

# Financial Assistance Program Application Guidelines

Wentworth Shire Council is accountable to the Community for the management and disbursement of its funds and is compelled to ensure that this is done in a manner that maximises benefits to the Community.

For the 2025/2026 financial year, Council has allocated \$200,000.00 to be distributed back to the community through donations, fee waivers and exemptions, grants, and rate reductions.

For a more detailed explanation of Council's Financial Assistance Program, please refer to Council's Financial Assistance Policy on our website.

For any fee waiver requests for the amount of \$2,000 and under, please complete the Fee Waiver Request Form (Up to \$2,000) available on Council's website.

Any other Grant requests under the Financial Assistance Program will be referred to Council for a resolution. It is important to note that the decisions about whether to grant an application requests rests totally with Council and cannot be delegated to Council staff. Council only considers applications under this program four times per financial year. Therefore, to avoid disappointment, applicants are urged to provide a complete application and submit within the timelines provided.

## 2025/2026 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATION TIMELINE \$2,000 AND OVER (UP TO \$5,000)

APPLICATIONS CLOSE	→	TO BE CONSIDERED AT ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING	→	APPLICANT NOTIFIED BY
<b>ROUND ONE</b> 5PM, THURSDAY 24 JULY 2025	→	WEDNESDAY 20 AUGUST 2025	→	SUNDAY 31 AUGUST 2025
<b>ROUND TWO</b> 5PM, FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER 2025	→	NOVEMBER 2025 (DATE TBC)	→	SUNDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2025
<b>ROUND THREE</b> 5PM, SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2026	→	FEBRUARY 2026 (DATE TBC)	→	SATURDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2026
<b>FINAL ROUND</b> 5PM, FRIDAY 24 APRIL 2026	→	MAY 2026 (DATE TBC)	→	SUNDAY 31 MAY 2026

The following categories are part of the Financial Assistance Program 2025/26 and will be referred to Council for a resolution.

1. Fee Rebates – are defined as being where an individual or group requests that a fee is reduced or waived or refunded. Please note, should a fee waiver be approved, only the hire fees will be waived. Bonds (where applicable), will not be reduced or waived.

2. Donations – are defined as being a request for Council to make a small, one-off cash contribution to a cause, organisation or person. Donations are capped at \$250.
3. Grants (Cash Sponsorship) - are defined as being a request for Council to make a cash contribution to a specific item or event. Grants are capped at \$5,000.
4. Rate Reductions – are defined as being a request for a reduction in one of Council's standard rates. Rate reductions are capped at a maximum refund of 25% and is only available for charitable organisations.

For a more detailed explanation of the category limitations, please refer to Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Wentworth Shire Council - Financial Assistance Program Category Limitations for 2025/26						
NB: - This table should be read in conjunction with the information provided in table 2.		Fee Waiver	Donation	Grant	In-kind support	Rate reduction
A	<b>Government Funded Organisations/Activities</b>	x	Max. \$250	x	x	x
B	<b>Pre-schools &amp; Charitable organisations</b>		Max. \$250	Max. \$5,000		Max. 25% refund
C	<b>Community Service organisations, Not for profit or special interest groups</b>		Max. \$250	Max. \$5,000		x

#### Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a grant under this program, the applicant must be in at least one of the following categories:

- Charitable organisations;
- Not for profit organisations;
- Community groups;
- School groups; or
- Be able to demonstrate special circumstances as determined by the General Manager or Council's delegated staff

For a more detailed explanation of the categories, please refer to Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Wentworth Shire Council - Financial Assistance Program Eligibility Criteria 2025/26		
<b>Criteria 1 – Location</b>  Requests of Council can only be made by individuals that reside in, or organisations whose operations are based within, the Wentworth Shire Council. In the case of events, the event must be predominately staged within the Wentworth Shire.	<b>Criteria 2 – Alignment with Community</b>  Objectives Council will give priority to applications that support one or more of the identified community objectives within the Community Strategic Plan.  (Refer to Table 3 for the Community Strategic Plan Objective numbers).	
<b>Criteria 3</b>	<b>Category of the Organisation who is making the request</b>	<b>Examples</b>

