



Community Assistance Program Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions

Updated April 2023



Aims of the Community Assistance Program

- To assist local organisations and community groups to develop and implement one-off projects and activities that benefit the residents of the Penrith Local Government Area.
- To meet identified social and community outcomes.
- To encourage community participation in locally based community projects.

Eligibility Criteria

- Community based non-profit organisations providing one off activities.
- Direct benefit to, and participation by, Penrith City residents.
- Project management in line with Council's Access and Equity principles.

Ineligible applications include:

- Fundraising programs or organisations whose main role is to fundraise.
- Reimbursements for projects already undertaken.
- Organisations that have not returned evaluation forms for projects funded by previous Community Assistance Program funding rounds.



Assessment Criteria

- How effectively the proposed project addresses the priority social needs of Penrith City residents.
- The expected outcomes and beneficiaries of the project.
- Collaboration with other community groups to deliver the project.
- How effectively the proposed project contributes to strengthening and building the capacity of the community.
- The capacity of the applicant to access alternative resources or funding for the proposed project, including whether the proposed project is a core responsibility of an existing Government funded program.
- How achievable and cost-effective the proposed project is.

Community priority needs

- Strengthening local community connections
- Addressing isolation and disadvantage
- Providing crisis support
- Improving physical and mental wellbeing health
- Strengthening Increasing community preparedness for disasters
- Addressing family violence
- Increasing Enhancing intercultural connections through creative and cultural expression
- Improving sustainability outcomes through community building activities



Priority groups

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Children 0–12 years old
- Young people
- Women
- People with disability including children, families and carers
- Older people
- Gender and sexually diverse community members

To assist in preparing an application, information on priority needs and issues within Penrith city can be found in the following council's strategies and recent community engagement listed here:

- [Penrith Community Strategic Plan 2017–2027](#)
- [Penrith Community Snapshot 2018](#)
- [Resilient Penrith Action Plan 2021–2030](#)
- [Penrith Health Snapshot 2019](#)
- [Penrith Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017–2021](#)
- [Penrith Disability Snapshot 2021](#)
- [Penrith Ageing Snapshot 2020](#)
- [Penrith Community Safety Plan 2018–2022](#)
- [Penrith Youth Action Plan 2021](#)



How to apply

Applications open at 9am on Wednesday 7 June 2023 and close on Thursday 6 July 2023.

Apply for up to \$1,500 per project via Smarty Grants.

Enquiries

For any additional information or questions please contact Natalie Wadwell on 4732 7513 or natalie.wadwell@penrith.city



Frequently Asked Questions

Priority community needs

1. What are access & equity principles?

Social justice in the community is when everyone has equal access to wealth, opportunities and decision-making. CAP Projects should incorporate the principles of social justice:

- Equity – there should be fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those in need. It's important to consider and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances. The equity impacts of any proposed activities include the impact on community well-being as well as who pays and who benefits.
- Access – all people should have fair access to economic resources, services and rights essential to improving their quality of life. All residents should be able to get to and use public facilities and services regardless of their social and economic circumstances.
- Participation – all people should have maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.
- Rights – to achieve equality of rights and avoid discrimination, opportunities for participation should accommodate linguistic, cultural and religious diversity.

2. What are the priority social needs of Penrith City residents?

Projects that receive Community Assistance Program funding should work to address a local social need. Social issues and needs are those which affect a large number of people in the community, and can often be supported by community projects, programs and infrastructure that aim to provide opportunities for people to improve their quality of life. Examples of social needs include access to:

- Secure, affordable housing to address homelessness and housing stress



- Opportunities that support childhood wellbeing and healthy development, to address issues like low levels of literacy or emotional development
- Opportunities and infrastructure that support healthy and active lifestyles, to address health and wellbeing issues like increased rates of obesity or mental health issues
- Education and employment opportunities for vulnerable groups, to break cycles of disadvantage
- Opportunities to build social connections and support networks, to address social isolation and improve community participation
- Domestic and family violence support and prevention
- Opportunities for local participation to build community strength, pride and connection

