



Youth Access Grants Program Guidelines

2025/2026





City of Port Phillip

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Please consider
the environment
before printing.

Contents

Youth Access Grants Program Guidelines	1
Contents	3
Acknowledgment of Country	5
Introduction to program	5
Needs and interests of young people living in Port Phillip	5
Program Objectives	5
Council Priorities	5
Funding Categories	6
Category 1: Get Involved	6
Eligibility	6
What can be funded?	6
What can't be funded	7
Assessment criteria	7
Category 2: Recreation Programs	8
Eligibility	8
What can be funded?	9
What can't be funded:	9
Assessment criteria	10
Assessment process	11
Program timeframes	12
Support documentation required (Category 2 only)	12
Annual report or financial statement	12
Public and products liability insurance	12
Other insurance	13
Child Safety Policy	13
Auspice organisation	13
Submitting your application	14
Support provided by Council	14
Funding principles	15
Access and Inclusion	15
Ensuring a Child Safe City of Port Phillip	15

LGBTIQA+	16
Sustainability.....	16
Lobbying.....	17
Checklist: Preparing your Grant Application	17
Category 1: Get Involved (Individual) Grant.....	17
Category 2: Recreation Programs (Organisational) Grant	17
Appendix A - Definitions.....	18
Appendix B - City of Port Phillip	20
Appendix C - Terms and conditions	20
Category 1: Terms and Conditions	20
Category 2: Terms and Conditions	21

Acknowledgment of Country

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to the land.

Introduction to program

Youth Access Grants are available to increase access to recreational activities for young people aged 12 to 18 years in Port Phillip.

The Youth Access Grants Program 2025/26 has been developed in response to research and community consultation by City of Port Phillip, to address shortages of free or low-cost recreational options for young people.

Needs and interests of young people living in Port Phillip

There are more than 4,096 young people aged 12 to 17 in the City of Port Phillip. This population is increasing and is predicted to grow.

Consultation with young people highlighted that they would like increased access to free or low-cost recreation including:

- sporting activities such as training, lessons, competitions, and organised group sports
- creative expression including theatre, acting groups and art lessons
- social activities including meditation, mindfulness, environmental activities, movie clubs, group coding and gaming sessions.

Young people also expressed interest in activities which help others, strengthen individual positive identity, reduce social isolation, and protect the environment.

Program Objectives

The City of Port Phillip Youth Access Grants aims to:

- Provide access and inclusive recreational opportunities for young people aged 12 – 18 years of age who live, study, work or recreate within the City of Port Phillip
- enable young people to build social connections and a positive sense of self.

Council Priorities

Applicants must demonstrate consistency with the Strategic Direction below from the [City of Port Phillip Council Plan 2025-35](#):

A healthy and connected community - In Port Phillip, everyone feels safe, valued and connected. We celebrate our diversity and actively work together to build a welcoming community where everyone belongs.

Funding Categories

There are two funding categories available through the Youth Access Grants Program 2025/26.

Funding category	Applicant	Purpose	Maximum amount
Category 1: Get Involved	Individual	Funding for a young person aged 12 to 18 years to participate in recreational activities.	Up to \$500
Category 2: Recreation Programs	Organisations	Funding for organisations to provide recreation programs for a group of young people aged 12 to 18 years.	Up to \$15,000

Table 1 Youth Access Grants Program 2025/26 funding categories

Category 1: Get Involved

Maximum funding per application: \$500.

The Get Involved category offers funding for a young person aged 12 to 18 years to participate in recreational activities. Applications can include multiple activities adding up to a maximum of \$500. The total funding pool available is \$10,000.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Youth Access Grant under the Get Involved category, the grant beneficiary must:

- Be aged 12 to 18 years. Proof of age is required with application, this can include birth certificate, passport, driver's license, and proof of age ID.
- Live, work, study or recreate in the City of Port Phillip

Note:

- A parent or carer must complete and submit the application if the intended beneficiary is aged 12 to 18 years. If the application is successful, the parent or carer will also be responsible for managing the funds and completing an acquittal report.
- An organisation cannot submit an application or manage a grant on behalf of an individual.

