

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

COMMUNITY GRANT ASSESSMENT PANEL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

VERSION: 03

Approval Date	30 May 2024
Approved by	Chief Executive Officer
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Responsible Officer	Director Corporate Services
Authorising Officer	Chief Executive Officer

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Purpose	3
Authority	3
Functions	3
Definitions	4
Terms of Reference	5
Committee term	5
Term starts	5
Term ends	5
Membership.....	5
Constituency of the Assessment Panel.....	5
Role and responsibilities of members	5
Appointment of members.....	5
Length of appointment of members	5
Convener / Chairperson.....	6
Meetings.....	6
Grant Assessment Procedure	6
Support to the Panel.....	6
Conflicts of interest.....	6
Misuse of information	6
Reporting.....	7
Secretariat	7
Review.....	7
Records	8

Introduction

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Assessment Panel (the Panel) is to:

1. Review, assess and provide objective, independent recommendations to Council in relation to applications submitted to the City's Community Grants (the Grants); and
2. Ensure guidelines, assessment criteria, policy and procedures endorsed by Council have been applied consistently and equitably for all applications.

AUTHORITY

3. The Panel's work will be confined to the assessment of Community Grants for Council's consideration.
4. The Panel does not have delegated authority.

FUNCTIONS

5. The Grants support projects, programs, activities and events that respond to a community need, and will improve the health, wellbeing and capacity of our community.
6. The Grants are based on funding themes aligned with the Council Plan priorities and Geelong's vision - A Clever and Creative Future.
7. Assessment of applications is based on the criteria included in the Councillor endorsed guidelines.

Definitions

Act

The *Local Government Act 2020*.

CEO

The Chief Executive Officer of the City appointed by Council.

City

The administration of the Greater Geelong City Council, led by the Chief Executive Officer.

Council

The Greater Geelong City Council.

Councillor

Elected officials representing the City of Greater Geelong, including the Mayor.

Council officer

All staff of the City, including all contractors and volunteers engaged by the City, and the Executive Leadership Team.

Conflict of interest

Has the same meaning as defined in the Act.

ELT

Executive Leadership Team consisting of the Directors of the City who all report to the Chief Executive Officer.

Terms of Reference

COMMITTEE TERM

Term starts

1. Panel members are appointed for a period of three years.

Term ends

2. The term ends after three years or a decision to abolish the Panel.

MEMBERSHIP

Constituency of the Assessment Panel

3. The Panel shall comprise:
 - a. Director Corporate Services (or delegate); and,
 - b. Community members selected through an Expression of Interest (EoI) process.
4. Appropriate specialists may be invited to join the Panel to ensure diverse representation and adequate skill sets. Such panel members are still required to complete an EOI and address the selection criteria.
5. Two panel members will constitute a quorum for an individual grant assessment panel.
6. More external Panel members than needed will be approved. This is to ensure there is an adequate pool of Panel members.

Role and responsibilities of members

7. Individual Panel members are required to:
 - a. Adhere to the policy and guidelines in making assessment of each grant application
 - b. Adhere to confidentiality and conflict of interest requirements
 - c. Complete assessment within the required time frames; and
 - d. Attend briefing sessions and meetings either virtually or in person.

Appointment of members

8. Community members will be invited to submit an online expression of interest for participation on the Panel.

In selecting community members for the Panel, the City will seek to:

 - Achieve a mix of skills representative of the scope of the Community Grants
 - Ensure broad representation of the City of Greater Geelong community; and
 - Create a forum for full discussion of all applications to the Community Grants.
9. The CEO will approve the appointment of assessors through a briefing note prepared by the Community Grants and Partnership Project Manager.
10. Any vacancy which arises during the appointment period will be filled through a further EoI process.

Length of appointment of members

11. Panel members are appointed for a maximum period of three years.

Remuneration of members

12. This is a voluntary position. Members are not paid a sitting fee. The City will reimburse Panel members for all expenses incurred when attending face-to-face meetings, such as transport and meals.

CONVENER / CHAIRPERSON

13. The position of Convener shall be held by the Manager, Community Grants & Partnerships or they may nominate another officer from the Grants Unit.
14. The Convener's role is to ensure all panel members have the opportunity to participate fairly in discussion, and to confirm that the Panel's agreed recommendations are recorded in the meeting minutes.
15. If the Convener is not present at a meeting, another officer from the Grants Unit shall undertake the role.

MEETINGS

Grant Assessment Procedure

16. Funding round opening and closing dates are advertised on Council's website. Applications to grant programs are made via SmartyGrants.
17. Following closure of the application period officers shall compile all applications and make an initial assessment of eligibility in preparation for the Panel meeting.
18. Panel meetings are convened at an agreed time to assess all applications received under each grant category. In addition to Panel members, Council officers with expertise relevant to each grant stream will present to panel meetings to advise on and provide information on applications. These officers do not have a decision-making role.
19. The Panel uses the weighted assessment criteria as outlined in the program guidelines to guide the assessment of applications and development of recommendations for funding.
20. The overall assessment scores provide the basis for the Panel's funding recommendations to Council.
21. Appointed Panel members may be called upon to assess one or multiple grants.
22. Two Panel members will constitute a quorum for an individual grant assessment panel.

Support to the Panel

23. Panel members will be briefed on the context of individual grants their role and the process of recommendation to Council.
24. Panel members will be provided training to complete their assessments via SmartyGrants.

Conflicts of interest

25. Panel members are required to declare and document any conflict, or perceived conflict of interest in line with legislation and policy guidelines. Where any conflict, or perceived conflict with an application is declared, the Panel member must not participate in the discussion or assessment of the application.
26. Community panel members cannot apply for any City of Greater Geelong grants during their term.

Misuse of information

27. All information received by Panel members in the course of their work as members is confidential and must not be shared with any party outside Council.
28. All media enquiries are to be directed to the Corporate Communications Council Officer assigned to the Community Grants Unit.

REPORTING

29. The panel is required to report its recommendation to Council for endorsement of funding allocations through the Grants.

SECRETARIAT

30. Council officers will provide secretariat services for the Panel. This involves convening meetings, providing all documentation, and recording meeting notes in the Panel Report Spreadsheet.
31. Agendas for the Community/Independent Panel will be distributed at least three business days prior to the meeting by the Grants Unit.

REVIEW

32. The terms of reference for this committee will be reviewed every four years.

Records

Records shall be retained for at least the periods shown below.

Table 1: Record retention and disposal schedule

Record	Retention / Disposal Authority	Retention Period	Location
Records relating to arranging and facilitating Panel meetings.	PROS 09/05 VAR 1 Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of Local Government Functions	Temporary	Destroy after administrative use has concluded.
Records of general administrative nature relating to management of Panel meetings.			

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