



Grant Guidelines

2026 Annual Grant Round
& Pitch-Up Geelong

We exist to create
a fairer, more
equitable Geelong
community

GIVE
WHERE
YOU LIVE
FOUNDATION

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Background



The Give Where You Live Foundation exists to create a fairer, more equitable community across the G21 region.

We continue to ask ourselves - how can we enable greater fairness, equity, inclusion, care, compassion and connection in our community? This will require changes in our community - to underlying systems and structures holding inequity in place and to mindsets and beliefs.

We will use all our energy and resources, in partnership with our community, to help all people and places thrive.

We believe that, together with our community and partners, we need to change our society to be more connected and we need to change our economy to be more equitable, regenerative and inclusive.

We believe the challenges we are facing now as a community require a whole of community response, and a range of actions, initiatives and support including, but not limited to, traditional grant making.

We seek to be recognised as one of the most progressive foundations in Australia.

We will catalyse systems change, build community assets and incubate social innovation, using research, design, data, evaluation, reflection practices and advocacy. We will continue to diversify our social change efforts through our programmatic approach, through building a portfolio of social and economic change initiatives, including grants to fund community partners' social and economic change efforts.

More information on the Foundation's 2030 Strategy, our Theory of Change, our grants and initiatives can be found at givewhereyoulive.com.au

Our Cross-cutting Themes



To achieve our ambitions, we believe we need to:



Identify and address underlying systemic and structural barriers that inhibit opportunity and contribute to social and economic inequity in our region.



Take a whole of community approach to strengthen our empathy and understanding, community connections and resilience - ultimately building a movement for change.



Support the self-determination of Australia's First Nations people, supporting Indigenous communities to meet their social, cultural and economic needs.

For more information on our principles, please visit our website [here](#).

These principles underpin and inform all areas of our work, as well as being key considerations for our grants program, cutting across our priority areas of **food security; homelessness assistance; inclusive employment;** and **regenerative economic development.**

Our Focus Areas

Food Security and Homelessness Assistance

Our goal is for our local food and homelessness assistance systems to support wellbeing, equity and justice, strengthening our connected and caring community and social sector, so that people are supported and can meet their basic needs when experiencing a life crisis.

The long-term outcomes we seek through our work, including our own initiatives and our grant making, is to ensure all people at all times have access to sufficient, affordable and healthy food, and to **ensure that people have access to homelessness assistance to meet their urgent needs.**

Inclusive Employment and Regenerative Economic Development

Our goal is for a local economy that is inclusive, regenerative, and supports community wellbeing. An economy that prioritises inclusive participation, equity and sustainably builds and retains local community wealth, so that all people and places thrive. An economy that works for people, rather than the other way around.

The long-term outcomes we seek through our work, including our own initiatives and our grant making, is to **ensure that everyone who wants to work has the opportunity and support to work and for a local economy that is equitable, locally led, inclusive, sustainable and regenerative.**

2026 Grant Round



The Give Where You Live Foundation's 2026 grants will focus on the Foundation's principles and priorities outlined above (our focus areas), via four grant streams:

- Annual Grants
- Innovation Fund
- Pitch-Up Geelong
- Strategic Partnership Grants

Annual Grants

The 2026 Annual Grants will focus on addressing immediate needs across the following areas:¹

- Food Relief and Food Security
- Homelessness Assistance
- Inclusive Employment

The Foundation will prioritise grant funding for organisations and/or initiatives that are assisting our G21 community through:

- **Community-driven efforts** - Meaningfully involves or is led by community members through consultation, co-creation, implementation, or evaluation of the grant activities to affect positive change through grass-roots strength-based approaches involving people who are the most impacted by systemic barriers and inequitable systems.
- **Collaboration and coordination** – supporting collaborative networked approaches to progress social change efforts.
- **Food insecurity and homelessness prevention and early intervention** - collaborative and systems-change approaches that strengthen connection, circles of support and capability for individuals/families at high risk of food insecurity and/or homelessness, including coordinated referral pathways and community-led solutions.
- **Food relief and homelessness assistance** – addressing gaps in the social safety net and efforts to improve system coordination to expand access, choice and diversity in food relief, food security supports and homelessness assistance.
- **Food security and system transformation** - initiatives such as regenerative agriculture, regional food hubs, Indigenous food sovereignty, community-driven initiatives and social enterprises that contribute to long-term food justice and resilient local food systems.
- **Economic inclusion and employment initiatives** – partnerships and systemic interventions that reduce structural barriers to employment and economic participation, job readiness and employment pathways, wrap-around employment supports, initiatives addressing persistent structural barriers to employment, and local work-integrated for-purpose enterprises.

1. The Annual Grant Round focus area(s) will be determined each year, based on needs and opportunities.

Funding available: Applications can be submitted for grants up to \$20,000 (GST exclusive). These are non-recurring grants.

