

TOWARD ZERO COMMUNITY GRANTS

PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2020/21 (*OPEN 19 APRIL 2021*)

“Climate change has been described by the World Health Organization (2015) as the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century. The unfolding climate crisis requires an immediate response to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of Victorians, now and into the future.”

Dr. Brett Sutton, MMBS MPHTM, FAFPHM, FRSPH, FACTM, MFTM
Victorian Chief Health Officer

Program purpose

The purpose of this program is to provide funding to reduce future impacts on climate change by supporting projects aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and operational costs in community facilities. This links to Hepburn Shire Council’s strategic objective: Sustainable Environment and Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019.

Program objectives

The program aims to support projects which reduce greenhouse gas emissions, through reduced energy consumption, carbon drawdown and/or increasing the use of renewable energy in community facilities.

These could include (but are not restricted to):

- Renewable energy systems, such as solar PV
- Insulation and weather proofing
- Energy efficient heating/cooling systems
- Energy efficient lighting
- Energy efficient hot water, kitchen and other fixed appliances
- Carbon drawdown
- Initiatives which support or encourage low-carbon activities and education

We encourage programs that upgrade energy inefficient appliances, replace fossil fuel-based energy with renewable energy as well as programs that shift the behaviour of Shire residents to be more sustainable through education and awareness.

Who can apply?

Local not-for-profit groups and organisations, within Hepburn Shire, who are incorporated with an ABN, or have an auspicing agent.

Funding opportunities

Towards Zero Community Grants are open once a year. Applications will be open from 19 April to 14 June 2021 and must be implemented and acquitted before 17 December 2021.

The 2020/21 total funding pool is \$56,000 with no minimum or maximum requirements per application.

Application process

1. Contact the Hepburn Council [Sustainability Officer](#) to express interest in the program
2. If your project idea meets the program requirements, discuss the specifics of your application with the Sustainability Officer
3. Submit online application – via Smarty Grants

Key dates

The Program key dates are listed below. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application after the Council meeting where the Towards Zero Grants round is taken to.

Applications Open	19 April 2021
Applications Close	14 June 2021
Assessment Process	14 June – 28 June 2021
Report to Council – Ordinary Council Meeting	20 July 2021
Applicants Notified	23 July 2021
Acquittal Due	17 December 2021

Key council contacts

Contact Council's Sustainability Officer at HepburnSustainability@hepburn.vic.gov.au

Eligible projects

To be eligible for assessment applicants must:

- Have read and understood the Toward Zero Community Grant Program guidelines.
- Conduct their activity before 17 December 2021.
- Be within the Hepburn Shire to the benefit of its residents.
- Have 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)
- Have a COVID safe plan
- The project 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 Council owned / managed land or property, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning or Parks Victoria land you 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; the not-for-profit and / or dissolution clause
<https://www.ato.gov.au/non-profit/getting-started/is-your-organisation-not-for-profit/>

Ineligible projects

- Individual applicants, profit-making organisations and political parties.
- An activity that is the funding responsibility of the state or federal government, or can be funded by fees, sponsorship or service agreements.
- Applicants that have an 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 the project is of benefit to Hepburn Shire Council residents.
- Schools and health services. We encourage these applicants to partner with other community organisations to deliver projects. Projects benefitting children from the age of 8 - 12yrs will be considered.

If you are unsure of your eligibility, please contact the Sustainability Officer to discuss your application prior to submission.

Examples of previously approved Towards Zero Grant projects

1. [Installation of solar and battery system at the Hepburn Recreation Reserve.](#)
2. Replacement of energy inefficient heaters with energy efficient heaters at the Daylesford Community Childcare Centre.
3. Energy efficient lighting upgrade at the Clunes Neighbourhood House.

Assessment criteria and process

Criteria

Assessment criterion	Weight	Application question
Project objectives	25%	Provide a short summary of your project (what, why, how and who). <i>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.</i> What will the project achieve and how will it be implemented? Present the aims and objectives of the project. Outline timeframe, key tasks and project milestones.
Project timeline	25%	Outline timeframe, key tasks and project milestones. Provide information on each stage of the project and how it will be completed.
Project beneficiaries	10%	Who are the project beneficiaries of this project? <i>Who will this program benefit?</i>
Risk management	10%	Risk management – identification of risks and mitigation. Description of the risks involved in delivering your project and strategies you will use to avoid those risks. Identified risks.
Budget	10%	Budget – balanced income and expenditure statement.
Supporting documents	10%	Certificate of currency. Quotes. Supporting information. Permissions.
Applicant capacity	10%	Does the applicant, communicate they have the skills, experience and aptitudes required to carry out the proposed project?

Process

Assessment for the Towards Zero Grants Program is made by members of the Towards Zero Grants Panel who include; independent community members appointed by Council, and relevant Council Officers. Each aspect of the application is assessed individually by each Panel member to form an average total score for each application.

A report recommending successful Towards Zero Grants applications will be presented to the Ordinary meeting of Council for their endorsement.

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 and permissions should be provided where applicable
- Public Liability Insurance is the responsibility of the applicant
- An offer of a grant does not mean an ongoing funding commitment or obligation by Council
- Hepburn Shire must be acknowledged on any promotional material related to the Project. This must be approved by Council's Communications Officer prior to distribution. You are required to extend a written invitation, with a minimum of two weeks' notice, to the Mayor and Hepburn Shire CEO to attend openings and events when available.
- Councillors to be invited to attend openings and the event when available
- Successful applicants or their Auspicing Agent, are required to enter into a formal funding agreement with Council. If the Project does not adhere to the conditions of the agreement, Council may require grant funds to be returned
- All funded Projects must complete an Evaluation and Acquittal including evidence of expenditure, including receipts
- Ongoing maintenance and repair costs for equipment purchased with grant funds are the responsibility of the applicant
- In the event of a Project only being partly funded, Council will provide an explanation on request

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

If your application includes Towards Zero Grants funding from Council and another source of funding is greater than the Towards Zero grant amount, and if the external funding source becomes unavailable, you will be required to submit an alternative proposal and budget within 30 days of the external funding decision date.

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