What can be funded?

For the Get Involved category, the following will be considered for funding, but not limited to):

- Sporting activities (sports club membership, lessons, sports programs)
- Creative expression (arts, dance lessons)

- Social activities (meditation, mindfulness, environmental activities, movie clubs, group coding and gaming sessions)
- Equipment needed to participate in the recreational activity.

What can't be funded

The Get Involved funding category is not for:

- Organisations (including organisations that submit applications on behalf of individuals)
- Activities that have already started or been completed
- Activities that do not align with Council's principles and values as identified in the Council Plan 2025-35.
- Activities that are designed only to generate profit
- Activities that are illegal or in breach of Council policy.

Assessment criteria

Submissions will be assessed by a panel. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Suitable purpose (weighting 40 per cent)

- What will the funds be used for?
- What are the benefits for the young person?

Need and priority (Weighting 40 percent)

- Has a need for financial support been clearly demonstrated?
- Have other funding sources been considered?
- Applications will be prioritised if they are to support young people who are:
 - from First Peoples backgrounds
 - living in social/public, or community housing (including transitional housing)
 - living in low-income households or financial barriers
 - from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
 - living with disability
 - gender diverse/non-binary

Clear budget (weighting 20 per cent)

- Does the budget include an itemised breakdown?
- Does the budget reflect value for money?

Category 2: Recreation Programs

The Recreation Programs category is available to organisations that deliver programs for young people aged 12 to 18 years in the City of Port Phillip.

Organisations can apply for up to \$15,000. An organisation can submit multiple applications for different programs/ activities. A maximum of \$25,000 will be granted per organisation.

Grant applications must be for new recreational activities or to increase access to existing opportunities for young people.

This category includes a detailed application and acquittal process.

Youth participation is a requirement in the planning of the program.

Organisations that support young people from the following groups are encouraged to apply:

- First Peoples
- living with disability
- diverse backgrounds
- LGBITQA+
- experiencing financial disadvantage
- living with complex needs.

Eligibility

To be eligible for Youth Access Grants Program under the Recreation Programs category, applicant organisations must:

- not for profit, community groups, organisation, or club
- be located within, or offer projects within, the City of Port Phillip municipality
- provide programs, projects, activities, or services to young people aged 12 to 18 years who live, work, study or recreate in the City of Port Phillip municipality
- be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act or supported by an Incorporated Association that is deemed to be non-profit, as classified by the Australian Taxation Office (section 103A(2) (c) of the [Income Tax Assessment Act 1936](#))
- provide an ABN or an Auspice Organisation ABN
- have Public Liability Insurance or an Auspice Organisation Public Liability Insurance with a minimum of \$20 million
- have complied with all terms and conditions including the submission of a satisfactory project status and acquittal reports for all previous City of Port Phillip Grants
- have a Child Safety Policy.

- not have received, or be seeking to receive, greater than \$25,000.00 of total funding via the Youth Access Grants program in the current financial year in which they are applying.

What can be funded?

The following will be considered for funding under the Recreation Programs category, but is not an exhaustive list:

- fees for temporary training costs or sessional program staff employed to implement the program or activity
- costs incurred in hiring a venue (excluding costs associated with the rental of business premises)
- project administration costs
- costs associated with encouraging participation
- materials and other items essential to the program or activity
- printing, advertising, translations, and promotional costs
- transport costs
- research costs
- limited catering costs essential to the provision of the program or activity

What can't be funded:

The Youth Access Grants (Recreation Programs category) cannot be used to fund:

