

Policy number	Policy 121
Policy title	COVID-19 Business Grants
Strategic outcomes supported	CL6 – Finances are managed appropriately, sustainably and transparently for the benefit of the community. EC1 – A desirable place for commerce and tourism that supports equity, diverse local employment and entrepreneurship. S3 – An empowered community with a sense of pride, safety and belonging.

Policy objective:

To establish transparent and effective guidelines for the administration of grants to local businesses and business groups that support vibrancy, innovation and recovery from the economic impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Policy scope:

This policy applies to any party seeking funding from the Town of Victoria Park for a Covid-19 Business Grant, including:

- Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants; and
- Covid-19 Economic Development Grants.

Policy definitions:

Advertised closing date – the date by which the Town of Victoria Park requires complete applications to be received for an advertised funding round.

Auspice organisation - means a legal entity which must take responsibility for applying, receiving, holding, administering and acquitting against a grant or funding on behalf of an unincorporated organisation or individual.

Incorporated association – means an association, as defined by the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 [WA], inclusive of any association, society, club, institution, community group or body formed or carried on for a lawful purpose. All profits made by the association must be used to benefit the association or, in the case of a charity, the beneficiaries of that charity, and not for the gain of its individual members.

Medium Business – is an Australian legal entity with an Australian Business Number, which has between 20 and 199 employees and maximum annual turnover of \$10 million (excl. GST).

Regulatory Approval – an approval, licence or permit required by a government body, statutory authority or similar for the carrying out of works or activities, including but not limited to Development Approvals, Building Licences, Liquor Licences, Food Business Registration and Free Trade Area Permits.

Small Business – is an Australian legal entity or individual with an Australian Business Number, which has 19 or fewer employees and maximum annual turnover of \$10 million (excl. GST)

Standard Operating Expenses – are expenses that are core to the basic operation of a business and not directly related to Covid-19 recovery needs, including but not limited to staff salaries, rent, utilities, insurances, consumables, standard operational equipment and routine advertising or marketing costs.

Policy statement:

Administration of Covid-19 Business Grants

1. The Town of Victoria Park will administer Covid-19 Business Grants to support resilience, vibrancy and innovation in the local economy during the Covid-19 recovery process.
2. Covid-19 Business Grants are subject to a regular budget review process and availability of funding. The Town of Victoria Park reserves the right to suspend the administration or availability of Covid-19 Business Grants at any time.
3. The Town of Victoria Park will advertise when it is accepting applications for Covid-19 Business Grants on its website and such other appropriate mediums. Applications may be accepted during set funding rounds or on an ongoing basis.
4. The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for the operational management of Covid-19 Business Grants.
5. All funding provided under this policy is to be reported on in the Annual Report.
6. The Town must ensure that all documentation relating to the COVID-19 business grant program, including executed agreements, is recorded, as required under the *State Records Act 2000*.

Conflicts of interest:

7. In the administration and awarding of COVID-19 Business Grants any real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest are to be managed in keeping with the *Local Government Act 1995*, the code of conduct and the Town's values.
8. In order to achieve this, in keeping with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*, *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* and *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* employees and elected members with any involvement in COVID-19 Business Grants shall declare:
 - a. any financial, indirect financial, proximity or gift interests that they have with any applicant for a COVID-19 Business Grant; and
 - b. any impartiality interests they have with any applicant for a COVID-19 Business Grant.
9. As is required under the Act, where any employee or elected member discloses a financial, indirect financial, proximity or gift related interest they must not be involved in that particular COVID-19 Business Grants application. If:
 - a. this is as a member of a panel, they must not participate in the panel and the CEO should appoint another person as a member of the panel;
 - b. as an employee who awards or assesses applications for a grant, the application must be referred to another appropriate employee who can award or undertake the assessment for the grant; and
 - c. the application is referred to a committee or Council, in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
10. Where an impartiality interest by an employee is disclosed, the interest should be referred to the CEO to establish if it continues to be appropriate for that employee to be involved in the assessment process.

Eligibility

11. Any party wishing to apply for a Covid-19 Business Grant must:
 - a. hold Public Liability insurance of \$10 million; and
 - b. own or hold the appropriate permission to use any intellectual property associated with the proposed project, activity or program; and
 - c. meet any additional eligibility criteria for the Covid-19 Business Grant category being applied for.
12. The following ineligibility criteria apply to all Covid-19 Business Grants contained within this Policy:
 - a. The applicant has an outstanding debt to the Town of Victoria Park;
 - b. The applicant has failed to submit a satisfactory acquittal for a previous Covid-19 Business Grant or Community Grants Program;
 - c. The applicant has failed to comply with the operational Terms and Conditions of the Covid-19 Business Grant being applied for;
 - d. The applicant has received a Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grant within the 12 months prior to applying.

