

Social Enterprise Growth Fund

FY2025-26 Social Enterprise Growth Fund Guidelines



Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

Diversity Statement

Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders.

We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone; principles which empower, foster harmony, and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.

Additional support for Applicants

Banyule City Council is committed to our grants process being open and accessible to everyone. To this end we would like to offer the following access options.

Please contact us on 9242 3416 or socialenterprise@banyule.vic.gov.au if you would like any of the following:

- If you need a printed copy of these guidelines or a printed copy in large print
- If you need to discuss these guidelines by phone
- If you need to discuss these guidelines with us using the services of an Auslan interpreter
- If you need a printed copy of the application form for reference purposes (all applications need to be submitted online through the SmartyGrants system)
- If you need assistance to enter information into SmartyGrants due to access issues or you have difficulty using technology.

If your hearing or speech is impaired, you can contact us through the National Relay Service on 133 677 (TTY) or 1300 555 727 and ask for 9457 9955.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Applicants

If you are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and would like to discuss the grants program with a member of Banyule City Council's First Nations team, please contact Zali Mifsud at zali.mifsud@banyule.vic.gov.au or 9242 3491

Support for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Applicants

If you need a language interpreter please contact [TIS National](#) on [131 450](#) and ask to be connected to us on [8673 4371](#).

If you face any barriers to applying and would like to discuss these or any other ways we can help you, please contact us at 9242 3416 or socialenterprise@banyule.vic.gov.au.

Purpose

The Social Enterprise Growth Fund aims to empower new & established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses, social enterprises to grow or expand their services into the Banyule City Council region or to support not-for-profit organisations who are developing a social enterprise business model. Recognising the funding challenges that often limit growth and innovation, this growth funding provides flexible support for these groups to develop and strengthen sustainable social enterprise models.

As a champion of social enterprise, Banyule City Council's [Social Enterprise Strategy 2020-2025](#) identified 4 key focus areas;

1. *Advance place-based social enterprise innovation*
2. *Build business capability and capacity*
3. *Improve market access*
4. *Increase community awareness and engagement*

This funding supports these pillars with a particular focus on building business capability and capacity, with the following core objectives;

1. Support new and existing social enterprises to grow or expand into Banyule
2. Enhance business development capacity through engaging external parties for marketing, business planning or operational efficiencies
3. Facilitate purchases that increase opportunity for impact
4. Funding not-for-profit enterprises who are developing a social enterprise business model and need support in business planning and/or research.

Funding will not be available for;

- Businesses that do not meet the definition of a social enterprise (*see Appendix 2 – Definitions*)
- Ongoing operational expenses (eg. Salaries or cost of goods)
- Projects that have already been completed

Our commitment explained

Banyule City Council is the first local government in Victoria to have a dedicated strategy and action plan for social enterprises.

[Social Enterprise Strategy 2020-2025](#)

[Social Enterprise Action Plan 2020-2025](#)

We are proud of our award-winning partnership program that works with the social enterprise sector on innovative projects to generate sustainable and inclusive outcomes for all members of our community

[Social Enterprise Partnership Program](#)

Banyule's Social Enterprise Support Service helps individuals, as well as current and future social enterprises with tailored information to develop & grow social enterprises.

[Social Enterprise Support Service](#)

Grant Pool & Grant Categories Banyule City Council's Social Enterprise Growth Fund pool consists of \$15,000 available to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses, social enterprises & not-for-profits to create social, cultural or environmental benefits for the Banyule City Council area.

This funding round has 2 purposes:

- 1. Support for Existing Businesses**
To help established Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander businesses, social enterprises, and not-for-profit organisations **scale their operations** and **increase their social, cultural, or environmental impact**.
- 2. Support for New Business Development**
To assist in the **creation of new social enterprise models** or in the **expansion of emerging businesses** with a focus on delivering positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

You can apply for Social Enterprise Growth Funding of up to \$3,000.

We encourage you to consider if you require the full \$3,000 to enable more organisations to access the available pool.

Banyule City Council also offers a range of other Grant streams, including Community Grants and Environment Grants. For more information on the other Grant streams available please visit; www.banyule.vic.gov.au/grants

Key dates

Grant round opens	01/04/2026
Grant round closes	30/04/2026
Applicants advised of outcome	30/05/2026
Acquittal date	31/12/2026

Eligibility criteria

- Applicants must fall into one of the following groups;
 - o Meet Banyule's definition of a [Social Enterprise](#)
 - o An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander business registered with [Kinaway Chamber of Commerce](#) **or** [Supply Nation](#)
 - o A certified social enterprise with [Social Traders](#)
 - o Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs)
- Be incorporated or have appropriate auspice support.
- Provide (or be planning to) support, programs or services to people living in Banyule.
- Have an ABN, or be willing to complete a "Statement by Supplier"
- Provide a current detailed profit and loss statement (preferred) **or** a detailed, current financial statement **or** detailed business plan with financial projections if you are a start-up. Bank statements are not appropriate and should not be submitted.

