

Grants and Fee Scale Policy

Title	Grants and Fee Scale Policy
Summary	The Policy outlines integrated, transparent and equitable processes to govern the allocation of grants and fee scales for indoor venues, parks, and residents' neighbourhood street parties.
Background	Community resourcing through grants and affordable venues and facilities is integral to residents and local organisations creating new opportunities for wellbeing, creativity and sustainability in the Inner West. This Policy builds on and replaces the earlier single policy adopted in November 2018, locating all fee waiver policies in one place. It also replaces the 2012 Grants and Community Resourcing Policy of the Former Leichhardt Council.
Policy Type	Council-wide
Relevant Strategic Plan Objective	<p>Strategic Direction 1: An ecologically sustainable Inner West</p> <p>Strategic Direction 2: Liveable, connected neighbourhoods and transport</p> <p>Strategic Direction 3: Creative communities and strong economy</p> <p>Strategic Direction 4: Healthy, resilient and caring communities</p> <p>Strategic Direction 5: Progressive, responsive and effective civic leadership</p>
Relevant Council References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Inner West 2036 Community Strategic Plan • Events in Parks Policy • Fees and Charges Schedule 2019/2020 • Grants and Fee Scale Policy 2018 • Grants Program Guidelines 2020 • 2012 Grants and Community Resourcing Policy, former Leichhardt Council
Main Legislative Or Regulatory Reference	Local Government Act 1993
Applicable Delegation Of Authority	As per the delegations' register
Attachments	Appendix 1

Document:	Council Policy	<i>Uncontrolled Copy When Printed</i>	
Custodian:	Director, Community	Version #	Version # 2
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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity regarding the ways Council can assist others, through grants, fee waivers and other resources such as Council venues, to deliver projects and activities which contribute to achieving the community strategic vision. The policy will guide the allocation of community resources and replace the version adopted in 2018.

2. OBJECTIVE

The policy aims to deliver a consistent, overarching framework for the provision of financial and other assistance across the Inner West Council area, while ensuring good governance and accountability. The policy seeks to align Council's investment in the community with Council's Community Strategic Plan.

3. SCOPE

3.1. In scope

This policy applies to two major areas of Council support for community initiatives:

1. Inner West Council Grants Program: A suite of project-based grants including community wellbeing, arts, community history and heritage, environment, recreation, community-led celebration day (multicultural) and resident association.
2. Scaled fee structures which provide for reduced or waived fees or charges: Applicable to the hire of indoor venues, parks, and street closure and occupation for resident street parties.

3.2. Out of scope

Reduced or waived fees and charges for the following are not supported by Council or are out of scope for scaled fee structures under this policy:

- Aquatic Centres
- Banner erection, flags and temporary signage
- Leases of Council properties and facilities
- Recurrent funding allocated for organisations in return for significant public benefits relating to community wellbeing and cultural development
- Road closure and occupation other than for existing approvals and resident street parties
- Seasonal bookings for recreation facilities and sporting grounds
- Waste and recycling services provided to the community for events in parks, at schools, street festivals and events.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Council will be guided by the Grants and Fee Scale Policy in the allocation of grants, and in determining the category of scaled fees charged for the use of indoor venues, parks, and street closure and occupation for resident street parties.

5. GRANTS AND FEE SCALE POLICY

5.1 Context

Council recognises that it cannot do everything on its own and that the best ideas to support and inspire communities come from within communities themselves. Council also recognises that innovation and best practice comes from supporting new and emerging ideas. Investing in the community's ingenuity, strengths, and capabilities provides expanded opportunities for community and cultural development; promotion of wellbeing, social inclusion and environmental improvement. Council's grants and scaled fee structures support community groups to help deliver the Community Strategic Plan.

The *Local Government Act* 1993 provides the legislative context for Council's Grants and Fee Scale Policy. Section 356 (1) of the Act allows Councils to grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions (with specific requirements for public notice in some circumstances where private gain is a factor); and Section 610 E allows Councils to waive or reduce fees if it is satisfied that there is a category of hardship or any other category Council determines warrants waived or reduced fees. Section 428 of the Act requires Council to report on the contribution scaled fees make to Council achieving its annual delivery plan.

