

POL	COMMUNITY INNOVATION AND PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING	ACS16
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BACKGROUND:

Participatory budgeting (PB) is a different way to manage public money, and to engage people in government. It is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget. The percentage of the public budget allocated to the PB process is at the discretion of the organisation.

It enables taxpayers / ratepayers to work with government and to have a direct influence on the budgetary decisions that affect their lives. It is designed to build trust between the organisation and the community.

There are a range of ways in which a local government can deliver a PB program, although most follow a similar basic process outlined below:

- residents brainstorm spending ideas through a collaborative decision-making process (public meeting, citizen parliament, online portal, hackathon workshop etc.)
- community delegates then develop proposals based on these ideas
- residents vote on proposals up to the budget allocation amount;
- the local government funds or implements the projects which receive most community support.

While the City already has policy and procedures pertaining to grants, donations and sponsorships (ACS2); the PB process is designed around a different, and more community-led way of allocating funds, and therefore requires a more flexible approach to its eligibility, selection and evaluation criteria to ensure that the articulated community engagement and innovation outcomes are captured.

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The funds allocated to recipients are to assist with the activities they provide to the community, and are specifically allocated to activities which innovate to address local social, environmental and economic issues.

PURPOSE:

To establish eligibility, selection and evaluation criteria for the allocation of PB funding to community groups and non-government organisations.

The policy aims to optimise the use of Council funds to support community groups and non-government organisations to deliver social, environmental and economic benefits.

Only projects that meet the eligibility, selection and evaluation criteria throughout the PB process will receive funding.

POLICY:

The following eligibility, selection and evaluation criteria are established for the assessment and prioritisation of applications received through the PB process.

Applicants that have received Council funding in previous years are eligible to apply, provided all previous funding has been satisfactorily acquitted.

PB Funding Eligibility

(1) Applicant Eligibility Criteria

An applicant (or auspicing organisation) is eligible to apply for PB funding if:

1. It is a not-for-profit or private organisation that primarily services residents and/or the interests of the City, or has a specific project that intends to do so.
2. It is an incorporated organisation.
3. It can demonstrate it is financially sound.
4. It holds appropriate insurance/s to a value as agreed with the City.

(2) Project Selection and Evaluation Criteria

A project is eligible for PB funding if:

1. It demonstrates innovation.
2. It meets a community need, and can demonstrate how the project or activity outcomes will benefit the local Cockburn community.

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3. It can demonstrate clear community involvement and support through the PB process.
4. It primarily serves residents and/or ratepayers of the City.
5. It gives consideration to sustainability principles (Policy SC37 – Sustainability).
6. Risks posed to the community or the organisation can be mitigated, including safety and legal liability.
7. It does not require commitment to ongoing funding from Council.
8. There are sufficient resources available to meet community objectives for the life of the project.
9. It does not duplicate an activity already available in the local area.
10. It is in accordance with Council Policy ACS7 for applications from schools and other educational institutions.
11. It attracts a financial and/or in kind contribution.

(3) Funding Conditions

1. Applications will be sought through the PB process at a frequency and an allocation determined by Council.
2. Consideration will be given to whether an organisation has been funded previously within the financial year.
3. Projects are only eligible for once-off funding, and cannot apply through other Council sources.
4. Other conditions as contained in the Guidelines and as agreed in the Funding Agreement.

(4) Elected Members are to be informed of the outcome of the applications for PB funding.