Implementation period: To be delivered for one-year, from 1 July 2026.

Funding approach: Open, competitive grant round, commencing in February 2026.

Funding uses: Funding is unrestricted² and can be used to support collaboration and participatory efforts and/or an organisation's core funding (e.g. general operating, overheads or administration costs) to be able to implement current or new projects, initiatives, services or support relevant to the focus area(s) of the grant.



Pitch-Up Geelong

Pitch Up Geelong is a **live crowd-funding event** based on the model developed by [The Funding Network](#).

The Foundation will support three local community organisations to develop and present a pitch, at the Pitch Up Geelong 2026 event, on the **theme of equity and fairness**.

At the event, the organisations will each have 6 minutes to present their work to potential donors interested in making a financial pledge, matched by matched funders. Donations at the event take the form of pledges, encouraged via an auction-style format. The event concludes by revealing the total amount raised for each organisation.

The Foundation:

- Provides pitch training - our professional pitch coaching will help you better articulate what you do, this helps secure funding at the event and builds capability to secure funding from other sources in the future. By presenting your work you will gain access to new networks and valuable pro bono resources, not to mention the incredible sense of confidence that pitching to a supportive crowd brings.
- Secures matched funding - match partner funding means every dollar raised for you on the night, up to a certain amount, is matched dollar for dollar.
- Hosts the event - you will have the opportunity to participate in an event that will allow you to connect directly with a roomful of potential donors. You simply have to participate in the training, show up on the night and make your pitch.

2. Not all priority areas may receive funding.

How to apply

To apply for an Annual Grant -

please complete and submit the online application form by 6 March 2026.

To apply for Pitch Up Geelong -

please complete and submit the Expression of Interest (EOI) form by 6 March 2026

You are welcome to contact the Foundation via grants@givewhereyoulive.com.au to discuss your application prior to submission.



Key Dates

Grant Stream	Annual Grant
Grant round opens	Feb 9, 2026
Grant round closes	5pm, 6 March 2026
Notified of outcome	Mid June 2026
Funding distributed	Late June 2026
Implementation period	1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027
Progress update	Jan 31, 2027
Final report due	Jul 31, 2027
Grant Stream	Pitch Up Geelong
EOI opens	Feb 9, 2026
EOI closes	Mar 6, 2026
Notified of outcome	Mid March 2026
Training	Jul 8 & July 22, 2026
Event	Aug 5, 2026
Funding distributed	Aug 31, 2026
Implementation period	1 September 2026 – 31 August 2027
Progress update	Jan 31, 2027
Final report due	Sep 1, 2027

Required Documents

- **Annual report** or, if you don't publish an annual report, a document listing board members or committee of management, a list of senior staff and a summary of activities/accomplishments in the last year.
- **Audited financial statements** (if separate from annual report), or if you don't have audited financial statements, a copy of revenue and expenses for the last financial year and a statement of organisational assets and liabilities.
- A copy of your **DGR and TCC status**.
- A **letter of support** from any partner listed as being key to the delivery of your project.
- **Quotes or estimates** if requesting funds for minor capital works, equipment and/or consultancy.



Eligibility



Applications must meet the following requirements:

- All grants must contribute towards our cross-cutting themes and address at least one focus area listed on page 3.
- Grants must be delivered in the **G21 region** made up of the following five local government areas:
 - City of Greater Geelong,
 - Surf Coast Shire,
 - Borough of Queenscliff,
 - Golden Plains Shire, and/or
 - Colac Otway Shire.
- For grants up to and including \$10,000, the applying organisation only needs to be endorsed as a Tax Concession Charity (TCC) and registered on the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) register, with current and up-to-date reporting on the ACNC register. Please note, if you do have Deductible Gift Recipient 1 (DGR1) you can still apply for grants up to and including \$10,000.
- For grants over \$10,001 the applying organisation must be endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) as covered by Item 1 of the table in section 30-15 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 and be endorsed as a TCC and registered on the ACNC register, with current and up-to-date reporting on the ACNC register.

The Give Where You Live Foundation does not provide funding to/for:

- Individuals (this includes scholarship programs).
- Political activities.
- Religious organisations when funds would be used in whole or in part to further the organisation's religious purposes (proselytising).
- Endowment Funds, building funds, major capital works, capital campaigns, annual campaigns or annual appeals.
- Attendance at fundraising events.
- Clinical or medical research.
- Retrospective funding.
- Programs that discriminate or create community conflict.
- Previous grant recipients who have not completed reporting acquittal requirements.
- Generally, the Give Where You Live Foundation does not accept auspiced applications. The organisation applying must be the one undertaking the project or program. Please contact the Foundation if you would like to discuss an exception.

Please note...