5.2 Guiding principles

The following principles underpin the Grants and Fee Scale Policy:

- Consistency: Consistent processes governing applications for grants, and applications to book venues
- Transparency: Clear eligibility criteria and decision-making
- Social justice: Allocating and pricing community resources in order to promote social inclusion, and address disadvantage, equity, access, participation and rights.

5.3 Strategic Reference

The Grants and Fee Scale Policy is designed to ensure the allocation of resources aligns with Council's community strategic directions, in particular:

- An ecologically sustainable Inner West
- Unique, liveable, networked neighbourhoods
- Creative communities and strong economy
- Caring, happy and healthy communities
- Progressive local leadership.

5.4 Inner West Council Grants Program

The Inner West Council Grants Program provides financial assistance to groups and individuals to enable them to deliver programs and services that are consistent with Council's strategic directions.

Applicants address grant assessment criteria published annually in the Grants Program Guidelines, included at Appendix One. Grants are available in the following grant streams:

- **Arts Grants:** Support projects and initiatives that provide opportunities for creative participation and the celebration of local history; enhance creativity and connection to place in the public sphere; develop skills; and strengthen the sustainability and capacity of the Inner West Council's cultural and creative industries.
- **Community History and Heritage Grants:** Support research and projects and interpret the Inner West's historically significant activities, places and people with a view to building the Library's physical and digital collections
- **Community Wellbeing Grants:** Provide financial and in-kind assistance to not-for-profit community-based organisations or community groups auspiced by an organisation, for sustainable local projects which address local issues; promote social justice; enhance wellbeing; foster inclusion and encourage social connection
- **Environment Grants:** Supports projects which strengthen the capacity of local groups to benefit the environment and community through projects focused on environmental improvement, sustainability education, awareness-raising and the promotion of sustainable living as a way of life
- **Recreation Grants:** Provides financial support to community sporting and recreation groups and non-government community recreation organisations that offer recreation programs and services to residents in the Inner West
- **Community-Led Celebration Day (Multicultural) Grants:** Provides financial support to plan and deliver celebrations of national cultures or national days of cultural significance in local communities across the Inner West
- **Community Material Small Grants:** Supports not-for-profit community-based organisations or community groups to establish, develop or expand community wellbeing activities with materials or resources.
- **Resident Association Small Grants:** Supports not-for-profit resident associations to address neighbourhood issues; providing opportunities for local communities to come together to work on issues that are important to them and their places.

5.5 Scaled fee structure

The provision of quality indoor venues and parks requires significant and on-going maintenance and capital expenditure by Council. Council provides scaled fee structures for the hire of indoor venues, parks, and street closure and occupation for resident street parties in keeping with legislative requirements under Section 8B of the *Local Government Act* 1993 which relate to Council's obligations to have effective financial and asset management.

Scaled fee structures aim to strike a balance between the need to charge fees to help offset operational costs of assets, and ensuring these resources remain accessible to the community. [Council fees and charges](#) are documented in the annual schedule, including any fees applied for damage bonds, key deposits, supply of waste and recycling receptacles and removal of waste, and energy usage.

Fee categories comprise:

- Category 1: 100% fee waived
- Category 2: 50% of fee
- Category 3: Full fee.

In making scaled fee decisions, Council considers these categories:

- The nature of the group applying for venue use
- The nature of the activity for residents.

The process for making scaled fee decisions is at Appendix One.

Scaled fee access to the following facilities and services may be sought on the Application Form:

- Indoor venues
- Parks
- Application and processing of applications for local road closure and occupancy for street parties by residents.

5.6 Policy Implementation

5.6.1 Grants

The Guidelines for the grant streams, including program aims; selection and eligibility criteria; and reporting requirements provide support in the development of grant proposals; and the process for evaluation and determination of proposals; for monitoring and evaluating grant results; and for continually improving guidelines and processes.

5.6.2 Scaled Fee Structure

A group or individual seeking access to a scaled fee under this policy may apply on the Council website and Schedule of Scaled fees. Applicants may seek a review of any fee determination, on written request to the Director, Community

5.7 Evaluation

Council will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy through:

- Regular reviews and updates of the policy every 4 years to coincide with the Community Strategic Plan review cycle.
- Annual updates of Council guidelines and processes.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Director, Community

7. ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

Inner West Council Grant Program Guidelines 2020

Version Control - POLICY HISTORY:

Version	Amended By	Changes Made	Date	TRIM #
1	Governance: Policy and Risk	New IWC Policy replacing pre-merged versions	June 2017	#
2	City Living	This policy replaces the 2018 policy, policy fragments from other areas of Council, and the 2012 <i>Grants and Community Resourcing Policy</i> of the former Leichhardt Council	March 2020	
3	Community	This policy updates the March 2020 policy, with new component regarding access for Local Not for Profit Groups and an increased attendance fee threshold	November 2022	

Appendix 1: Guidelines for determining scaled fee

Introduction

Council provides a scaled fee structure for hire of indoor venues, parks, and street closure and occupation for resident street parties.

