

Mansfield Shire Council

Outlying Communities Infrastructure Fund

Guidelines
2026-27



Mansfield Shire

Mansfield Shire Council **Outlying Communities Infrastructure Fund Guidelines 2026-27**

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Purpose

This document sets out the application guidelines for funding of the Outlying Communities Infrastructure Fund Grant. It is designed to assist prospective applicants in deciding whether to apply for the grant and outlines the process for submitting an application.

This document also sets out the purpose of the Fund and explains who is eligible to apply. It sets out the criteria that will be used to assess applications for funding.

Objectives

The Outlying Communities Infrastructure Fund aims to support communities to develop or improve community facilities that enhance liveability and improve community resilience and connectivity in outlying communities within the Mansfield Shire.

This will be achieved by utilising the funding amount to provide Mansfield Shire outlying communities with the opportunity to apply for grants of up to \$15,000.

Funding Details

Grants of up to \$15,000 are available out of a total funding pool of \$60,000. Only one application per organisation will be accepted.

Grant opens 27 July 2026

Draft project workshop 2 September 2026

Final submissions closing 5pm 12 October 2026

Who Can Apply?

To be eligible to apply for the Outlying Communities Infrastructure Fund applicants must:

- ▶ Be incorporated, community based and not-for-profit
- ▶ Be Auspiced by an incorporated organisation (if group is unincorporated)
- ▶ Be based in an outlying area of Mansfield Shire Council as defined by the Planning Scheme

Who Cannot Apply?

Applications will not be accepted from:

- ▶ Individuals
- ▶ Groups that are unincorporated and not Auspiced by an incorporated organisation
- ▶ Groups or organisations that were successful in the previous round, 2025-2026, are not eligible for a grant in 2026-2027 unless prior Council permission is granted
- ▶ Businesses or political groups
- ▶ Government agencies – with the exception of groups registered as State or Local Government Entities for the purpose of managing land – i.e. Crown Land Committee of Management and Local Government halls and reserves
- ▶ Individuals, groups or organisations outside Mansfield Shire
- ▶ Applicants that have not successfully acquitted previous Council grants or who have

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outstanding debts to Council

Eligible Projects

The projects must:

- ▶ Demonstrate ongoing community benefit
- ▶ Take place in an outlying community within the Mansfield Shire (not within Mansfield township as per the Planning Scheme)
- ▶ Deliver capital improvement to buildings, facilities and publicly accessible land managed or maintained for community benefit

Eligible projects may include:

- ▶ Improvements to community buildings i.e. kitchens, bathrooms, social spaces
- ▶ Improvements to sporting and recreational facilities
- ▶ New infrastructure initiatives
- ▶ Infrastructure that increases inclusion, accessibility for all abilities and fair access
- ▶ Sustainability improvements
- ▶ Projects that reduce risk or increase safety
- ▶ Storage improvements
- ▶ Fencing

What We Do Not Fund

- ▶ Appliances and/or non-permanent equipment
- ▶ Projects that will require recurrent funding
- ▶ Staff costs
- ▶ Projects that have previously been funded by Council
- ▶ Purchase of land or buildings
- ▶ Payment to the applicant for time spent working on the project or planning the project
- ▶ Maintenance works that are an organisation or club responsibility under tenancy or lease agreement
- ▶ Projects which exclude access to the public or community groups
- ▶ Ongoing administration and operational costs
- ▶ Expenditure or financial commitments made before the grant has been awarded
- ▶ Works that have already been started or completed
- ▶ Projects located within the Mansfield township zone (as defined by the Planning Scheme)

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Community Contribution

This fund does not have a set community contribution, however, applicants must demonstrate some contribution from the community to the project grant total.

Eligible contributions include volunteer labour, professional services, donated materials or cash.

In-kind contributions, rates and cash

In-kind contribution is a contribution of a good or a service other than money. Including, voluntary labour (for example, painting work), donated goods (for example, kitchen equipment), donated services (for example, professional advice from an architect).

The following information is provided by the Victorian Government to help you calculate your in-kind contribution: <https://www.vic.gov.au/grants-understanding-kind-contributions>

The calculation of your in-kind contribution is based on your best estimates. The following figures may help guide you:

- ▶ Calculate volunteer general labour at \$20 per hour
- ▶ Calculate volunteer specialist labour (for example, engineer or architect) at \$45 per hour
- ▶ Calculate donated goods at the price you would pay for them if they were not donated

Cash donations can come from fundraising events, individuals, foundations, businesses or community groups.

Application Process

Grant Opens 27 July 2026

Draft Project Workshop presentation 2 September 2026

Grant Closes 12 October 2026

All draft applications are presented at the Project Workshop with expert advice and assistance provided by council officers to refine project.

