

Community Grants and Funding Policy

*Te Kaupapa Here Karāti me te
Pūtea Hapori*

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whakatane.govt.nz

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1.0 Introduction – Kupu Arataki

Whakatāne District Council (Council) recognises the important contribution made by communities to the overall wellbeing of the Whakatāne District and residents. Council oversees grants and other funding that is made available for the purpose of supporting organisations that contribute to community wellbeing. This supports Council's community outcomes and priorities.

This policy provides an overview of how community grants and funding are managed. It also provides guidance to Elected Members and other decision makers when making recommendations and decisions about grants and funding applications.

2.0 Objectives – Ngā Whāinga

The purpose of this policy is to outline grants and funding processes and principles. These form the basis for the provision of grants and other funding.

This policy ensures the distribution of funding:

- Is transparent
- Supports organisations that contribute to wellbeing in the district and Council's community outcomes and priorities
- Occurs in a consistent, efficient, effective manner
- Includes evaluation and reporting requirements that are appropriate to the level of support provided and that ensure accountability

3.0 Principles – Ngā Mātāpono

The following principles will guide behaviour by encouraging decision makers to support projects and initiatives that:

- Align with community outcomes and/or identified wellbeing benefits outlined in Council's current Long-Term Plan (LTP), or by communities themselves through things such as approved community plans.
- Promote equity: Council is committed to ensure that those who most need support, receive it.

Groups that can receive community grants and funding include those that support:

- Children/tamariki, young people/rangatahi
- Kaupapa Māori outcomes for Iwi, hapū and whānau
- Pasifika and other identified ethnic communities
- Whānau/families
- People with disabilities
- People experiencing personal isolation.

- Isolated and/or rural communities
 - Older people
 - Projects and initiatives that have high levels of volunteers
 - Other groups at Council's discretion.
- Support Council's Treaty partnership obligations and the aspirations of Iwi, hapū and whānau by nurturing strong relationships founded on Maori values, principles and practices.
 - Provide transparency and value for money for ratepayers.

4.0 Scope – Te Aronga

This policy applies to community grants and funding allocated by Council through the following methods:

- Contestable Grant Funds, including Matching Funds
- Multi-year and Community Partnership Agreements
- Specific Purpose Funds
- Community Board Discretionary Funds
- Sponsorships
- Any other funds, or grant funding types, as may be made available from time to time at Council's discretion.

5.0 Policy – Te Kaupapa Here

5.1 General

Council aims to support community organisations that promote the wellbeing of our residents. Grants and funding will also be allocated to support community wellbeing outcomes and Council's strategic priorities as described in the current Long Term Plan.

Community grants and funding will build upon and support community-led initiatives, which create positive change in the community, enhance communities' ability to meet their own needs, and develop local community leadership.

Whakatāne District Council allocates community grants and other funding from a limited pool of money. Council is not a primary funder of community organisations. Our role as a complementary funder will be recognised through prioritising organisations that have actively sought other funding before approaching Council.

5.2 Treaty of Waitangi

As a Council, we recognise the work of Iwi, hapū and whānau throughout Whakatāne District communities. We are committed to fulfilling our legislative and relationship obligations as a Treaty Partner and to developing stronger partnerships with tangata whenua.

This policy aligns with the Council's Te Toi Waka Whakareī Māori Relationship Strategy. In the context of this policy, Council makes a commitment to:

1. Acknowledge the special role and significance of Iwi, hapū and whānau as tangata whenua
2. Acknowledge the importance of protecting and preserving Māori culture, language, and customs within the Whakatāne District
3. Allocate community grants and funding in a manner that supports initiatives fostering the preservation, revitalisation and promotion of Māori cultural practices, language and heritage
4. Support eligible Kaupapa Māori organisations as an important way to realise Māori aspirations, foster collaboration and build relationships promoting mutual understanding, shared decision-making, and positive outcomes for Whakatāne District communities
5. Engage with Iwi, hapū and whānau to promote grants and funding opportunities available to them
6. Encourage decision makers to consider a Te Ao Māori perspective when assessing applications which seek to deliver outcomes for or by Māori actively supporting Māori communities, groups, and organisations in their endeavours. This support may include providing guidance, resources, and capacity-building opportunities to strengthen Māori-led initiatives
7. Consider Iwi, hapū and whānau aspirations and goals when evaluating grant applications and allocating funds
8. Act with transparency and accountability in its decision-making processes relating to community grants and funding. Council will regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy, ensuring it aligns with Treaty partnership and relationship obligations and contributes to the wellbeing of both Māori and non-Māori communities within the district
9. Remove barriers that contribute to inequitable outcomes and support those that enhance mana taurite / equity outcomes, with an emphasis on encouraging 'for Māori, by Māori' initiatives.

