Pathways out of Homelessness Program

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

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Pathways out of Homelessness Program Grant Guidelines

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Introduction

The Pathways out of Homelessness Grant Program (Pathways program) provides funding to external organisations to strengthen sector capacity, collaboration and innovation in supporting Brisbane residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness to achieve sustainable housing outcomes.

Homelessness can profoundly affect a person's mental and physical health, relationships, education and employment opportunities, and ability to fully participate in society. Current service and sector evidence indicates that more people are experiencing, remaining in, or returning to homelessness, including rough sleeping, where suitable accommodation and support pathways are limited by a range of factors.

Brisbane City Council (Council) recognises that housing and homelessness are primarily responsibilities of the Queensland and Australian Governments, including through the Homes for Queenslanders housing plan. Council plays an important enabling and coordinating role by investing in local, evidence-based and collaborative responses that complement broader government responsibilities and strengthen pathways out of homelessness.

The Pathways program provides multi-year funding for up to 3 years to successful applicants that deliver practical, innovative, evidence-based and sustainable responses to prevent homelessness, prevent people re-entering homelessness, or enable pathways out of homelessness, particularly rough sleeping, into stable accommodation.

Objectives

The Pathways program aims to support a reduction in homelessness experiences in Brisbane by bolstering sector capacity, coordination, collaboration, innovation and demonstrated outcomes that address the following priorities:

- support Brisbane residents experiencing rough sleeping and other forms of homelessness into safe and sustainable accommodation
- prevent homelessness for vulnerable cohorts, or re-entry into homelessness, by maintaining stable housing.

The Pathways Program does not seek to duplicate funding for services or activities that are already funded elsewhere, such as through Queensland and Australian Government avenues.

In particular, Council is interested in applications that propose integrated, person-centred, evidence-based and innovative approaches to overcoming barriers for people who are disproportionately impacted by homelessness, including:

- First Nations people
- people who have experienced family, sexual and domestic violence
- people who identify as LGBTQIA+
- people with disability
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- older people (over the age of 55)
- young people

Round dates

Applications for this grant round will open in the 2026-27 financial year, with funded activities anticipated to commence from 1 July 2027.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application following Council's assessment and approval process.

Eligible applications

Applicants must:

- deliver all services funded by the Pathways program in the Brisbane Local Government Area,
- be a not-for-profit organisation, or be auspiced by a not-for-profit organisation that is registered or is eligible for registration under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth),
- be a service provider delivering community services or be a social enterprise,
- have as one of its primary objectives, the purpose of reducing the experience of or risk of homelessness to individuals and families,
- have met all acquittal conditions of previous Council grants, have no debt to Council and be financially viable,

- and have public liability insurance cover to a minimum value of $20 million and have appropriate workplace health and safety policies in accordance with the Funding Agreement.

If an applicant states in their application that they are being auspiced by an Auspice Organisation, a letter from the Auspice Organisation must be provided, signed by the chair, president, or chief executive officer (or equivalent) of the organisation, agreeing to auspice the proposal.

Ineligible applications

Applications will be deemed ineligible if identified as:

- incomplete or submitted after the closing date and time
- for political organisations
- for an individual(s)
- for for-profit organisations
- for Queensland or Australian Government departments
- for government educational institutions
- for applicants who have previously been successful in obtaining Council grants but have outstanding acquittals or debts.