Social needs are often identified by trends or increased rates of occurrence in an area, with demographic data being an important tool to look at social needs. The [Penrith Community Profile](#), available on the Penrith City Council website, is a comprehensive source of demographic, social, health and sustainability data specifically related to the City of Penrith and its suburbs. The Penrith Profile.id website (profile.id.com.au/penrith) is also a good source of demographic data for the Penrith City community. You can use trends or demographic data as evidence of a social need your project will work to address.

3. What is collaboration? Why should we collaborate?

Collaboration is working with others to achieve an outcome together. This means that each member of a collaboration contributes their strengths and learns from the others.

Collaboration with other community groups and local businesses improves awareness of available services, builds new networks and gives access to a wider range of resources. It also allows resources to be used more efficiently and cooperatively to achieve mutual aims. Collaboration is encouraged so that your group can benefit from these advantages in the long-term. Collaboration with community groups means that other community groups will work with your group, contributing to planning or delivering the project together.



Collaboration with the community builds ownership within the community and empowers community members to participate fully in their local community. It allows your project to meet the unique needs of the local people in your community. Collaboration is encouraged to provide improved opportunities for the residents of Penrith City. Collaboration with the community could include community involvement in planning meetings for the project, or as volunteers on the day for an event. Asking the community for feedback on your project and using that feedback to plan future activities is another way the community can be involved. Some applicant groups are comprised entirely of local community volunteers, which means the project is resident-led.

4. How can our project contribute to capacity in the community or community groups?

Improving capacity in the community is about strengthening the community so the community is more capable of doing things. This includes building resilience through overcoming social isolation, learning life-skills and overcoming barriers to accessing opportunities and resources.

Improving capacity in community groups is about helping groups to be more effective at planning and delivering activities, so they are more able to deliver their activities. This includes getting resources, or developing your group's skills, to allow you to run new or additional activities. It also includes improving the way your activities are delivered to improve your group's ability to operate in the long term.

Preparing your application

5. How much money can we apply for?

Any amount up to a maximum of \$1,500 per project can be provided through the Community Assistance Program. You don't need to apply for the maximum amount – it's best to apply for the amount needed to make your project happen.



6. Can we use donations and other grants for a project funded by cap?

We encourage groups to source other support for their projects, but it is not required. Other support can include donations from the community, sponsorship from local businesses or funds from other grant programs.

7. We received community assistance program funding last year – can we apply again this year?

Yes. Community Assistance Program funding aims to assist local community groups to develop activities that benefit Penrith City residents. If your group has a successful project one year, you can also have new ideas for projects the following year.

8. Can we put in more than one application this year?

Yes. Community Assistance Program funding aims to assist local community groups to develop activities that benefit Penrith City residents. If your group has more than one idea for projects, you can put in separate applications that will be assessed separately.

9. Community assistance program funding is for one-off activities – can we apply for funding to run a series of activities?

Yes. The 'one-off' description is to explain that the funding is not recurring. This means that you can use Community Assistance Program funding to run several sessions. Examples include running sessions every week for a term or several days in a row.

10. Can we charge a fee for people to participate?

As per the Access & Equity principles discussed above, projects should provide equitable access to participation. Participation fees can be a barrier to participation for vulnerable community members.

If you will charge a participation fee, you must include this information in your application, and also say how you are ensuring that fees are not a barrier for participation. For example, a gold coin donation for participation could be used for cost recovery without strictly imposing an attendance cost.

If your funding body requires you to charge fees, you could put measures in place to support disadvantaged community members to attend. In this case, you should also



consider that the Assessment Criteria note that Community Assistance Program funding should not be used to achieve the core responsibilities of an existing Government funded program.