- individuals
- ongoing programs
- organisations that submit applications for funding on behalf of individuals
- programs not targeting the 12 to 18 age group living in the City of Port Phillip
- programs considered the responsibility of state or federal government or not core to Council business such as school curriculum activities
- building, capital works or facility maintenance works - Capital works are defined as projects undertaken to create a new permanent asset or space, or to permanently change the use, function or layout of an existing asset or space.
- items that are part of an organisation's core business or normal operating expenses. For example, insurances, utilities, rental of business premises
- ongoing staff salaries or administration costs not specific to the project
- retrospective funding (project cannot have started prior to grants being awarded)

- activities that do not align with Council's principles and values as identified in the [Council Plan 2025-35](#).
- activities that duplicate other local service responses unless need, coordination and cooperation is evident
- activities that could be funded from other sources, such as fees, sponsorships
- activities that are designed only to generate profit
- activities that are illegal or in breach of Council policy

Assessment criteria

Submissions will be assessed by an internal panel, against the following criteria:

Community need and benefit (weighting 30 per cent)

- Has a need for the new/ expanded program been clearly demonstrated?
- How effectively will the program meet this need?
- What benefits will the program deliver?
- Who are the participants?
- How many young people in the City of Port Phillip will participate?
- Projects will be prioritised if they cater for young people who are: include:
 - from First Peoples backgrounds
 - living in social/public/community or transitional housing
 - from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
 - living with disability
 - gender diverse/non-binary.

Capacity of the organisation to deliver on project outcomes (weighting 30 per cent)

- Proven track record and experience (similar work undertaken)
- Necessary resources to effectively deliver the project
- Provide a financial statement to demonstrate that the organisation is financially viable and has the experience to effectively deliver the project.

Planning and management (weighting 20 per cent)

- How will the project be planned, managed, implemented, and evaluated?
- Realistic timelines
- Does the budget reflect value for money?
- No more than 20 per cent of any grant is allocated for organisational overheads

Youth participation and consultation (weighting 20 per cent)

- Were young people consulted and involved in the design of the program?
- How will you ensure active youth participation in the program?

Assessment process

After you have submitted your grant application:

- You will receive an email confirming receipt of your application and a PDF copy of your application for your records.
- Council officers conduct an eligibility check, including initial assessment. Applicants that do not meet eligibility criteria will not continue for further assessment and applicants will be notified by email.
- An Assessment Panel consisting of Council officers will review each application against the assessment criteria and make recommendations for endorsement.
- Recommendations are presented to the Manager Family Youth and applicants are notified of the outcome by email.
- Recipients for Category 2 only will be listed on the Council's website and may be published in Council's Annual Report.

Program timeframes

Youth Access Grants are available to fund projects, programs and activities that will take place between 1 April 2026 and 30 September 2026.

Activity	Scheduled Date
Applications Open	Tuesday 11 November 2025
Online Information Session	Thursday 20 November 2025, 10am – 11am
Applications Close	Sunday 14 December 2025 at midnight
Applications Assessed	January 2026
Applicants emailed application outcome	February 2026
Funds issued to successful applicants	March 2026
Project/Program delivery	April – September 2026
Acquittal reports due	October 2026

Support documentation required (Category 2 only)

Applicants must provide the required documentation with their application.

Annual report or financial statement

Applicants must include a copy of their organisation or group's annual report, or annual statement or financial statement submitted to Consumer Affairs Victoria.

Public and products liability insurance

The City of Port Phillip requires applicants to hold current Public and Products Liability Insurance to the value of \$20 million to protect themselves against legal liability for third party's injury, death and/or damage to property caused by an occurrence in connection with the applicant's activities.

Applicants must demonstrate they hold the required insurance by submitting a valid Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance with their application.

You may apply through an auspice organisation if your group does not wish to purchase insurance.

Other insurance

Applicants must also include copies of any other relevant insurance, such as volunteer insurance or professional indemnity insurance, if applicable.

Child Safety Policy

A copy of the organisation's child safety policy.