- We prefer grant applications supporting local First Nations people provide a letter of support from a local First Nations owned and operated organisation.
- Organisations with current funding from the Foundation facing delays, or with incomplete reporting requirements, should contact the Foundation prior to applying.
- If you are seeking to purchase food items, for distribution as food relief, please contact the Foundation prior to submitting your application, as there may be options to access food items through the established collaborative mechanisms of Geelong Foodshare.

Grant Assessment



Pitch-Up Geelong EOIs will be assessed by Foundation staff.

Annual Grants will be assessed by Community and Business Grant Panel Members⁴ and Foundation staff.



Each application will be assessed against the following criteria:

-  **Strategic Alignment** – grants must align with the Foundation’s Theory of Change cross-cutting themes and focus areas.
-  **Community Need** - able to clearly define a relevant community need, challenge and/or opportunity. Applicants are encouraged to include their own data or stories relevant to their organisation or initiative.
-  **Organisational Alignment and Capacity** - ability to demonstrate your organisation’s alignment and ability to deliver impact against the identified need and/or opportunity.
-  **Budget and Financial Management** - ability to demonstrate your organisation’s financial and budgetary accountability, transparency and effective management.
-  **Evaluation and Impact** - ability to demonstrate a plan to collect data and/or stories of impact against the Organisation’s selected measure(s).

Applications are then considered against each other and prioritised for funding against other key considerations, including:

- o Number of applications addressing the same primary measure,
- o Funding received through other Give Where You Live Foundation grant rounds and other local funders, and
- o Risks to funding or not funding an application.

CONTACT US

We are here to help if you would like to discuss your application prior to submission. To set up a time, for further information and all queries regarding the grant rounds please contact the grants team 03 5229 4364 or via grants@givewhereyoulive.com.au

General advice and Frequently Asked Questions

Read the documentation carefully

The documentation not only tells you what you need to do by when, it also tells you what we're looking for in projects to fund. Reading through everything we've made available to you will ensure you are writing a competitive application.

Use evidence to support your claims

We know you are expert at what you do, but you need to show us and take us on this journey. The best way to do this is by using evidence to support any claims you make, especially when describing the need for your project. We recommend using a combination of quantitative (numbers) and qualitative (stories) data to put forward a compelling case.

Make sure you answer the question

This sounds simple, but often applicants can be overwhelmed by character limits and wanting to put forward all their expertise in their application. A shorter response that answers the question is easier to assess against selection criteria than a longer response that contains information unrelated to the question.

Use clear and concise language

Also referred to as plain English or plain language, this makes it easier to read your application. This means shorter sentences, direct language, and fewer words. Don't forget we use community members as part of the assessment process, so keep this in mind when writing, and avoid acronyms and jargon where possible.

For more tips in writing grant applications, you can check out The Grants Hub - <https://www.thegrantshub.com.au/grant-resources>

Prepare your application in Word first using the questions

Responding to the questions in Word first allows you to play with the structure of your application and edit your application. This will also save you from any web-form issues that result in data losses. Once you are ready you can simply copy and paste this into the online form.

Pay attention to character limits

The form will not accept text that goes above the set character limit. Exceeding the limit will result in unfinished sentences.

My organisations doesn't publish an Annual Report

That's OK - If you don't publish an annual report, we need some more information about your organisation. Please attach a document listing board members or committee of management, a list of senior staff and a summary of activities/accomplishments in the last year.

My organisation doesn't have audited financial statements

That's OK - If you don't have audited financial statements, we need some more information about your organisation's financial position. Please attach a copy of revenue and expenses for the last financial year and a statement of organisational assets and liabilities.

Get Feedback

If you have previously applied for funding from the Give Where You Live Foundation, whether successful or unsuccessful, you can contact the team to get feedback. We offer both written, in person or online feedback on your grant applications.

Minor capital works and equipment

When applying for minor capital works and equipment, you need to explain why it is needed and what it will allow your organisation to do.

Your organisation may already be addressing a community need via a project or service that the minor capital works or equipment will support, or you may need the minor capital works or equipment to implement the project or service.

You need to explain the project or activity that will be supported by the minor capital works or equipment. What will the equipment or the works enable you to do as an organisation? Which project or service will it support? The project is not just the purchase of the equipment or the minor capital works, it is what you can then achieve with this purchase.

When describing who will implement the project or activity we are assessing against governance criteria. What we want to understand is who is overseeing your project or service and are they appropriately qualified. We will also need to understand who is overseeing any minor capital works. We will only need to know who is responsible for purchasing and installing equipment if it requires specialist knowledge.

Tell us what these minor capital works or this equipment will enable your organisation to do. What change will it allow you to make for your service users and the wider community? Consider the impact beyond the initial purchase or completion of the capital works.

If you're struggling, reach out!

We're more than happy to help you articulate your responses, so get in touch with the team if you've hit a roadblock or you're not sure how to answer a question.

GIVE WHERE YOU LIVE FOUNDATION

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