



Guidelines for Hepburn Shire Council *Towards Zero Community Grants*

including

Hepburn Solar Bulk Buy *Community Bonus Program*

2018-2019

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) are now open for Hepburn Shire Council's *Towards Zero Community Grants Program*. Community groups are encouraged to apply for funding projects which will save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions at community facilities.

Additionally, due to the overwhelming success of the Hepburn Solar Bulk Buy (HSBB) in the Shire throughout 2018, there will be funding made available from Council and MASH, specifically for rooftop solar PV.

This funding program links to the Hepburn Shire Council Plan and the broader emission reduction goals of Z-NET Hepburn Shire. Successful applicants will need to demonstrate how their project links to the objectives of the funding program. Funding is available for projects which can demonstrate energy and cost savings and a clear reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

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Funding Objectives:

To support projects which allow community groups to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs, through reduced energy consumption and/or increasing the use of renewable energy at community facilities. Projects may include:

- Renewable energy systems, such as solar PV
- Insulation and weather proofing
- Energy efficient heating/cooling systems
- Energy efficient lighting
- Energy efficient hot water, kitchen/other fixed appliances
- Other suitable projects

Council and HSBB invite community groups to submit an EOI for their project. Submissions will be assessed for their viability by Council officers and HSBB representatives. Technical support will be provided to guide and refine scope of potential projects, prior to recommendations being made.

All applicants are advised to contact Council's Sustainability Officer – Dominic Murphy on dmurphy@hepburn.vic.gov.au or 5321 6490 to ensure that their project meets the funding aims.

Who Should Apply?

Local not-for-profit groups and organisations in the Hepburn Shire, which are incorporated and have an Australian Business Number (ABN), or have an auspicing agent, are encouraged to apply.

Eligible schools or childcare centres, which would normally not be eligible under Council guidelines, are also encouraged to apply for the solar PV system grants only.

Key Dates:

EOI Opening date	Monday 7 th January 2019
EOI Closing date	Friday 22 nd February 2019 at 5.00pm
Recommendations to Council	21 st May 2019
Notification to all applicants	24 th May 2019
All projects completion and acquitted	31 st December 2019



Eligible Projects

To be eligible for assessment applicants must:

- Complete their activity before 31st December 2019.
- Be within the Hepburn Shire to the benefit of its residents.
- Be an organisation that is a legal entity with an Australian Business Number (ABN). For example; an incorporated body, co-op, trust, or, be auspiced by a suitable group.¹
- Have all permits, permissions and approvals for the project.²
- Be a not-for-profit group.³
- Be willing to participate in PR for the project, including a potential media release and photo with members of the applicants' organisation and funding representatives.
- Suggest a project which demonstrates community involvement in its planning and implementation.

¹ An Auspicing Agent is another organisation that is a legal entity with an ABN. A letter signed by two committee members from the auspice agent confirming they will auspice the application must be provided when the grant application is submitted. Auspicing agents retaining a fee for this service will not be considered.

² If the project is to undertake works on land owned/managed by Council, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning or Parks Victoria, applicants must provide written approval from the relevant land manager.

³ Your organisation meets the requirements of being a not-for-profit by having specific statements in its governing rules, as set out in the following publication:
<https://www.ato.gov.au/non-profit/getting-started/is-your-organisation-not-for-profit/>.

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Ineligible Projects

- Individual applicants, profit-making organisations and political parties.
- Applicants that have an existing outstanding community grant acquittal or unpaid invoice from Council.
- Projects that have already commenced or have already been completed.
- Applications made outside the closing dates.
- Organisations based outside the Shire, unless it can be demonstrated that the project is of benefit to Hepburn Shire residents.
- An activity (other than solar PV systems) that is the funding responsibility of the State or Federal government or can be funded by fees, sponsorship or service agreements. This includes schools and health services, which are encouraged to partner with other community organisations to achieve projects. This is with the exception of applicants for solar PV systems, who may apply for a share of the funding offered through the Hepburn Solar Bulk Buy Community Bonus.

If you are unsure of your eligibility, please contact Council's Sustainability Officer prior to submission.