Auspice organisation

An auspice is any organisation that is incorporated, holds current public and products liability insurance and agrees to take responsibility for your grant. Any legally constituted body may act as an auspice organisation to partner with and/or apply for or manage funding on behalf of another non-incorporated organisation.

Examples of an auspice include:

- local neighbourhood houses
- a community organisation you have worked or partnered with
- a peak body or governing association of your field
- organisations with a similar mission and purpose.

If you are being auspiced, obtain from your auspice organisations the following:

- Incorporation number
- GST status
- ABN
- Financial statement
- Current Public Liability Insurance
- Letter of support confirming the auspice arrangement.

Any auspice fees can be included in your grant budget.

If the funding application is successful, the auspice organisation will receive and manage the funds for the applicant to deliver the funded project or activities. The auspice organisation is responsible for the effective acquittal of the grant.

Submitting your application

All applications are made online through City of Port Phillip's Smarty Grants.

[Smarty Grants registration](#)

[Help guide for applicants](#)

[Applicant frequently asked questions](#)

If you require assistance to complete your online application, please contact

daniel.fry@portphillip.vic.gov.au

Support provided by Council

The City of Port Phillip Middle Years & Youth Services will be holding an information session for the community to get information about the Youth Access Grants application process and ask questions as required.

To attend the Youth Access Grants Information session, visit [Information Session Registration¹](#)

Interpreters for Auslan and languages other than English are available upon request (as long as adequate notice given). If you have any access or support requirements to enable equitable participation in this session, please contact daniel.fry@portphillip.vic.gov.au.

Activity	Scheduled Date
Online Information Session	Thursday 20th November, 10am to 11am

¹ Full weblink to information sessions <https://www.trybooking.com/DGZOY>

Funding principles

Funding Principles	Funding Principles Example
Child Safe Standards	Meet obligations in relation to keeping children and young people safe
Inclusion and Accessibility	Be free from discrimination and enable equitable participation for all community members
Equity	Address disadvantage and offer equal opportunity to all by recognising the individual needs of different community members
Responsiveness	Consult with participants and service users to respond to community needs.
Efficiency and Effectiveness	Maximise use of community and Council resources to achieve project goals.
Accountability	Maintain transparent governance and reporting processes.
Sustainability	Model environmental, social and economic sustainable practice.

Access and Inclusion

City of Port Phillip is committed to equitable participation and engagement, ensuring access and inclusion to all of its services and programs for people with disability. If you have any access or support requirements to enable equitable participation in this program, please contact daniel.fry@portphillip.vic.gov.au.

All grant applicants are encouraged to consider how their organisation and project will be accessible and inclusive of people with disability.

Council has an [Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Fact Sheet²](#) to support applicants ensure their projects are inclusive for all participants.

² Full web link to Accessibility and Disability Inclusion Fact Sheet: [accessibility-and-disability-inclusion-fact-sheet-for-grant-applicants-2021.docx \(live.com\)](https://www.accessibility-and-disability-inclusion-fact-sheet-for-grant-applicants-2021.docx)

Ensuring a Child Safe City of Port Phillip

City of Port Phillip has zero tolerance for child abuse and we are a committed [Child Safe organisation](#)³. Our commitment is to ensure that a culture of child safety is embedded across our community to safeguard every child and young person accessing City of Port Phillip.

All grant applications that work directly with children and young people are required to comply with legislation and regulations relating to child safety including, but not limited to, the:

- Working with Children Act 2005
- Working with Children Regulations 2016
- [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#) (CSS).

LGBTIQA+

Council prides itself on being welcoming and sensitive to the needs of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQA+).

Council works hard to ensure our community is inclusive and we are committed to promoting a fair, just and tolerant community.

Applicants are encouraged to consider how they can ensure events are safe, welcoming, and inclusive of LBGTQIA+ community.

Sustainability

City of Port Phillip has committed to improving sustainability through our Sustainable Environmental Strategy (2023-28), [Act and Adapt](#)⁴.