Ineligible	<b>Commercial Business/Operation, Political Organisations</b> This category applies to private and family functions, trade fairs, product launches, meetings of registered political groups/parties, conventions and all income generating activities for personal or corporate profit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered political parties.</li> <li>Private businesses, business owners or corporations.</li> </ul>
A	<b>Government Funded Organisations/Activities</b> This category applies to organisations that are substantially funded from Federal and/or State Government sources, regardless of whether they are run by an incorporated body, not for profit organisation, or government department. These organisations will generally receive substantial operational funding from one or a combination of Local, State or Federal government bodies, or through other revenue raising activities such as the collection of fees and charges.  NB: Only small donations for non-operational items will be considered for these organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State &amp; Federal Government Departments and agencies.</li> <li>Police</li> <li>Community Service Agencies.</li> <li>Schools &amp; TAFE</li> <li>Vocational. education &amp; training providers.</li> <li>Aged care facilities.</li> </ul>
B	<b>Pre-schools and Charitable Organisations</b> This category applies to pre-schools and organisations that are set up for charitable, social, philanthropic, or other similar purpose and who have DGR status with the ATO. These organisations will generally have the capacity to raise funds and/or apply for operational funding from one or a combination of Local, State or Federal government grants programs or through the charging of fees.  NB: Pre-schools may make application for a 25% refund on public liability insurance, garbage, water and sewerage charges. Council will also meet the cost of building insurance on pre-schools. Applications for Grants under this program must be accompanied by your organisations Audited Financial Statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welfare groups.</li> <li>Registered charities.</li> <li>Pre-schools.</li> </ul>
C	<b>Community Service Organisations, Not for Profit groups and Special Interest Groups</b> This category applies to organisations that provide services, representation, advocacy and activities in the community. They are established for social and community purposes, and are not conducted for profit or gain of individual members.  These organisations will generally have limited capacity to raise funds from a variety of sources including membership, sponsorship, project focused grant funding.  Applications for Grants under this program must be accompanied by your organisations Audited Financial Statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not for profit play groups or day care organisations.</li> <li>Sporting &amp; recreational clubs.</li> <li>Rotary &amp; Lions Clubs.</li> <li>Aged &amp; pensioner groups.</li> <li>Men-in-a-shed.</li> </ul>

#### Alignment with the Community Strategic Plan

As part of the general criteria for evaluating requests for financial assistance, groups and organisations must identify how the request links to the strategies and objectives in the Community Strategic Plan.

Objective Number	Table 3: Community Strategic Plan
1.1	Promote the Shire as an ideal location for investment and the establishment of innovative, sustainable and diversified industries.
1.2	Promote the Wentworth Region as a desirable visitor and tourism destination.
1.3	High quality connectivity across the region.
1.4	Encourage lifelong learning opportunities.
1.5	Encourage and support initiatives that improve local employment opportunities.
2.1	Continue to create opportunities for inclusion where all people feel welcome and participate in community life.
2.2	Work together to solve a range of social and health issues that impact community wellbeing and vulnerable people.
2.3	To have a safe community.
2.4	A well informed, supported and engaged community.
2.5	To have a strong sense of place.
3.1	Ensure our planning decisions and controls enable the community to benefit from development.
3.2	Ensure that community assets and public infrastructure are well maintained.
3.3	Minimise the impact on the natural environment.
3.4	Use and manage our resources wisely
3.5	Infrastructure meets the needs of our growing Shire.
4.1	Consistently engage and consult the whole community to ensure that feedback is captured and considered as part of decision-making and advocating processes.
4.2	A strong, responsible and representative government.
4.3	An effective and efficient organisation.
4.4	Provide strong leadership and work in partnership to strategically plan for the future.
4.5	Adopt practices of prudent asset, financial and human resource management across Council to ensure long-term sustainability and efficiency.