A social enterprise is a business that is led by a social, cultural or environmental mission that creates benefit to the public. It earns most of its income from trade and reinvests its profits to fulfil its economic mission. It's important to know that social enterprises are different to regular corporations who typically work to maximise profit to benefit shareholders and owners.

Who is not eligible to apply

- Groups/individuals with outstanding grant acquittals. All previous grants from Banyule City Council, where the acquittal is due prior to the closing of the current funding round, must be acquitted to a satisfactory standard. Unacquitted, or insufficiently/unsatisfactorily acquitted grants will deem the application ineligible.
- Groups who undertake or promote gambling.
- Groups/individuals seeking support or assistance from Councilors in their application.

What won't be funded

- Political activities.
- Projects submitted by individuals who are not auspiced.
- Projects submitted by non-incorporated organisations/groups that are not auspiced.
- Projects which are the responsibility of another funding body or level of government.
- Uniforms, prizes, trophies, scholarships, donations, sponsorships or gifts.
- Applications seeking retrospective funding.
- Costs related to project management or auspicings fees for groups or organisations (individual applicants can include the costs of auspicings as a part of the funded component of their project).
- Fundraising.
- Catering expenses unless you can demonstrate that they are integral to the project's community benefit.
- Delivery fees.
- Projects where the group/organisation has received full funding for the same project from another source.
- Projects that require ongoing financial support from Council.
- Projects that have taken place previously, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the project is significantly different in scale, scope or ideas.
- Projects run for private or commercial purposes.
- Recurrent operational expenses (including utilities such as fuel, gas, water and electricity).
- Costs related to higher education course fees or educational expenses.

The application process

Filling in the form

Applications for the Banyule Social Enterprise Fund Program must be made online via the SmartyGrants link <https://banyule.smartygrants.com.au/>

Tips for completing your application online

- Please register for SmartyGrants and open a new application as soon as possible to receive communications and reminders from us sent out to all active applicants. Please note: you can save and return to your grant application at any time prior to submission.
- You will need an email address to register on SmartyGrants and submit your application.
- Access to the application form will not be available until the opening date.
- The online system does not accept incomplete applications. All fields marked with an asterisk* must be completed.
- Review your application carefully before submitting, as once it is submitted you cannot go back and make changes. If you have submitted and need to make changes, applicants can request to have their application reopened to update or submit further information if the request is made prior to the grant round closing date. Once the grant round closes, no further changes are possible

- Ensure all required documentation is attached prior to submitting your application. All requested documentation in support of the application needs to be submitted with your application on Smartygrants. Council staff are unable to attach this information for you.
- When you submit your application, you will receive an application number. Make a note of it and print and keep a copy of your application for future reference.
- Applicants will receive an email from Smarty Grants when the application has been successfully submitted.
- More information about submitting an application through SmartyGrants can be found here: <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

Budget

You will need to submit a balanced budget that includes any other sources of public or private income or in-kind support and details your project expenditure.

Quotes

Council encourages all applicants to purchase from a local supplier where practicable.

- All applications are required to supply 1 quote/estimate for any hire/purchase of equipment, services or materials over \$500. Quotes can be written, scanned images from catalogues or online stores, or a screenshot from a website.
- All quotes need to clearly show the supplier/company name and contact details.
- Quotes should be current (not more than 6 months old)
- Council recommends that any equipment purchased with grant funds should meet Australian Standards.

Financial information for group applicants

- A current detailed profit and loss statement (preferred) **or** a detailed, current financial statement **or** detailed business plan with financial projections if you are a start-up must be provided with the application
- If savings or term deposits exist, the group must clearly explain what the funds are set aside for.
- Groups with substantial money in bank accounts who do not provide an explanation as to what the money is allocated for will be considered a lower priority.
- The application needs to demonstrate why the project/equipment purchase cannot be completed with existing funds.

Contact with Council

All applicants must contact a Council officer to discuss their proposal prior to lodgement. Council officers may be able to assist you planning your project or activity or advise you on eligibility conditions for the grants.

Please follow the following timeline for contact

- Initial contact: no later than **15 April 2026**
- An Officer will need to complete a final checklist with you, which covers questions related to project eligibility and viability, prior to submission.