All final applications are assessed by a panel and presented to Councillors for endorsement at the Council meeting.

Successful projects are expected to be announced in December 2026.

Further information and the application form can be viewed here:

<https://www.mansfield.vic.gov.au/Community>

Paper copies are available at Council Office: 33 Highett Street, Mansfield, Victoria, 3722.

Steps:

1. Check your eligibility against the criteria
2. Read the guidelines before completing your application
3. Option to discuss your proposal with a Council Officer:
community.development@mansfield.vic.gov.au OR 03 5775 8555
4. Obtain quotes for all expenses for your proposal

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5. Obtain letters of support and establish partnerships and links with other groups
6. Provide all supporting documentation to attach to your submission, including photographs, quotes, financial statements and insurance
7. Attend the Project workshop and present your project
8. Prepare final application following officer recommendations
9. Submit your application online by the due date

Receipt of application forms will be acknowledged by email following submission. If an acknowledgment email is not received following submission, please contact community.development@mansfield.vic.gov.au OR 03 5775 8555.

Applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome.

Project Workshop

The project workshop is an opportunity to present your draft project to council officers with expertise in Planning Infrastructure and community development for assistance and guidance. Officers will provide guidance in any regulatory requirements or stakeholder involvement that may be necessary.

The projects will not be assessed against any criteria at the workshop.

Assessment

Applications will be assessed initially by Council Officers to ensure the application is complete and meets the eligibility requirements. If the application is deemed eligible, it is then examined in more detail against the assessment criteria.

An internal multi-disciplinary assessment panel will propose recommendations to Council on funding allocations. Officers from across Council are consulted where specialist advice is required in formulating recommendations.

CRITERIA	WEIGHTING
demonstrated link to funding objective with clear evidence of demand for the project and the ongoing benefits to community	50%
detailed project planning and demonstrated capacity to deliver project successfully	40%
community contribution	10%

Additional weighting may be applied by the assessment panel to ensure the even distribution of funds across the Mansfield Shire's geographical area.

Successful Applicants

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You will receive a notification of successful funding and an agreement that must be signed and returned to Council.

1. Payment can only be made once you return your funding agreement to accept the terms of the funding along with an invoice for the grant amount
2. Make sure you adhere to any special conditions outlined in your funding agreement or letter
3. Do what you said you would do in accordance with your application
4. Retain all project invoices and receipts
5. Tell Council in advance if your funded project is predicted to be different from your application in any way
6. Acknowledge Council's support by use of the Mansfield Shire Council Logo
7. Take photos and relevant notes during your project
8. Finally, evaluate and acquit the project and tell Council how the project went

Further Information

Please contact Council's Project Officer Social Inclusion Action Group, Sally Small.

Email: community.development@mansfield.vic.gov.au

Telephone: 03 5775 8555

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Grant Terms and Conditions

Conflict of Interest

All applicants will be required to declare any interests of which they are aware, which could reasonably raise an expectation of a conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest can be actual, potential or perceived, and should be declared to ensure that any risks are managed.

Contracts

A signed funding agreement between Mansfield Shire Council and the recipient is required for all Outlying Community Infrastructure Fund projects.

Auspice agency

Applicants to the Outlying Community Infrastructure Fund must be an incorporated organisations. If your group is not incorporated, you need to approach a local, incorporated group and ask if they will 'auspice' your application.

An auspice agency is an organisation that agrees to act as the trustee of your project's funds and assumes financial responsibilities related to successful completion of your project. *Your* group still manages the actual implementation of the project. We recommend that you establish an agreement with your auspice agency outlining roles and responsibilities.

Indemnity

Council shall not be responsible at any time for any liabilities incurred or entered into by the community organisation as a result of, or in connection with, any activities undertaken as a result of funding being received.

The community organisation will agree to indemnify Mansfield Shire Council and its staff, from and against any claim, demand, liability, suit, cost, expense or action arising out of or in any way connected with the Project or the activities of the community organisation.

Land-owner permission

Land-owner permission (if applicable) must be obtained prior to submitting an application to the OCIF. All legal requirements, permits and permissions necessary to undertake the Project are the responsibility of the community organisation.

Completion deadlines

From the date upon which the funding agreement is signed, projects must be completed within 12 months.

Grant payments

100% of the grant will be paid to successful applicants after the funding agreement has been signed by both parties and an invoice has been received by Council. NOTE: If you are using your grant to source project funding from another agency, the OCIF grant amount will be committed to your project, the grant payment will not be made until the other funding sources have been confirmed.

GST

The fund grants are GST exclusive.

Reporting

An acquittal report is required at the end of the funding period or as specified in the term of the funding agreement.