Applicants are advised to avoid the following:

- balloons
- single use plastic bags and straws
- single use crockery and cutlery that cannot be recycled.

Applicants are encouraged to consider how they can reduce their impact on the environment by implementing the following:

- avoiding the use of disposable decorations
- reducing power consumption
- utilising eTicketing
- promoting public transport, walking and cycling
- sharing resources with other organisations or project supporters

³ Full web link to Council's Child Safe Standards: <https://www.portphilip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/strategies-policies-and-plans/child-safe-standards>

⁴ Full web link to Act and Adapt, Sustainable Environmental Strategy 2023-28: https://www.portphilip.vic.gov.au/media/uytl3gwp/copp_act-and-adapt-strategy-2023-28_fa_online.pdf

- washing crockery and cutlery rather than using disposable items
- encouraging reusable coffee cups
- providing drinking water to reduce the use of plastic bottles
- composting organic waste.

Lobbying

Canvassing or lobbying of councillors, employees of City of Port Phillip or assessment panel members in relation to the grant is prohibited.

Checklist: Preparing your Grant Application

Category 1: Get Involved (Individual) Grant

Use this checklist for the preparation necessary to apply for Category 1: Get Involved.

- Read the Youth Access Grants Program Guidelines
- Check eligibility for the grant
- Check-in with the Youth Services Team Leader about the suitability of your application by emailing daniel.fry@portphillip.vic.gov.au.
- Login in or register with [SmartyGrants](#) to create your application

Category 2: Recreation Programs (Organisational) Grant

Use this checklist for the preparation necessary for organisations to apply for Category 2: Recreation Programs.

- Read the Youth Access Grants Program Guidelines
- Check eligibility for the grant
- Review the assessment criteria in the guidelines
- Check in with the Youth Services Team regarding the suitability of your program idea by emailing daniel.fry@portphillip.vic.gov.au
- Complete budget and include any in-kind contributions
- Obtain all mandatory supporting evidence and submit with your application including a recent annual report or annual financial statement submitted to Consumer Affairs.
- Login in or register with [SmartyGrants](#) to create your application

Appendix A - Definitions

ABN (Australian Business Number)

The Australian Business Number is a number used to identify a business or organisation for tax and Australian Government purposes. An ABN for the organisation or for the auspice organisation must be provided in the grant application.

Acquittal report

An acquittal report ensures that grant recipients have administered grant funds responsibly and in line with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement. An acquittal report usually consists of a written report that summarises project outcomes in relation to project objectives. It also provides a financial statement detailing how the funds were spent. Organisations and individuals that do not submit their acquittal report will be listed and may not be eligible for further funding from City of Port Phillip.

Auspice

Any legally constituted body may act as an auspice organisation to partner with, apply for or manage funding on behalf of another non-incorporated organisation or individual. If the funding application is successful, the auspice organisation will receive and manage the funds for the applicant to deliver the funded project or activities. The auspice organisation is responsible for the effective acquittal of the grant.

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest occurs if a member of the grants assessment panel has something to personally gain from the grant application. It also extends to providing family and close friends with preference.

Council

The City of Port Phillip is defined as a geographical area and also the entity that has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the City of Port Phillip.

Funding agreement

A funding agreement is a formal document stating the purpose of the funding, the financial amount, and the conditions attached to the grant. It also defines the rights and responsibilities of the grant recipient and Council.

Once signed, recipients are under a legal obligation to comply with the stated terms and conditions. A funding agreement will be issued to successful applicants for amounts over \$2,000.

Grant

A grant is a sum of money awarded to an organisation or individual for a specified purpose.

GST (Goods and Services Tax)

Organisations are strongly encouraged to establish their responsibilities in relation to their GST status and indicate on the application form what that status is. Successful organisations with an ABN and registered for GST will receive a Recipient Created Tax Invoice for their grant, plus 10 per cent GST.