This must be completed no later than **15 April 2026**

Failure to discuss your project and complete a checklist with a Council officer prior to submission will render your application ineligible for funding.

You will be asked to provide the name of the Council officer you spoke with and the date of the discussion on the application form.

This will also be recorded by the officer you speak with. Please email Daniel Shields (socialenterprise@banyule.vic.gov.au), to set up a time to discuss your idea.

GST & Council grants

Please note, Banyule City Council grants are GST free.

The GST component of products and services for your project can be included within the proposed grant budget, however GST will not be added to the total final grant amount allocated if you are successful.

Auspicing

Unincorporated groups will require the support of an incorporated entity to auspice their grant application.

Any legally constituted body may act as an auspice organisation to partner with and/or apply for or manage funding on behalf of another non-incorporated organisation.

Examples of an auspice include:

- A peak body or governing association of your field
- A community organisation you have previously worked or partnered with
- Organisations with a similar mission or purpose
- Local neighbourhood houses

If the application is successful, the auspice organisation will receive and manage the funds for the applicant to deliver the funded project. The auspice organisation is responsible for the effective acquittal of the grant.

If your application is to be auspicied by another organisation, all insurance, incorporation and ABN information of the auspicied group must be provided in your application. A letter from the auspice organisation on letterhead stating their support for the application is also required.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that a clear agreement setting out each party's obligations is reached prior to applying for funding. Refer to <https://www.nfplaw.org.au/free-resources/working-with-others/what-is-auspicing> for further information.

*Auspice organisations may also apply for funding in their own right. Acting as an auspice for an unincorporated group will not affect the auspice group's opportunity for success with its own grant application.

Multiple applications

Both individual and group applicants may not apply for more than one Banyule Social Enterprise Fund grant each round. However, applicants may:

- Apply in another Banyule Council grants stream
- Be named as a partner/collaborator on more than one Banyule Social Enterprise Fund grant application if they are not the lead applicant
- Organisations that are auspicing another application may also apply for their own projects
- Organisations may auspice more than one application

Completing your Application

Your application will be assessed against the following 4 criteria depending on your relevant:

Assessment Criteria – Existing Social or Inclusive Enterprise

- How will the funding increase your capacity for business growth? (25%)
 - o How does this project achieve improvements to areas such as revenue, employment or customer growth, or other benefits.
- How will the project increase your social impact? (25%)
 - o How does this project relate to your social enterprise's social, environmental or cultural mission?
- Likelihood of project success (20%)
 - o Do you, or your project partners, have the necessary capacity, experience & skills to deliver this project?
 - o Is the project realistic within the specified timeframes
 - o Do you have existing networks or resources to support your project delivery.
- Benefit to the Banyule community (30%)
 - o Who are the intended beneficiaries of your project?
 - o How will you engage or reach these people?
 - o What is the identified need within the Banyule community?
 - o Are there any ongoing/long-term benefits to the community from your project?

Assessment Criteria – Existing Organisation Developing Social or Inclusive Enterprise Model

- How well the social, environmental or cultural mission of the proposed social enterprise is defined (25%)
 - o Who are the intended beneficiaries of your project?
- Social Enterprise viability (25%)
 - o Does your business have a viable operating model?
 - o What market gap are you seeking to fill with your enterprise?
- Likelihood of success (20%)

- o Do you, or your project partners, have the necessary capacity, experience & skills to deliver this project?
 - o Is the project realistic within the specified timeframes?
 - o Do you have existing networks or resources to support your project delivery?
- Benefit to the Banyule community (30%)
 - o What is the identified need within the Banyule community?
 - o Are there any ongoing/long-term benefits to the community from your project?

Assessment and decision making

Applications will be assessed through the following steps:

Stage	Who
Eligibility Check	Social Enterprise Lead
Officer Review & Comments	Council Officers with knowledge of the sector
Grants Panel Review	Banyule Senior Officers
Panel Recommendations	Approved under the delegation of the Director of Community Wellbeing

All parties involved in the assessment process **must declare any conflict of interest** prior to involvement in the assessment of grants.

Notification

Notification of grant outcomes are made within 1 month of the closing date for the round.

Applicants will be notified by email. Successful applicants will be required to submit a grant agreement and invoice form online prior to the grant being paid by Council.

Council no longer requires a separate invoice to be submitted by the successful applicant.

Grant agreement

Successful grant applicants will be required to sign a grant agreement.

In the case of group applicants, the applicant is signing on behalf of the organisation and by doing so is agreeing that the group/organisation is fully aware of the application and the conditions associated with the grant being awarded.

Any requests for variations to the purpose, scope or spend of the grant must be made in writing and are subject to Council approval.