6.0 Funding - Te Pūtea

6.1 Total Funding Envelope

The total amount of grants and funding Council has available is set through the adoption of the Long Term Plan and reviewed every three years. This excludes funds administered by Council on behalf of external agencies.

6.2 General Funding Criteria

6.2.1 Criteria

General criteria apply to all Contestable Grant Funds, Multi-year Agreements (including Community Partnership Agreements), and (where available) Community Matching Funds. For Specific Purpose Funds, applicants must follow the fund requirements prescribed through the application process.

When assessing applications of similar merit, decision makers will consider general criteria collectively.

Applicants will need to submit the appropriate application form with details of the projects and/or activities for which they require funding assistance. The depth of information requested from applicants will be relative to the amount of funding being applied for.

Criteria for applications will usually include requirements to:

1. Clearly describe the project activity or service
2. Describe whether the applicants have applied for similar funding elsewhere
3. Demonstrate how the project or activity promotes community wellbeing and/or community outcomes outlined in the current Long Term Plan
4. Demonstrate community need and/or community support for the initiative
5. Identify how the project contributes to ensuring greater equity in our communities
6. Identify whether the project will benefit vulnerable people, areas of high deprivation, or other identified target groups
7. Present a realistic budget for the project and identify exactly how the grant or funding will be spent
8. Provide evidence of the organisation/group structure and fund management capabilities

Criteria for applications may also include requirements to:

9. Supply a full set of accounts
10. Acknowledge Council support in promotional materials and other communications.

6.2.2 Eligibility

The following general eligibility requirements apply when being considered for funding:

- Groups and organisations that make up the community sector
- Groups and organisations active in Whakatāne District
- Activities that will specifically benefit Whakatāne District communities.

More specific requirements for a particular fund may also apply:

It is important to note that if a group or organisation is benefitting from a Council lease subsidy, rates relief or any other form of Council support, this must be identified when applying for a grant or other Council community funding.

6.2.3 Exclusions

This list of funding exclusions draws on:

- The statutory purpose of Local Government ‘to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure and local public services’
- Central Government guidance, in particular the Office of the Auditor General and the NZ Treasury

- Internationally applied principles of ‘best practice’ grant-making.

The following groups and activities will not be funded:

- Commercial or private organisations whose primary purpose is profit generation
Note: Social enterprises may be considered on a case-by-case basis
- Debt servicing or repayment
- Legal expenses
- Activities that promote religious ministry or political purposes, or activities where the main purpose is to promote religious, ethical, commercial, or political views of an organisation
Note: Advocacy groups such as Ratepayers and Residents Associations may be considered on a case-by-case basis
- Medical expenses
- Statutory functions, activities, and services (e.g., core education, policing, health care etc.)
- Salaries
- Retrospective funding
- Purchase or promotion of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products or psychoactive substances
- Physical works (e.g., improvements to community buildings) requiring consents or permits prior to the necessary consents or permits being obtained. (Grants may be awarded in principle, but funds will not be released until all conditions are satisfied).

Note: Previous grant applicants who failed to fulfil the obligations and terms of a previous grant agreement will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 Types of funds

6.3.1 Contestable Grant Funds

Contestable Grant Funds refers to Community Grant Funds and (where available) Community Matching Funds.

- Community Grant Funds support the delivery of a clearly defined activity, project or initiative.
- Community Matching Funds is a subset of Contestable Grant Funds where the applicant matches the funds provided by Council. Matching may be through provision of funds, volunteer contributions, or in-kind contributions of at least equal value to the funds provided by Council.

Contestable Grant Funds are open to applications from community organisations and groups providing for the wellbeing of our people and communities. This includes Iwi and hapū organisations delivering Kaupapa Māori outcomes.

Grants funding will be awarded through a contestable process. Contestability enables decision makers to compare the relative merits of the funding applications they receive in order to allocate grants from the funding pools as fairly as possible.

