

Business Assistance Grants Program 2020

Application Guidelines

Council Offices

25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang VIC 3752

Mail to: Locked Bag 1, Bundoora MDC VIC 3083

Phone: 9217 2170

National Relay Service: 133 677 (ask for 9217 2170)

Email: info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Free telephone interpreter service

 **131 450**

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The City of Whittlesea recognizes the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the Traditional Owners of this place.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Economic Development Team

Phone: (03) 9217 2278

Email: business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

What is the City of Whittlesea Business Assistance Grants Program?

The impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) have been felt right across Victoria's small business community.

Council is committed to supporting our business community to ensure its viability and promote endurance. The City of Whittlesea Business Assistance Grants Program (BAGP) has been designed to provide relief to local businesses to support their resilience now and into the future.

The BAGP supports local businesses through three funding categories:

- Business adaption
 - Provide funding to access new markets, transition online or implement innovation and/or enhance business models
- Revitalising spaces
 - Activating spaces to enhance shop fronts and surrounds
- Business continuity
 - Strengthening business stability by engaging professional business or legal advice.

The BAGP aligns with the Council's vision for a strong local economy (Whittlesea 2040 – A Place for all) and the Economic Development Strategy, *Growing our economy together*, the key directions of which are to:

- **Strive** to build a healthy, prosperous and resilient community
- **Foster** an environment that encourages the development of a vibrant local economy
- **Capitalise** on the City's human, natural and built resources to maximise local employment
- **Promote** the municipality as an attractive destination to invest and work in, visit and enjoy
- **Collaborate** with community, businesses and government to deliver resources and opportunities.

Program funding

Applicants can apply for funding that contribute to projects and initiatives that support one or more of the following categories;

1. Business adaption

Assist local businesses to invest in innovative practices to access new markets or enhance their business model to operate in a Covid-safe manner. This may include, but not limited to:

- Building modifications such as protective screens, social personal protective equipment (PPE)*
- Transitioning to an online platform to sell products and/or services
- Website design and development, e-commerce platforms, or online content development (i.e. mobile apps).

2. Revitalising spaces

Supporting projects that will enhance the shop front of their business. This may include but not limited to:

- Improvements to window displays and façades
- Signage*
- Furniture to activate their footpath trading area (relevant footpath permit/permission must be held).

3. Business continuity

Strengthen business stability by providing financial assistance to engage professional business and legal advisory services. This could include advice on managing risk, business diversity or marketing strategy development.

*Applicants are to be mindful that projects including major building modification works or signage may be dependent of Council approval regulations (i.e. Building, Planning and Health Services).

Applicants are welcome to submit an application that may include one or more of the categories above. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their project with the Economic Development Team prior to submitting their application on 9217 2278 or email business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au .

Supplies/goods should be sourced from a business within the City of Whittlesea, where possible. Council’s Economic Development Team can assist with connecting you to local support service agencies and suppliers for consideration. Please note that Council does not endorse one business over another. Supplies/goods must be sourced from a business/es that do not have a conflict of interest with the applicant (i.e. seeking goods/services from a family member).

Supporting documentation

The following supporting documentation must be submitted with your application to be eligible for funding:

- A copy of your City of Whittlesea Council business property rates notices indicating operating premise (for verification purposes only). If you rent, a copy of the business lease agreement or another business document that proves business operating premise i.e. electricity or phone bill
- A formal quotation for each item in your project
- Certificate of public liability insurance, professional indemnity insurance or relevant business insurance.

Key dates

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Applications open | 11 September 2020 |
| Applications close | 30 October 2020, or such time as the funds are exhausted, whichever is the earlier. |
| Applicants notified of outcome | Aim to notify within 28 days of submission |
| Project commencement | Upon receipt of signed “Conditions of Grant” |

You are encouraged to submit your application as soon as possible.

Successful applicants will have until 31 March 2021 to complete projects funded under this program.

Maximum grant value

The maximum grant amount for each applicant is \$5,000 (exc. GST). Only one application can be made for any business. This can be focused on a single category or across a combination of categories up to the maximum value of \$5,000 (exc. GST).

Applications seeking smaller amounts are also encouraged. Any additional expenses incurred above the approved grant value are the responsibility of the applicant.