Variations

Requests for variations to the purpose, expenditure or end date for the approved project must be submitted online. Contact should be made with Council to discuss the reason for the variation and to request a form to be added to the application on SmartyGrants. Once submitted the request will be reviewed and the outcome will be advised via email. The project should not proceed until the group has been formally notified of the outcome of the variation request.

Acquittal

The acquittal is to be submitted online at <https://banyule.smartygrants.com.au> and must detail how the grant funds were spent.

To successfully acquit your grant, you will be required to submit receipts or an invoice showing a zero balance owing, accounting for your expenditure.

Receipts must list items purchased, detailing the cost per item, and the total cost. All receipts should reflect the expenditure approved and align with the grant budget or letter of offer.

Unpaid invoices, copies of online orders and bank transfer statements cannot be accepted as proof of purchase.

Failure to acquit the grant satisfactorily will be considered a breach. A breach may result in requests for grant funding to be returned to Council and exclude the group from future grant rounds.

Acknowledgement of Council

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the contribution of Banyule City Council to the project by including reference to it in publications and annual reports and by including the words “supported by a Banyule City Council Grant” or Council’s logo in any promotional material.

Who to contact

For more information about the Grants round please contact:

Name: Daniel Shields

Email: socialenterprise@banyule.vic.gov.au

Ph: (03) 9242 3416

If you experience technical issues with the SmartyGrants system, please contact them directly at service@smartygrants.com.au or by phone on (03) 9320 6888.

Appendix 1 – Project Plan

Some categories require you to submit a Project Plan.

Please use this template as a guide on how to develop a project plan.

Project plans should demonstrate the key steps that will be taken, what will be delivered, by whom and by when. This plan will provide the assessment panel with more information on your timeframes and key outputs.

Project name:

Organisation/Group applying:

Anticipated project start date:		Anticipated project end date:		
Key actions	Person Responsible:	Performance indicators	Date task to be completed.	Additional information.
List tasks to be completed in order they will be undertaken	Who will do the task?	What will show that you have completed the task?		Include resources required including staff, materials etc

Appendix 2 - Definitions

ABN (Australian Business Number): The Australian Business Number is a number used to identify a business or organisation for tax and Australian Government purposes. An ABN for the organisation or for the Auspice organisation must be provided in the grant application.

Acquittal report: An acquittal report ensures that grant recipients have administered grant funds responsibly and in line with the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement. An acquittal report usually consists of a written report that summarises project outcomes in relation to project objectives. Grant recipients will be required to provide a financial statement detailing how the funds were spent. The financial statement must include a detailed budget breakdown.

Auspice: Any legally constituted body may act as an auspice organisation to partner with and/or apply for or manage funding on behalf of another non-incorporated organisation. If the funding application is successful, the auspice organisation will receive and manage the funds for the applicant to deliver the funded project or activities. The auspice organisation is responsible for the effective acquittal of the grant.

Conflict of Interest: A conflict of interest occurs if a member of the Assessment Panel has something to personally gain from the grant application being either successful or unsuccessful. It also extends to providing family and close friends with preference.

Grant agreement: A Grant Agreement is a formal document stating the purpose of the funding, the financial amount, and the conditions attached to the grant. It also defines the rights and responsibilities of the grant recipient and Council. Once signed, recipients are under a legal obligation to comply with the stated terms and conditions.

In-kind support: An in-kind contribution is when a group contributes goods or services in lieu of providing funds. In-kind contributions must have a \$ value. For example, volunteer hours @ \$41 per hour, use of equipment or facilities or donated goods.

Incorporated associations: An incorporated association receives recognition as a legal entity separate from its members and offers some protection for office holders from any debts or liabilities incurred by the group. The organisation must be registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria. For more information please contact Consumer Affairs Victoria or phone 1300 558 18.

Social Enterprise or Profit for Purpose: An organisation that trades to intentionally tackle social problems, improve communities, provide people at risk of exclusion access to employment or training or help the environment.

Public Liability Insurance: protects community groups and organisations against legal liability to pay-compensation to third parties, property damage that may occur as a result of activities undertaken by the group or legal costs that a group may have to pay if it needs to defend claims of bodily injury and/or property damage made by a member of the public against it.

Unincorporated associations: An unincorporated association is not recognised as a separate legal entity to the members associated with it. It is a group of people who agree to act together as an organisation and form an association. The group can remain informal and its members make their own rules on how the group is managed. The rules may also be referred to as a constitution.

Not for Profit (NFP) Organisation: An NFP is an organisation that does not distribute any profit to an individual, its members and or shareholders. Any profit from the organisation will be directed back into the organisation and its activities.