project (10%).

### **Notification of results**

All applicants will be advised of the decision regarding their application. Notification is sent via email to the primary contact provided on the application form.

### **Successful grant recipients**

Successful applicants must submit an Acceptance of Conditions Funding Agreement form via Smartygrants by 17 June 2026, to enable Council to release the awarded funds by 30 June 2026. If the applicant is unable to complete the acceptance by 17 June 2026, the grant funding distribution may be reviewed by Council.

Successful grant recipients will be invited to stay connected and collaborate with Council's Community and Economic Development team as the project progresses.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- > Grant recipients must acknowledge Council in any relevant material, publications, web pages or media releases about the funded project by using the Council community logo.
- > Applicants must submit a completed application form and all required documents in order for their application to be assessed.
- > Council may require you to validate any of the information provided in your application.
- > Funding will not be given for projects started or completed before 1 July 2026.

- > Successful grant recipients will be invited to stay connected and collaborate with Council's Community and Economic Development team as the project progresses.
- > Applicants cannot apply for the same project under another Glen Eira Community Grants Program in the same year.
- > Applicants are responsible for costing their projects accurately. Council is not responsible for costs that have been underestimated.
- > Under the Social Cohesion Grants program, a community group or organisation can receive grant amounts ranging from \$5,000 and up to \$10,000.
- > The amount of any grant awarded is at the discretion of Council.
- > Applicants that meet grant criteria are not guaranteed funding.
- > Grants may not be funded to the maximum amount requested
- > Funding will not be provided if there is an outstanding acquittal.
- > A grant may only be used for the specific purpose awarded in the Acceptance of Conditions Form unless prior approval for a different purpose has been obtained from Council.
- > If a project cannot proceed as originally approved, the applicant must request a variation or extension by contacting Council's Community Strengthening Team. A *Request for Variation or Extension* form will be sent to the applicant via SmartyGrantys.com. Approval of the request will be at Council's discretion. Applicants are notified if their variation or extension is approved.
- > Council may request the return of grant funds if there is evidence that grant funds have not been spent for the purpose they were awarded.
- > The grant conditions must be accepted before end June 2026 and the project completed by 31 December 2026. Acquittals are due 15 January 2027 and any unspent funds are to be returned to Council by 31 January 2027.
- > Applicants must ensure their activities, projects and events meet Victoria State Government and Local Laws, such as safety requirements, permits and approvals.

## **ACQUITTAL, AUDIT AND LEGISLATION**

### **Acquittal of grant funds**

An acquittal is an accurate report on the funded activities and how the funds were spent.

An acquittal will be due after the conclusion of the funded activity.

A Social Cohesion Grant Acquittal Form must be submitted to Council through the SmartyGrants portal by Friday 15 January 2027. Receipts are required for all purchases over \$100.

Failure to submit the acquittal will make any future applications ineligible for funding.

### **Audit of grants**

Grant recipients acknowledge that as part of its accountability processes, Council may audit any grant recipient for compliance with grant conditions. Organisations selected for an audit will be notified.

### **Legislation**

Funded community groups and organisations must comply with all relevant laws, regulations and conditions.

## **PRIVACY COLLECTION NOTICE**

Glen Eira City Council (Council) is committed to protecting the personal information provided by you in accordance with the principles of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) (PDP Act)*. Personal information is collected by Council only for the purpose of its functions set out in the *Local Government Act 2020*

(Vic) and other legislation. Council uses the Glen Eira City Council SmartyGrants portal for

individuals to complete and submit applications for funding offered under the Community Grants (Social Cohesion) Program . Council collects information via SmartyGrants about the individuals, groups and organisations applying for grants and how the grants will be applied. Specifically, the information collected by Council is used to assess applications for Council's funding programs and administer any subsequent funding awarded. The personal information in your application will be used solely by Council for that primary purpose or directly related purposes. If this information is not collected, Council will be unable to process your grant application. Information about the applicant's usage of SmartyGrants will also be collected to retain audit trails relating to who has accessed or modified information and when it occurred. The information submitted into SmartyGrants (including personal information) will be used and accessed by Council officers and persons acting on behalf of Council (eg. contractors). In certain circumstances, we may disclose information about you where permitted or authorised under the *PDP Act* or other applicable laws. Personal information collected in connection with the grant application may also be disclosed to third parties for the purpose of the Public Grant Applicants' Summary. If you want to know more about privacy at Council, including your right to seek access to your personal information, contact Council's Privacy Officer on 9524 3333. Council's *Privacy Policy* is available at [gleneira.vic.gov.au/about-council/our-organisation/council-legislation-and-policies/privacy](http://gleneira.vic.gov.au/about-council/our-organisation/council-legislation-and-policies/privacy)

## **CONTACT US**

For further information, contact Council's Community Strengthening Team  
communitygrants@gleneira.vic.gov.au 9524 3333 or visit [www.gleneira.vic.gov.au](http://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au)