11. What is an auspice organisation? Do we need an auspice organisation?

An Auspice Organisation is an organisation that provides support and guidance to another smaller organisation or group. An Auspice Organisation might support your community group by helping you with your grant application, assisting with insurance cover for activities, or managing the grant funds on your group's behalf.

If your group is not registered as a non-profit organisation with NSW Fair Trading or ASIC, you will need to partner with an Auspice Organisation. Registered non-profit organisations have an adopted constitution that sets out how they will manage funds, as well as record and report spending, to ensure that funds are used appropriately and not used for profit.

To receive grant funds, your group will need to have a bank account and public liability insurance – an Auspice Organisation may be able to help you with these aspects, whilst also offering local experience, networks and resources to support your project.

If you have a great idea for a community project but don't have an Auspice Organisation yet, contact us so we can help you (see contact details below). You can approach a local community service organisation to auspice your project, or we can help put you in touch with some local services. Many local community service organisations are keen to work with local residents to deliver projects that make a difference in the local area.

12. Whose bank account /ABN /GST details should we provide under payment details?

Provide the details of the group or organisation who will be managing the funds.

13. We can't apply online. Can we still apply?

Yes, you can arrange for a form to be posted to you. You can return the completed application form by post, but please be aware of the short timeframe and ensure you allow enough time for the form to be received by us before the applications close.



Assessment process

14. When will we find out if we are successful? When will we receive the funds? When can we run our project?

You will be notified of the outcome of your application by early September 2023. We anticipated funding for successful applications will be received October 2023. You can commence your project any time after you have been notified that you have been successful.

15. How do you decide who will be funded? How do you decide how much money each project will receive?

Each grant application is assessed against the Eligibility Criteria and the Assessment Criteria that are listed in the CAP Guidelines. Firstly, to be considered for funding, your project must meet the Eligibility Criteria.

Next, each application is scored on how well it meets six Assessment Criteria, based on the information you include in your application. Once all the applications are ranked in order of total score, the funding is allocated so that applications with a higher score will receive more funding and lower-scoring applications will receive less funding. If you tell us that your project needs a certain amount (eg. \$1000) to go ahead, and your application is allocated less funding than the amount needed (eg. \$800), your project will not be funded because the available funds are not enough for your project to proceed.

To help with understanding the Eligibility and Assessment Criteria, there is information in this FAQ document, including on collaboration, capacity-building, priority social needs, and Access and Equity principles. You can also contact us with your questions (see below for contact details).

Expectations of successful recipients

16. What happens if I need to change a project from what was in the application?



Council appreciates that sometimes there is variance in project expenses or changes to how you approach your project. If your expenses or project scope change throughout the implementation of the project, it is important to notify Council in writing and obtain approval prior to spending the money. Failure to notify Council may impact processing your acquittal and future funding applications with Council.

17. Do I need to recognising Council's contribution?

Yes. Recipients are asked to acknowledge Council's contribution on promotional material. Please request Council's logo when you are preparing your promotional material. Logo use must be signed off by Council. Please allow one week in your planning for approval.

18. What is an acquittal and how does it impact future funding applications?

An acquittal is a formal report on your funded activities and how the money was spent. It is a requirement to submit an acquittal for each project funded through the Community

A project acquittal form will be made available through the Smarty Grants portal. This form must be returned to Council on finalisation of the funded project, no later than 30 June 2023. Council recommends completing your acquittal as soon as possible after project completion to ensure it is approved prior to seeking further funding opportunities.

A strong acquittal includes:

- A detailed budget of how public funds were spent, particularly if there is variance from the stated budget in the application
- Copies of invoices and receipts for expenses
- The outcomes of your project, such as the number of participants, quotes or a summary of feedback
- Images showing your activity in action.

19. We have another question – what can we do?

Get in touch by email or phone so we can help you and provide more information.

For more information, contact Natalie Wadwell on 4732 7513 or email

Natalie.Wadwell@penrith.city