The following will NOT be funded:

- general operating expenses such as electricity, telephone, uniforms and rent that are part of the applicant's ongoing expenses, except where evidence can be provided to Council showing it can be directly attributable to the delivery of the program.
- primarily commercial or fundraising ventures
- general public liability costs for the applicant (public liability costs that are specific to the project are eligible)
- debt payments
- sponsorship, prizes, award ceremonies, fundraisers or competitions
- hospitality, i.e. food and alcohol costs for events
- travel costs and allowances (except where directly for clients exiting homelessness)
- services that duplicate other existing services including state government funded services such as mental and community health programs
- donations to individuals or organisations
- retrospective funding, i.e. where the applicant has committed to expenditure prior to the notification date

- proposals that do not meet Pathways program objectives
- staff training except where directly related to other project activities that meet client needs
- media and marketing activities
- on-street activities, including the use of brokerage for this purpose (i.e. food, clothing, washing, tents), where those activities do not directly address the underlying causes of rough sleeping or reduce the prevalence of homelessness.
- rent or accommodation costs for clients
- capital costs associated with the construction or maintenance of social housing.
- Community events such as festivals, fetes, Christmas and New Year events. If seeking Council funding towards such activities, apply for either the Festivals and Cultural Events Sponsorships or the Lord Mayor's Community Fund.

Organisations can only make one application to the Pathways program per round. This does not apply where the organisation is acting as an auspice or identified lead organisation for a separate consortia application. In these instances, a maximum of 2 applications per organisation will be accepted.

What can be funded?

Applicants may apply for funding for up to 3 years, payable as agreed milestone outcomes. Council may award part or all of the funding requested, subject to available budget and assessment outcomes.

The Pathways program will support investment in responses that prevent homelessness or re-entry into homelessness, and enable pathways out of homelessness, by funding expenses attributable to:

- project and activity delivery, including direct staff costs for the project;
- materials, services and programs that prevent homelessness or re-entry into homelessness, create sustainable pathways out of homelessness, or assist people sleeping rough to move into stable accommodation.
- enhancements to existing programs or new projects from organisations funded by Council and specifically through the Pathways Program are permissible.

This is not an exhaustive list, and applicants are encouraged to consider innovative and evidence-based responses that address identified barriers, strengthen coordination and partnerships, leverage other funding or resources, and contribute to sustainable outcomes beyond Council funding.

Funding available

Funding is available for eligible projects for up $150,000 per year for up to 3 years, payable as agreed milestone outcomes. Applicants should request an amount that is proportionate to the proposed activities, demonstrated need, expected outcomes and value for money.

Multi-year funding will be conditional on ongoing compliance with funding conditions and evidence of the delivery of agreed milestone outcomes, verified through an annual acquittal report.

Evaluation costs must be included as part of the application to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Clear partnerships should be identified, along with how project outcomes will be sustained once the grant funding is expended, which may include additional funding sources, partnerships and/or delivery models.

Financial arrangements

Payments

If applicants are successful in obtaining funding, they must sign the Funding Agreement and return it to Council. This step must be completed before any funding will be provided by Council under these guidelines.

GST

If an organisation or Auspice Organisation (where applicable) is GST registered, 10% GST will be added to the funding as an itemised GST gross-up.

If an organisation or Auspice Organisation (where applicable) is not GST registered, 10% GST will be added to the funding but will not be itemised as GST.

For advice on GST, please contact your tax advisor or the Australian Taxation Office on 13 24 78 or via the Australian Taxation Office website.

Assessment process

Applications are encouraged from organisations that can demonstrate how funding will support new initiatives, partnerships, coordinated responses or enhancements to existing programs that deliver on the Pathways program objectives. Applications must articulate the activities that will be funded and how they will contribute to preventing homelessness, preventing people re-entering homelessness, maintaining stable housing, or assisting people to move from rough sleeping into stable accommodation.

Provided the eligibility criteria for making an application under these guidelines are satisfied, the project will be assessed against the following assessment criteria.

