

Environment Canterbury Funding Guidelines for community organisations, revised 2018

Purpose

1. To provide guidance to staff for the allocation of funding to support community organisations (COs)¹ in a fair, open and transparent way.
2. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Community Partnerships Strategy and the Strategy Implementation Plan.

Scope

3. These Guidelines apply to all funds transferred from Environment Canterbury to a community organisation as an allocation through a funding process or as a grant to support service delivery of a specific project.
4. These Guidelines do not apply to contracts for service awarded to community organisations for a timebound delivery of a product or service. The Procurement Policy is the appropriate guiding document for Contracts for Service.

Principles

5. Public resources should be used for the best possible public benefit. Therefore, staff of Environment Canterbury must be guided by certain principles when they manage public resources.
6. The Community Partnerships Strategy Implementation Plan includes details of principles to underpin management by public entities of funding to non-government organisations. (Office of the Auditor-General, 2006) along with additional principles specific to Environment Canterbury.
7. All principles should be adhered to by staff when funding is allocated.

These Guidelines will:

- Identify a set of eligibility and assessment criteria for providing funding to community organisations that is consistent across the organisation (contestable funds will have additional criteria specific to that fund);
- Set out what will and will not be funded;

¹ A community organisation, public or private non-profit (including a church or religious entity) that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community, and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs (National Library of Medicine, USA).

- Outline other matters which staff must take into consideration when allocating funding.

Eligibility criteria:

8. All requests for funding, whether received on an Environment Canterbury application form or in another format, must meet our basic eligibility criteria.

	Criteria
1	Proposal is aligned with one or more of Environment Canterbury's strategic priorities, as set out on our Long-Term Plan/Annual Plan, portfolio strategy plans, or agreed by Zone Committees.
2	Recipient can demonstrate legal entity status: incorporated society, registered charitable trust and/or registered charity. Individuals must be registered with IRD.
3	Projects must comply with applicable legislation and local and regional plan rules.
4	Project is not a legal obligation or condition of a resource consent ² .
5	Recipient can demonstrate feasibility of project (is it practically and financially feasible?).
6	Recipient can demonstrate ability to manage financial accounts and meet reporting requirements.

Environment Canterbury will fund (in general):

- Tangible goods (plants, building materials etc.)
- Services (project management, technical advice, education, etc.)
- Community engagement (coordination, facilitation, etc.)
- Capacity and capability (upskilling, salary, etc.)
- Sponsorship/donation (events, awards, etc.)
- Other on case by case basis.

Environment Canterbury will not fund:

- Organisations and/or initiatives that are primarily political in nature
- Projects already funded or delivered through our operations/business as usual
- Any project that will exclusively result in private gain.

² We will not underwrite any obligation to remedy or mitigate the effects of other activities.

Assessment criteria:

9. Applicants will be asked to provide a project plan or written proposal which addresses both the eligibility and assessment criteria.
10. Contestable funds must have specific criteria which will be applied when assessing applications for funding. This information must be readily accessible by community organisations. In addition, the criteria below will also be considered where relevant.

Assessment criteria	Description
Alignment with our strategic objectives and priorities	The depth and breadth of the CO's alignment with one or more of our strategic priorities.
Significance of the problem or opportunity	Project needs to describe how significant the problem/opportunity is to the community of interest and the extent to which providing funding assistance would help us to grow capacity within the community to deliver successful projects.
Ability to deliver	Demonstrate leadership and financial management capability and a sound methodology to deliver outcome(s).
Value added	Operate in a space (geographic, issues or otherwise) where there is an identified gap in our ability to deliver on a key objective or to develop an effective relationship with a stakeholder group or community of interest.
Risk assessment	Acceptable level of risk, proportional to investment. CO demonstrates leadership capacity in their field and preferably has a proven track record of achievement and/or clear structures and processes.
Value for money	Demonstrate good return on investment for rate payers; leverage bigger outcomes. Proportion of the funding required to be found from sources other than Environment Canterbury will also need to be considered to gauge value, sustainability, and likelihood of success.
Working Collaboratively	Extent of external support for the CO and ability to operate in a collaborative or facilitative way.
Iwi engagement	Proposal includes details of engagement with the relevant papatipu rūnanga where appropriate.

Other considerations:

11. In assessing applications for funding, decision makers should also:
 - undertake a risk assessment (using the risk assessment tools available in the staff Kete)

- consider if the amount of money requested can fit within an existing budget or funding allocation. If not, ensure there is clarity on the process and timeframes for requesting new funding through the Long-Term Plan/Annual Plan processes
 - ensure Environment Canterbury has the capacity/budget to provide additional in-kind support from staff that a project may be reliant on
 - determine an appropriate payment structure (e.g. CO receives some or all funding up front) based on a financial risk assessment of the recipient/project
 - agree clearly identified outputs or milestones to deliver on key objectives and which can be monitored/reported.
12. All funding agreements must include provisions for acknowledgement of the support provided by Environment Canterbury in any publications / media releases / signage related to the project.

Following agreed processes

13. Approved templates for funding letters, funding agreements, and MOUs must be used. Guidance can be obtained from the Community Partnerships Coordinator.
14. Some of the current funding programmes, such as Immediate Steps, and Community Vehicle Trusts have established processes and agreements. Where available this should be used in preference to generic templates.
15. All allocations of funding to community organisations must be undertaken in a transparent, consistent and fair manner. Processes should also be fit-for-purpose and commensurate with the amounts involved.
16. Staff must ensure that appropriate accountability and reporting provisions are put in place before any funding is allocated.
17. All funding allocations must be recorded in the agreed way. See the Community Partnerships Strategy Implementation Plan or ask the Community Partnerships Coordinator for details of how to record and report on funding allocations.

Review

18. These Guidelines will be reviewed annually by the Community Partnerships Coordinator to ensure internal consistency between processes is maintained.