MAJU PULU KITA | ADVANCE OUR ISLANDS

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT

GUIDELINES

Scope

To support new and existing local businesses to improve amenity, stimulate business activity and provide direct benefits to the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Community in a manner that is fair, equitable and transparent.

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Strategic Community Plan 2016 – 2026 identifies the need to encourage economic stability for the Islands. The Shires Corporate Business Plan further defines the aspiration to support employment and promote business opportunities. The Business Improvement Grants Program aims to support local businesses in achieving the goals and aspirations as detailed in the Strategic Community Plan.

Grants of up to 50% of the total project cost up to a maximum grant of $3,000 will be available for eligible applicants for approved project and subject to budget allocations.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for a grant, a business must meet the following criteria:

- Be a legally constituted entity, an individual or business with an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- Have a demonstrated investment in the Shire; such as a lease of at least three years or ownership of a premises located within the Shire; to be determined at the discretion of the Shire;
- Have all current insurances, permits and licences for business operation. These approvals must be obtained prior to any application being approved;
- Have all current insurances, permits and licences for the works/services/project proposed. These approvals must be obtained prior to any funds being dispersed;
- Have received approval of the grant being successful prior to the commencement of the project (grants will not be given for works already undertaken).
- Have not been approved for funding under this program previously in the current financial year (maximum one grant per applicant per financial year).
- Businesses which are solely home based will be ineligible.
- The business must not have any outstanding debts with the Shire.

Types of Projects Supported

- Projects that improve amenity, stimulate business activity, and provide direct benefits to the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Community such as (but not limited to):
    - Signage (Council approved)
    - Specialised equipment that increases services not currently available
    - Formal training

Grants will **NOT** be considered if:

- The applicant organisation is another tier of government or if the grant would directly benefit another tier of government;
- The applicant organisation is funded by other tiers of government, or if the grant would directly benefit an organisation funded by another tier of government;
- The applicant organisation has an outstanding grant that has not been acquitted properly.
- The application is for a program or event that has already been delivered (e.g. retrospective funding)

Ineligible Expenditure

The following expenditure will not be supported under the program:

- Business operating costs (ie. wages, stock, marketing, etc)
- Consumables
- Non-specialised, relocatable equipment

Assessment

Applicants must demonstrate their proposed project meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Job creation/retention
- Improved amenity
- Increased customer experience
- Community benefit
- Diversification from existing offerings

Applications will be assessed by the Community Development Coordinator with final approval by the Chief executive Officer subject to budget limitations.

Purpose of the Funds

Funds are allocated only for the purposes of the project as described in the application, and must not be used for any other purpose, or transferred or assigned to any other party, without prior written approval by the Shire.

Application Assessment

Applications will be assessed for compliance by the CDC. Non-compliant applications will be marked as such.

The CEO will make payments under delegated authority upon receipt of the completed acquittal.

Each application will be individually reviewed, assessed and ranked on merit against the guidelines, eligibility and assessment criteria. The Shire reserves the right to decline any application that does not meet the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Business Improvement Grant criteria.

All decisions made through this assessment process are final and not subject to an appeals process. Successful recipients may not be granted the full amount requested.
Applicants will be notified of the outcome by letter within 30 working days after the close off date of each funding round. If successful, the applicant will receive a letter of success, outlining the awarded amount and any conditions that are associated with the grant. This will include reporting and acquittal requirements.

Funding Agreement
All successful applicants will be provided with a funding agreement which will outline milestones for payments, how the Shire should be acknowledged and acquittal requirements.

Budget
When preparing the budget breakdown, applicants must list all expenditure items inclusive of GST. Where applicable, identify which items of expenditure will be funded by which funding sources.

Quotes
The Shire encourages, where possible, the use of local businesses for any quotes that may be sourced in relation to the supply of goods and services, however this does not form part of the assessment criteria.

Acquittal
Within one (1) month of the agreed project completion date, all Shire's Business Improvement Grant recipients must acquit their grant. Please keep appropriate receipts and records accordingly. Acquittal will involve providing the following evidence:

- All paid invoices and receipts;
- An outline of the original aims/objectives of the project and an explanation of how the funding assisted in meeting these objectives;
- Photos/evidence of completed project.
- Failure to satisfactorily complete the acquittal requirements may disqualify recipients from receiving their funding and further grants or financial assistance.

Assistance
For further information or assistance to complete the application form, please contact the Community Development Coordinator on:

Phone: (08) 9162 6649

Email: aindil.minkom@cocos.wa.gov.au