The Contestable Grant Fund process requires that:

- Applications meet the general criteria and eligibility for funding outlined in this policy
- Applications are invited through scheduled funding rounds that are publicly advertised and have an opening and closing date
- Eligible applicants have an equal opportunity to be considered for a grant
- A clearly defined assessment process is applied to all applications in a transparent manner
- Financial allocation and other relevant information are discoverable – i.e., made available to the public
- Funding is spent within a year of distribution, or as otherwise arranged at Council’s discretion.

6.3.2 Multi-year Agreements (including Community Partnership Contracts)

Multi-year Agreements (including Community Partnership Contracts), where available, will meet the general criteria and eligibility for funding outlined in this policy.

Council may enter into multiple year agreements with organisations that have a track record of delivering services, actions and programmes aligned with community outcomes and Council’s strategic direction.

The total funding allocation is determined through three-yearly Long Term Planning processes.

As part of the application process, the parties will enter into a formal agreement that outlines clear performance objectives. Funding will be allocated annually, subject to performance and achievement of agreed outcomes.

6.3.3 Specific Purpose Funds

In addition to the funds described above, Council administers grants which have a specific purpose and where specific criteria apply, for example, on behalf of government agencies.

6.3.4 Community Board Discretionary Funds

Individual Community Boards have discretionary funds that can be applied for by community organisations and individuals planning community-good initiatives.

6.3.5 Other funding mechanisms

External organisations offer community funding and support in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. To assist the community to attract external funding, Council’s website provides a list of other available funding sources.

7.0 Definitions – Ngā tikanga o ngā kupu

Term	Definition
Contestable Grant Funds	Contestable Grant Funds support the delivery of a clearly defined activity, project, or initiative. Grant funding is awarded through a contestable process. Contestable Grant Funds include Community Grant Funds, Community Matching Funds, Community Board Discretionary Funds and Multi-year Agreements.
Community Grant Funds	Community Grant Funds are a financial contribution to a community organisation, group, or sector of the community to achieve a specified outcome.
Community Matching Funds	Community Matching Funds are similar to Community Grant Funds, but require the applicant to 'match' the value of funds provided by Council. Matching may be through provision of funds, volunteer contributions, or in-kind contributions of at least equal value to the funds provided by Council.
Community Board Discretionary Funds	Individual Community Boards consider appropriate requests for funding from community organisations and individuals through their discretionary spending fund. Discretionary funds are financed through targeted rates.
Multi-year Agreements (including Community Partnership Contracts)	Multi-year Agreements (multiple year) are between Council and selected organisations. The two parties enter into a strategic relationship where Council provides funding or other support in return for the delivery of services, actions or programmes that align with community outcomes and/or Council's strategic priorities.
Specific Purpose Funds	These are funds with a specific purpose. They are often, but not always, funded by external agencies and administered by Council. A list of current available funds can be viewed on Council's website.
Other Funds	Any other funds available from time to time at Council's discretion.
Long Term Plan (LTP)	The LTP establishes Council's vision, community outcomes and priorities. It sets the budget and work plan for the next 10 years and is reviewed every three years.
Wellbeing	As outlined in the Local Government Act 2002, the purpose of Local Government is to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future.

8.0 Accountability – Ngā Haepapa

Council will ensure that all administrative and decision-making processes for community grants, other funding and policies are presented in a way that can be easily understood by the community.

Council is reminded of its requirement to be financially prudent and undertake transactions using good business practice. This applies to the distribution of community grants and other funding under this policy. Council upholds its statutory responsibility to ensure the lawful, transparent, and prudent expenditure of public funds.

Funding allocation may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, depending on project outcomes and the extent to which the allocated funding achieves Council's strategic objectives, to ensure that the grants and funding programme continues to reflect community needs.

The extent of the due diligence undertaken by Council staff and the amount of information requested from applicants will be relative to the amount of grant funding or assistance being applied for.

All recipients of community grants and other funding must ensure that the funded activity remains compliant with all relevant legislation, regulations and terms and conditions, including health and safety legislation. Refer to exclusions in 6.2.3 above.

A failure to meet all relevant terms and conditions associated with Council community grant funding may result in all or one of the following:

- Termination of funding
- Exclusion from future funding
- Repayment of part or all the allocated funding.

8.2 Accountability Report

All recipients of community grants and other funding are required to report back on activity outcomes. Refer to the appropriate funding guidelines for further details.

A failure to report back may result in future applications being declined or being subject to review.

8.3 Unspent Funds

Any unspent funds must be returned to Council in line with the appropriate funding guidelines.

9.0 Review – Te Arotake

This policy will be reviewed every six years. The next review is due in 2029.