Incorporated organisation

An organisation that is a legal entity and has a legal structure is Incorporated. The organisation must be registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria. For more information please contact Consumer Affairs Victoria or phone 1300 558 181.

In-kind contributions

An in-kind contribution is the 'non-cash' contribution made by the applicant that can be allocated a financial value, such as volunteer services. Applications with in-kind contribution will be viewed favourably.

Non-compliant

An organisation may be deemed non-compliant in the circumstances that the recipient:

- failed to meet terms and conditions of funding deed
- is insolvent
- is under legal investigation
- failed to lodge a satisfactory acquittal – a satisfactory acquittal demonstrates that the selection criteria of the program were met, and the financial expenditure of the project was spent appropriately, and unspent funds returned to Council
- did not complete the project and failed to lodge an acquittal
- completed the project and failed to lodge an acquittal.

Not for profit (NFP) organisation

This is an organisation that does not distribute any profit to an individual, its members and or shareholders. Any profit from the organisation will be directed back into the organisation and its activities.

Objectives or aims

An objective or aim states the overall goals of the project.

Outcomes

Outcomes describe the specific results of the project.

Project Variation Report

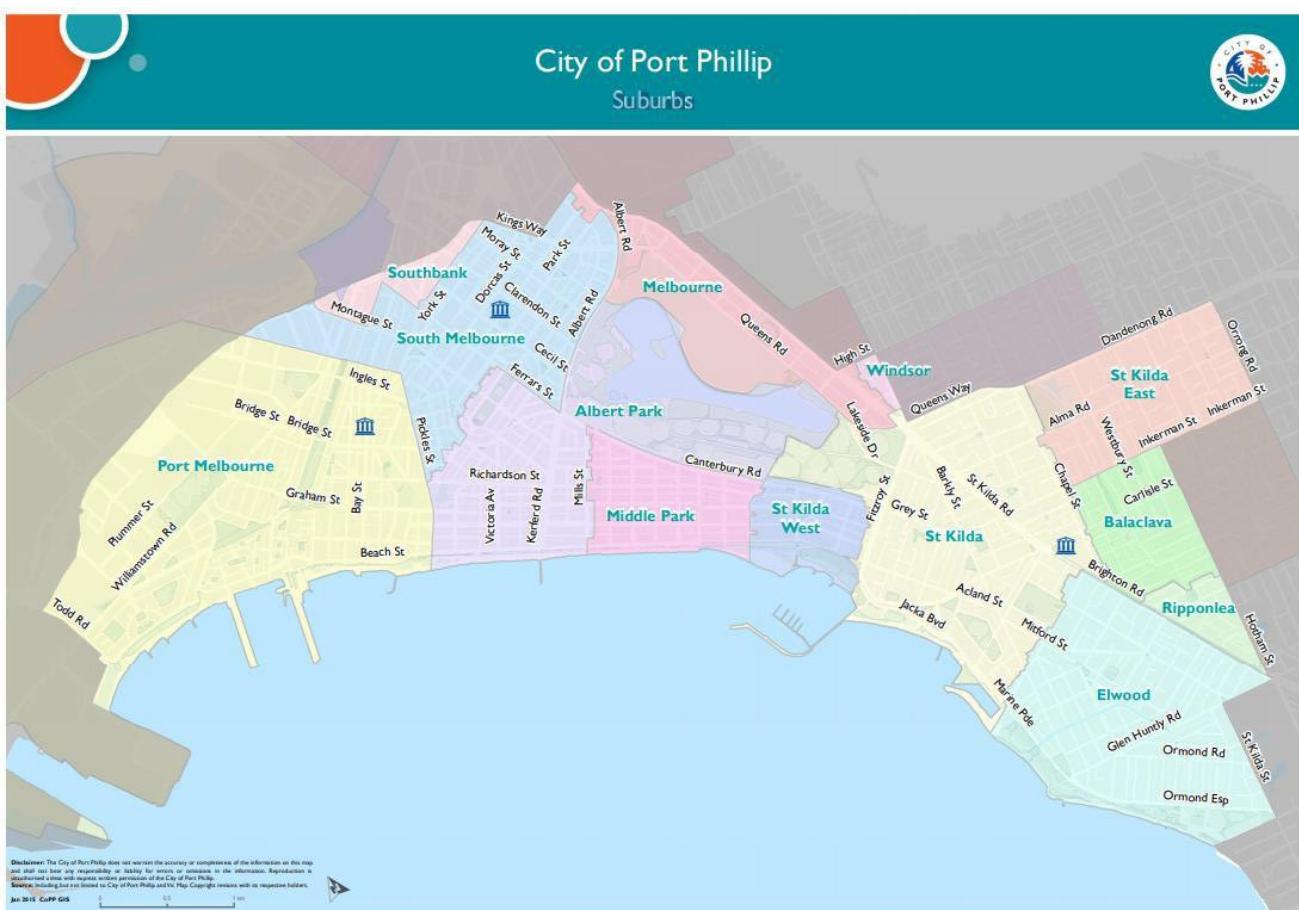
A Project Variation Report is to be submitted ONLY if there is to be a substantial variation or change to the project from the initial project application. Funded organisations wishing to submit a Project Variation Report must first contact the Middle Years and Youth Services Team.