The policy regarding scaled fees for community resources is underpinned by the need for them to be affordable and accessible for not-for-profit groups. Categories such as access and affordability for local residents; the health and wellbeing benefits of the activity; the necessity of Council support to enable activities to proceed; and the extent to which the activity aligns with Council's strategic priorities are therefore reflected in the scaled fee structure.

Fee scales

The Community Strategic Plan *Our Inner West 2036* identifies three Strategic Directions, including:

- Unique, liveable, networked neighbourhoods
- Creative communities and a strong economy
- Caring, happy, healthy communities.

How to apply

Council accepts scaled fee applications on the Application Form. Applicants will need to demonstrate their organisational status, provide estimates of number of the number of participants living in the Inner West Council area, estimate the number of number of participants with concession entitlements and describe the health and wellbeing benefits of the activity being provided.

Applicants will be required to identify the scaled fee category they believe they are eligible for and provide evidence to support that categorisation.

Assessment process

An assessment panel comprising specialist staff will assess the applications and determine fee categories based on the information provided and the categories outlined in Table 1 (below); and reference to the Community Strategic Plan.

Applications for scaled fee will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer's delegate.

Review process

Any applicant who believes that an incorrect category has been applied to their application may write to the Director, Community to seek a review. The requested review must include the following:

- Current financial statement, including all revenue and operating costs of the group
- Fees charged per participant
- Number of participants at the activity
- % of participants who are residents of IWC
- % of participants on low incomes (health care card holders)
- Analysis of ability of the activity to be held at one of IWC's lower cost venues.
- Benefits to IWC residents and the community need being addressed.

Further Information

Council's website and application form will provide the contact details of staff who can assist with any queries regarding fee categories, as well as other information including conditions of hire community venues and town halls, recreation facilities and parks, and street closure and occupation for resident street parties.

Table 1: Schedule of Scaled Fees and Categories of Organisation

Scaled Fee		Organisation	Activity	Examples
1	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporated local and non-local not for profit organisation Unincorporated local not for profit group Parents and Citizens and Parents and Friends Associations from schools in the Inner West Council local government area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services that enables achievement of specific Community Strategic Plan objective for residents Where there is evidence that payment of a fee for venue use will prevent the activity from occurring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcoholics Anonymous and other mutual support fellowships in the twelve-step tradition Local NFP meetings and events that are not primarily for fundraising Cultural and arts performance organisations that draw a local ticket purchasing audience Local meetings of registered political organisations Local youth band rehearsals Men's groups P&C/P&F fundraiser Play groups Seniors and cultural social support Women's groups
2	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporated NFP organisation Unincorporated local NFP group Sole traders with public liability insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services that enables achievement of specific Community Strategic Plan objective for residents Groups that charge an attendance fee of \$5 or more (for participation in the event), or for membership Offering community focused activities, and discounted access to health care card holders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dance groups Painting classes Yoga for cancer patients U3A Charity event with over 50% beneficiaries being residents.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious institutions (ATO defined) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious services and other forms of worship or religious study
3	Full fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private individuals Commercial organisations, businesses, sole traders Political parties, or activities that are overtly political in nature Regular, organised sporting activities/events Schools, TAFE, tertiary institutions, school Parents and Friends/Citizens (where acting on behalf of a school) State or federal government agencies /departments. Activities where Inner West Council residents comprise less than 50% of participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private events by invitation only (e.g. weddings, celebrations) Activities designed for benefit of the business sector Activities that are for the benefit of a private individual or organisation that are not open to Inner West residents Community activities designed to cater for residents of other Council areas Activities/events carried out by sporting clubs, sporting groups or associations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For-profit conferences or events Political rallies or overtly political public events Large scale sporting events Events by other levels of government with a relatively greater capacity to pay.