Assessment of Submissions

- As previously outlined, technical support will be provided to assist with refining applications, if necessary.
- Once a scope is finalised, applications will be assessed based on their merit, including Return on Investment of the project, expected energy/emissions/cost savings, and community impact.
- Applications will be assessed by a board of representatives from Council and HSBB. A report recommending successful and unsuccessful Community Grants applications will be taken to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held in May 2019.
- All applicants will be notified in writing regarding the outcome of their application.

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Required background information

- **Description of project.** A simple snapshot of the overall project and a summary of what the activity is. Describe the opportunity or issues the project addresses, why the project is important or how the need is demonstrated (plans, letters, minutes etc).
- **What will the Project achieve and how will it be implemented?** Present the aims and objectives of the project. Outline who in the community will benefit from the project and how any energy savings or other benefits relate to the program objectives. Outline timeframe, key tasks and project milestones.
- **Risk Assessment.** Description of the risks involved in your project and strategies you will use to avoid harm or injury.
- **Budget.** A completed budget that accurately reflects your project. Income and expenditure columns **must** balance. Projects with shorter payback periods will be given greater weighting, although this is not the only criterion. Projects with a simple payback period greater than 8 years will be deemed ineligible.

Funding Conditions and Requirements

- All planning and building permits and other applicable authorisations remain the responsibility of the applicant. Evidence of documentation relating to permits/permissions should be provided where applicable.
- Public Liability Insurance is the responsibility of the applicant.
- An offer of a grant does not mean ongoing funding commitment or obligation by Council.
- Hepburn Shire Council and/or Hepburn Solar Bulk Buy (depending on the project specifics) must be acknowledged on any promotional material related to the project/event. You are required to extend a written invitation, a minimum of 2 weeks before any PR event, to Council/HSBB.
- Councillors or relevant funding body representatives will attend openings and events when available.
- Successful applicants, or their Auspicing Agent, are required to enter into a formal funding agreement with Council/HSBB. If the project/event does not adhere to the conditions of the agreement, Council/HSBB may require grant funds to be returned.
- All funded projects must complete an evaluation and acquittal with evidence of expenditure, including receipts within three months of the project completion.

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- Ongoing maintenance and repair costs for equipment purchased with community grant funds are the responsibility of the applicant.
- In the event of a project only being part funded, Council/HSBB will provide an explanation on request.
- Multiple applications from applicants are accepted; however there is no guarantee of funding any or all applications. Priority to one application should be indicated on the application form.

For applicants who are seeking funding from external grant sources – it is a requirement to advise Hepburn Shire Council as soon as possible on the status of this external grant funding.

If your application includes community grant funds from Hepburn Shire Council and another source of funding that is greater than the community grant amount, and if the external funding source becomes unavailable, you will be required to return Council funds within 30 days of the funding decision.

If the other source of funding is less than the requested Grant and the external funding source is unavailable, you may be required to submit an alternative proposal and budget within 30 days of the external funding decision date.

All applications are to be submitted online, via Hepburn Shire Council's website.

Please contact Dom Murphy on 5321 6490 or dmurphy@hepburn.vic.gov.au for any additional information.

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Criteria specific to HSBB solar PV applications

In addition to the organisation meeting the eligibility criteria, the organisation will also need to respond to each of the following selection criteria:

- Electricity bill is paid by the community group, childcare centre or school (i.e. bill is paid by the applicant)
- Provide a scanned copy by email of the most recent electricity bill
- Building must be used at least 4 days per week by community during daylight hours
- High level of community use (state the number of people that the community group/school supports within this building)
- Identified a specific much-needed project to channel the first year savings arising from lower electricity bills that will directly benefit the people/groups serviced by the applicant organisation
- Ideally the applicant organisation should contribute at least \$1,000 towards the solar PV installation
- Payback on the solar PV installation is 5 years or less (payback based on the amount donated through the HSBB project and will exclude any contribution that the applicant organisation can make to the solar PV system. This means that the greater the dollar contribution that the applicant can make towards the solar PV system, the shorter the payback period will be)
- Building is a suitable structure for installation of solar PV (i.e. no shading issues; Powercor approval; no need for site structural survey, roof is ready and suitable) – this will be assessed by our solar provider and may require a site inspection.
- Grants will be released to a spread of community groups and schools

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