Who can apply

To be eligible for funding applicants must:

- Have been operating a business within the City of Whittlesea municipality (prior to Stage 4 restrictions)
- Hold a valid Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Be able to provide relevant Public Liability Insurance, Public Indemnity Insurance or Business Insurance documentation, or, include a quote for insurance in the application
- Not be subject to any legal impediment, including bankruptcy or liquidation.
- Be able to demonstrate how the grant will help support your business in response to the impact of COVID-19.

Who cannot apply

- Those who cannot provide proof of the business operating in the City of Whittlesea
- Political businesses or those that have a political purpose, government departments, agencies, foundations or grant making bodies, or those that have a primary focus on fundraising
- Businesses who have not complied with acquittal conditions from previous Council funding
- Trader associations, Owner's corporations (strata and company owned)
- Not for profit groups, community groups including schools and community organisations (please refer to Community grants available on our website)
- Education providers
- Businesses that have an adverse effect on public health, safety, the environment or heritage.

What cannot be funded

- A business' day to day operational expenses or core business (for example, salaries for permanent staff, electricity, lease or rent payments, telephone, uniforms etc. that are part of the business' ongoing expenses)
- Projects that are part of the business' regular activities (for example, a business consultant running networking events that is already part of their service delivery, or an education institution running a workshop on a topic that is already delivered as part of a course)
- Projects that have begun or are completed before approval of funding.
- Projects, activities, programs and events that have previously been funded by Council.
- Activities that will rely on recurrent or ongoing financial support from Council.
- New building projects or capital works.
- Activities promoting gambling, drugs and/or alcohol or events held at establishments that promote gambling.
- Projects that are the responsibility of other levels of Government.
- Gift vouchers, gifts, prizes, trophies, scholarships, donation, other grant programs, air travel or accommodation.

How to apply

1. Ensure you have carefully read the guidelines and that your business meets the eligibility criteria before completing your application.
2. Applications and required supporting documentation are submitted online at: <http://whittlesea.smartygrants.com.au>
Please note: to apply online you will need an email address.
3. If you cannot access the internet, contact the Economic Development Team on 9217 2278 or email business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Assessment criteria

If your business and project meets the eligibility criteria, your project will be considered according to how well it meets each of the four assessment criteria below. The percentage weightings are provided as a guide to the importance of each section in the assessment process.

1. Level of COVID-19 impact (20%)

Clearly able to demonstrate how the business has been impacted by COVID-19.

2. Aims and outcomes (40%)

Clearly identifies what the project is and why the project is crucial to the business' sustainability or improvement.

Clearly aligns with at least one of the categories of the BAGP

3. Project sustainability (20%)

Will the proposed project and its outcomes continue beyond the funding?

4. Local Procurement (20%)

Are goods/services being supplied by a City of Whittlesea business and is the budget request reasonable?

Assessment process

| Assessment Process | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. | Applications are reviewed for eligibility. |
| 2. | Eligible applications are initially assessed independently by two Council staff based on how well the proposed project meets the assessment criteria. |
| 3. | Assessment recommendations are reviewed for approval by the nominated advisory panel consisting of Council senior staff. This will occur on a fortnightly basis. |
| 4. | Applicants are advised of their outcomes. |

If your application is successful

Conditions of grant

All funded businesses must sign a 'Conditions of Grant' document before receiving funding. This letter outlines the conditions successful applicants must meet to receive the funding.

Payment will be processed once the signed 'Conditions of Grant' has been received.

Grant acquittals

Successful applicants must complete an acquittal which includes budget expenses and a brief report about the project's outcomes. The acquittal is due no later than one month after the funding period has ended (30 April 2021).

Recipients who do not complete their acquittal will be ineligible for any Council grants for a minimum of two years or until an acquittal is received.

If your application is unsuccessful

Applications that are not eligible or do not rate highly against the assessment criteria will not be funded. You will be advised by letter/email of the outcome of your application.

If you have any questions about the outcome of your grant application, you are encouraged to contact the Economic Development Team.

Glossary

ABN

An ABN refers to an Australian Business Number issued by the Australia Tax Office. If your business has an ABN it must be recorded within your application.

Capital works

Capital works are repairs or building to a property that create an asset and increase its value. *Please note: Capital works are not eligible for funding.*

Project

A temporary initiative, activity or program planned to meet a particular need.

Public liability insurance

Public liability insurance provides businesses with protection against legal and court costs (i.e. legal liability) in the event that someone is injured or has their property damaged as a result of your business activities.