Youth Access Grants Program assessment panel

The panel is made up of Council officers from relevant teams across the organisation. Care is taken to ensure that representatives do not have a conflict of interest in assessing and recommending grants for funding.

Appendix B - City of Port Phillip

To view a digital map of Port Phillip, please use [Google Maps](#).



Appendix C - Terms and conditions

Category 1: Terms and Conditions

- Funding of up to \$500 is available once per financial year.
 - Participants must maintain a satisfactory attendance record and accept all terms and Conditions of the nominated recreation activity.
 - Council will not be liable for any injuries sustained.
 - The funding will go directly to the individual who applied on behalf of the young person. They will manage the funding for the participant and be responsible for completing the acquittal report.

- Organisations must ensure that recreation providers meet legislation and regulations requirements relating to child safety before enrolling young people in activities. This includes the [Working with Children Act 2005](#), [Working with Children Regulations 2016](#) and [Victorian Child Safe Standards \(CSS\)](#).
- Funding is not refundable.
- Successful grant applicants and recreation providers must adhere to all health Victorian government requirements at the time of the delivery of the funded activity.

Category 2: Terms and Conditions

- If your application is successful, you will be required to sign and return the Conditions of Funding Agreement.
- Funded organisations must provide a Project Acquittal Report four weeks after completion of the project. All reports are to be submitted online with [SmartyGrants](#).
- Successful grant applicants and recreation providers must adhere to Victorian Government health requirements at the time of the delivery of the funded activity.
- Organisations holding a launch or event for the project for which they have been funded and are planning to invite the Mayor, Councillors or Council officers are required to ensure their invitation is sent at least four weeks before the event. The relevant Council officer must be notified of this invitation. Events must adhere to all Victorian Government health requirements at the time of the delivery of the funded activity.
- Funded organisations are required to acknowledge the City of Port Phillip in all promotional or publicity material for the funded project. The logo must be applied in adherence with the style guide provided to grant recipients.
- Funding requires compliance with specific conditions prior to payment and verification of ABN and GST status.
- The funded organisation must comply with all relevant laws and conditions. Significant State and Commonwealth legislation include:
 - Carer Recognition Act 2012
 - Consumer Affairs Victoria
 - Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
 - Child Safe Standards
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1992
 - Equal Opportunity Act 1995
 - Fair Work Act 2009
 - Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
 - Public Liability Insurance
 - Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
 - Victorian Disability Act 2006
 - Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance
 - WorkSafe Victoria

