

Small Business Assistance Grant Program

Funding Guidelines 2021-2022



INTRODUCTION

The Corangamite Shire Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP) aims to encourage businesses, both new and existing, located in the Corangamite Shire to innovate, adapt or diversify for business growth.

The program provides grants of up to \$5,000 from Council on a \$1:\$1 basis to see businesses undertake new projects that will have a positive impact on both the business and broadly economic activity in the Shire.

SCOPE

All small businesses who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN).
- Be located within the Corangamite Shire or planning to re-locate to the municipality within three months of applying for the grant.
- Have 20 or fewer full-time equivalent employees.
- Completed final reports and acquittals for any previous grants with the Corangamite Shire.
- Have no overdue debts with the Corangamite Shire.

TYPES OF PROJECTS

Priority will be given to projects that look at new ways to do business, innovate, adapt and diversify. However, all small businesses looking at ways to improve how they do business will be encouraged to apply. Some examples of projects that could be considered include:

- new website/point of sale software
- equipment to allow the business to expand
- upgrades to the inside of a building
- investment in new technology
- creation of new spaces to allow a business to expand
- investment in new business infrastructure
- electronic vehicle charging stations
- energy efficiency upgrades (e.g. solar panels)

HOW DO I APPLY?

To apply businesses need to complete the online application form on Council's website, including answering a variety of questions about the project and supplying relevant documentation where asked.

Applicants may be required to complete the online Business Permits Self-Assessment Checklist, to be aware of the requirement to obtain any necessary permits (e.g. planning, building, environmental health, local laws) prior to completing the application form and works.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to speak with Council officers prior to applying.

DOCUMENTATION

The following information needs to be supplied as part of the application:

- Completion of the online Business Permits Self-Assessment Checklist (if required).
- Complete answers to all the questions listed in the online application form.
- Provide a detailed description and timelines of the proposed project.
- Quotes for all purchases to be completed as part of the project.
- Have the building owners consent.
- Where the project requires planning and/or building permits, completed permit application forms.
- Any relevant business plans/detailed project plans.
- Photographs of planned upgrades/changes before project is completed.

APPLICATION DETAILS

To apply for funding as part of the program businesses would need to consider the following:

- Council will not grant funds for the program retrospectively (i.e. projects commenced or completed prior to Council decision in October).
- Council will not provide funds for ongoing or administrative costs, including the funding of staff or consultants to complete administrative work for the project.
- Council will not provide funds for purchasing of temporary equipment (e.g. ladders, gurneys, scaffolding, and safety barriers). Hiring of equipment is permitted when related directly to the project.
- Applicants must be able to fund the cost of the project upfront and then Council will reimburse its contribution following the completion of the project through an acquittal process.
- Funding cannot be used as a deposit or part of financing agreements.
- Council will not grant funds for works where a planning/building permit has been refused or not obtained.
- Council will not grant funds for external façade improvements for businesses that are eligible for funding through the Business Façade Improvement Program.
- Council will not grant funds to businesses to cover administration costs completing their application.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will need to be submitted to Council by COB Monday 27 September 2021.

The applications will then be presented for a decision by Councillors at the October Council Meeting.

LEVELS OF FUNDING AVAILABLE

Businesses can apply on a \$1:\$1 basis to implement improvements with the amount capped at \$5,000 (exc. GST) per business.

An example of a business applying to the program would be:

- Business - \$5,000 (exc. GST)
- Council - \$5,000 (exc. GST)
- Total cost - \$10,000 (exc. GST)

Businesses will be able to contribute over the \$5,000 amount if they want to complete a more significant project but would still only be eligible for \$5,000 (exc. GST) from Council.

If a business only wanted to complete a minor project, they could apply to the fund for an amount under \$5,000. An example of this would be:

- Business - \$2,500 (exc. GST)
- Council - \$2,500 (exc. GST)
- Total cost - \$5,000 (exc. GST)

HOW DO I FIND OUT IF MY APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

Applicants will be notified whether their application is successful or unsuccessful following the decision at the October Council Meeting.

TIMING OF PROJECT

Once Council has made a decision the project can commence and will need to be completed by June 2022.

HOW DO I RECEIVE FUNDING AS PART OF THE PROGRAM?

Business have until 30 June 2022 to complete the project and would need to forward all associated documentation, including relevant invoices, receipts and proof of works so that Council can reimburse the approved funding allocation. Any changes to this need to be agreed in writing prior to 31 May 2022.

COUNCIL CONTACT

For further information on the Small Business Assistance Program contact Council's Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator, Samantha Fox on 5593 7100 or samantha.fox@corangamite.vic.gov.au