

Council Policy – Small Business Grants

Responsible Directorate	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Business Unit/s	Business and Economic Development
Responsible Officer	Manager Business and Economic Development
Affected Business Unit/s	Finance

Objective

The objective of this policy is to:

- outline the general principles that govern the provision of financial support by Council, offered to sole traders or small businesses within the Shire of Ashburton (the Shire) through small business grants, to specifically support the development, diversification and growth of sole traders and small businesses within the Shire's district; and
- support the achievement of deliverables outlined in the Shire's Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 as 'A great place to have a small business'.

Scope

This policy applies to eligible sole traders and small businesses.

Policy Statement

The Shire is committed to fostering a welcoming, sustainable and socially active district that offers a diverse range of opportunities for the community.

To support this vision, this policy aims to encourage vibrant, sustainable and liveable towns by providing annual grants that aims to strengthen small business sustainability, growth, capability and to promote new infrastructure, services, commercial opportunities, investment and diversification.

Small Business Grants

General conditions and information

Who is eligible to apply?	• Sole traders based and operating in the Shire that are owned and operated by permanent resident. (Home or office-based business are eligible). • Small businesses based and operating in the Shire with up to 20 employees that are owned and operated by a permanent resident of the Shire. • Startup businesses or an existing business within the Shire, if a sole trader or a small business, as detailed above.
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Who is not eligible to apply?	- Any person under the age of 18 years. - Sole traders or small businesses that do not, or do not intend to operate within the Shire whether or not owned and operated or intended to be owned and operated by a permanent resident of the Shire. - Small businesses that employ more than 20 persons. - Non-permanent residents of the Shire. - Any sole trader or small business that does not have an Australian Business Number (ABN), or relevant public liability insurance. - Applicants that have previously received a small business grant and that have not acquitted the approved prior grant are ineligible.
Who provides the grant funds	Council determines the amount of funds that may be set aside for small business grants on an annual basis, during the annual budget process. Grants approved cannot exceeds the funds set aside Council, in any one financial year.
How much can be applied for?	- Up to \$5,000 (excl. GST) per application, per financial year. - Applicants must contribute 30% of the applied funding to be considered eligible.
How many times can applications be submitted	Only one application, per financial year.
When can I apply?	On the release of the small business grant funding round for the financial year advertised via the Shire's website and other approved engagement method.
What can the grant funding be used for?	- Business applications and/or registration fees. - Business capability and capacity enhancement and development. - Equipment necessary to undertake the operations and functions of the business. - Upskilling and training.
What the grant funding cannot be used for	- Any travel or accommodation costs (vehicle maintenance, fuel, plane flights and alike, accommodation). - Assistance for administrative day-to-day operations. - Consumables; alcohol; catering; incidentals; meals and alike. - Salaries and wages - Debt reduction, lease or loan repayments, taxes, excises, duties, utilities and like.
If I am successful are there any requirements	Successful grant applicants are required to submit a full and detailed acquittal to the Shire by 30 June following a grant being approved.

Who approves the grant funding?	Council
Canvassing of elected members or any Shire employee following a grant application is expressly prohibited.	

Grant assessment

The Small Business Grant Guidelines provide further clarity:

- on the promotion grant;
- when applications open and close;
- on what can and cannot be applied for;
- on the assessment process; and
- on the final notification process;
- on the requirements for acquitting approved grants

Definitions

A sole trader or small business means a registered business entity owned or operated by a permanent resident of the Shire of Ashburton, that employs a maximum of 20 employees, with the business being based and operated within the Shire's district.

Relevant policies/documents

[Small Business Grants Guidelines](#)

[Shire of Ashburton Strategic Community Plan 2022-2032](#)

[Shire of Ashburton Economic Development Strategy 2024-2028](#)

Relevant legislation/local laws

Section 6.7(2) of the *Local Government Act 1995*

Office use only				
Relevant delegations	Nil			
Council adoption	Date	16 June 2026	Resolution #	087/2026
Reviewed/modified	Date		Resolution #	
	Date		Resolution #	
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	Date		Resolution #	
Next review due	2030			