Approval Process

13. The Town of Victoria Park will only assess applications that are:
 - a. Received from applicants meeting the eligibility requirements laid out in this policy; and
 - b. Received by any advertised closing date.
14. The Town of Victoria Park will convene a panel of no less than three members to assess all eligible applications received. The panel will assess applications against the requirements and Assessment Criteria laid out in this policy.
15. It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate in their application how the proposed project, activity or program meets the Assessment Criteria outlined for the relevant Covid-19 Business Grant category in this policy.
16. The Town of Victoria Park reserves the right to:
 - a. Refuse a grant application, having regard for availability of funds and/or which applications best satisfy the Assessment Criteria;
 - b. Offer partial-funding of a grant application, having regard for availability of funds, which applications best satisfy the Assessment Criteria, and ability of the applicant to deliver the proposal with partial-funding; and
 - c. Not award any Covid-19 Business Grants where no applications received are considered to adequately satisfy the Assessment Criteria.
17. The Town of Victoria Park reserves the right to deny funding to any party should the proposed program or initiative or party conflict with the Town of Victoria Park's Vision, Mission or Values, or bring the Town of Victoria Park's brand or reputation into disrepute, at its discretion.
18. Where a proposed project, activity or program requires a regulatory approval to commence, the Town of Victoria Park may, at its discretion, award a Covid-19 Business Grant subject to the required regulatory approvals being

obtained prior to the commencement of the proposed project, activity or program, and within a timeframe to be specified by the Town of Victoria Park.

19. The Town of Victoria Park will notify applicants of its decision within six weeks of the advertised closing date or receipt of a complete application, whichever is the later.
20. The Chief Executive Officer may approve applications for COVID-19 Business grants up to the cap provided in this policy. Applications which exceed the capped value of the relevant grant category will be referred to Council for determination where deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer, and dependent upon available funding.

Acquittal Terms

21. Recipients will be required to acquit the funds within six weeks of the completion of the project, activity or program.
22. Recipients may be required to provide photographs and/or written testimonials for use by the Town of Victoria Park to promote the Covid-19 Business Grants program and local economy.

Covid-19 Business Grant Categories

Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants

23. The aim of the Covid-19 Business Resilience Grants is to support small businesses that are actively engaged in the Town of Victoria Park local economy to adapt, build resilience and grow during Covid-19 recovery.
24. The maximum value of a Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grant is \$1,000 per recipient.
25. The Town of Victoria Park may direct that payment of Covid-19 Small Business Grant funding will be on a reimbursement basis, and subject to the recipient submitting invoices and receipts detailing expenditure.
26. In addition to the general eligibility requirements outlined in this policy, the applicant must:
 - a. Be a Small Business whose principal place of trading is within the Town of Victoria Park Local Government Area; and
 - b. Have not previously received a Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grant within the twelve months prior to the date the application is submitted.
27. Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants will be assessed based on satisfaction of the Assessment Criteria and availability of funds at the time of application.
28. The assessment criteria for Covid-19 Small Business Resilience Grants are:
 - a. The proposed project, activity or program is intended to directly assist local business/es in recovery from Covid-19 and building ongoing resilience;
 - b. The proposed project, activity or program is not, in the opinion of the Town of Victoria Park, a standard operational expense;
 - c. The applicant can demonstrate an established and/or ongoing commitment to the Town of Victoria Park local economy, including:
 - i. Holding a commercial lease agreement within the Town of Victoria Park local government area with at least twelve months remaining, or own the property which is the principal place of trading; and

- ii. Demonstrating genuine, visible engagement with the local economy.
- d. The applicant can demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed project, activity or program and their capability to successfully deliver the proposed project, activity or program.

Covid-19 Economic Development Grants

- 29. The aim of the Covid-19 Economic Development Grants is to support projects, activities and programs developed by the local business community that will benefit the Town of Victoria Park local economy.
- 30. The maximum value of a Covid-19 Economic Development Grant is \$8,000 per recipient.
- 31. In addition to the general eligibility requirements outlined in this policy, the applicant must:
 - a. Be a Small Business or Medium Business whose principal place of trading is within the Town of Victoria Park Local Government Area; or
 - b. Be an Incorporated Association where the proposed project, activity or program is to take place primarily within the Town of Victoria Park Local Government Area; or
 - c. Be an unincorporated association, group or individual with formal support of an auspice organisation, where the proposed project, activity or program is to take place primarily within the Town of Victoria Park Local Government Area.
- 32. Covid-19 Economic Development Grants will be assessed on a competitive basis, having regard for the Assessment Criteria and availability of funds.
- 33. The assessment criteria for Covid-19 Economic Development Grants are:
 - a. The proposed project, activity or program will directly assist the local economy in recovery from Covid-19.
 - b. The proposed project, activity or program is not, in the opinion of the Town of the Victoria Park, a standard operational expense.
 - c. The proposed project, activity or program will deliver at least one broad benefit to the local economy, including:
 - i. Substantial improvements to the amenity of the public realm that will attract visitors to the area;
 - ii. Substantial activation of underutilised or vacant spaces that will attract visitors or investment to the area;
 - iii. Provide a unique and visible retail or service offering that will attract visitors to the Town of Victoria Park;
 - iv. Foster networking and collaboration between local businesses to support Covid-19 recovery;
 - v. Provide unique, regionally significant promotion, development or investment for the Town of Victoria Park's local economy; or
 - vi. Foster innovation industries or innovative business practices in the Town of Victoria Park's local economy.
 - d. The applicant can demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed project, activity or program and their capability to successfully deliver the proposed project, activity or program.

Sunsetting

34. This Policy is revoked on 30 September 2021.

Related documents

Practice 121.1 Covid-19 Business Grants

Responsible officers	Place Leader – Economic Development
Policy manager	Manager Place Planning
Approval authority	Council
Next evaluation date	This will be set by Governance

Revision history

Version	Action	Date	Authority	Resolution number	Report number
1	Adopted	18/08/2020	Council	491/2020	Item 15.3
2	Amended		Council		