Criteria #	Assessment criteria	Percentage weighting
1.	Demonstrated community need, effectiveness of response and benefit from the proposed services, activities and/or partnerships, aligned with the objectives of the Pathways program and the identified need cannot reasonably be met through other available funding sources.	30%
2.	Evidence of organisational experience and capacity to effectively deliver the project within the proposed timeline and budget.	20%
3.	Evidence of effective consultation, networks and partnerships, including appropriate engagement with people with lived experience, to deliver innovative and sustainable project outcomes that connect to government priorities and programs.	20%
4.	Evidence that the proposed budget is realistic and represents value-for-money with appropriate financial capacity and controls to support successful project delivery.	15%
5.	Robust reporting proposal and demonstrated ability to measure and report on the effectiveness of the project's contribution in achieving outcomes.	10%
6.	Evidence of sustainability of program delivery, benefits or outcomes beyond the agreed funding term	5%

Following the initial assessment by Council officers, recommendations will be provided to the Comparative Assessment Committee for review before presentation to Council's delegate. Council will not redress errors in applications. If an application is deemed ineligible, it will not be assessed. Council's delegate makes the final decision regarding funding allocation.

Eligible applications are considered on merit against the assessment criteria so not all eligible applications will be awarded funding.

The Pathways program is a competitive assessment process. Not every eligible application that meets the assessment criteria will receive funding. In some instances, successful applicants may not receive the full amount of the funding requested. If your proposal cannot proceed without the funding requested, this should be indicated in your application.

Application process

All applications are submitted via the online application system SmartyGrants.

Making an application

The online SmartyGrants application system will allow applicants to save, develop and print out applications before they are submitted. Supporting material can be attached to the online application.

A budget table is required to support the application. This is a critical aspect of the submission. Before you apply, it is highly recommended you review a budget table example to assist you with developing your budget.

Once an application is submitted through SmartyGrants, applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of the application. The submitted application will be kept confidential, and the contents will not be disclosed to any person outside the application and Assessment Process.

Planning an application

Before commencing an application, review and consider the assessment criteria (set out in the assessment process table). Applications must include:

- a compelling rationale, including evidence of need for your identified target group
- a description of the proposed activities, evidence/research as to its proposed effectiveness and proposed outcomes and benefits, including how the project will help prevent homelessness or re-entry into homelessness, maintain stable housing, or enable pathways out of homelessness, particularly for those who are rough sleeping, into stable accommodation, and how outcomes and impact on homelessness in Brisbane will be measured and evaluated
- a description of the applicant's current capacity and operations (e.g., business structure, hours of operation, nature of work)
- evidence of planning and delivery mechanisms, including timelines, milestones and proposed personnel
- a detailed budget accompanied by quotes or costings, previous expenses, any in-kind contributions, or in-kind support
- details of how program outcomes will be sustained once the grant funding has been expended.
- letters of confirmation from any external providers or partnering organisations named in the proposal.
- confirmation of commitment to the proposal from the board, executive or senior management of the applicant or its auspice not-for-profit organisation.

Assessment and outcomes

You will receive a letter advising whether your application was successful or unsuccessful.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application following Council's assessment and approval process.

The list of successful applicants will be published on Council's website at Brisbane.qld.gov.au.

Successful applicants

If an applicant is successful in obtaining a grant, they must sign the Funding Agreement and return it to Council. This step must be completed before any funding will be provided to the successful applicant by Council under these guidelines.

Applicants must:

- ensure that the project continues to comply with these guidelines
- deliver the approved project in accordance with the contents of the submitted applications approved by Council for the provision of a grant
- comply with the terms and conditions in the Funding Agreement (including any applicable special conditions)
- fully acquit the grant to Council in accordance with the terms and conditions in the Funding Agreement.

Unsuccessful applicants

Unsuccessful applicants can seek feedback on their application by contacting a Council Grants and Sponsorship Officer.

Applicants may wish to consider submitting the application to another grants program.

Council provides a free service which allows Brisbane community organisations and businesses to search for funding opportunities with Funding Finder.

Both the Queensland and Australian Governments have websites that list available grants:

- Queensland Government 'Find a Grant'
- Australian Government 'Community Grants Hub'
- Our Community publishes a quarterly list of grants Australia-wide.

Acquittal

The successful applicant must fully acquit the grant to Council in accordance with the terms and conditions in the Funding Agreement.

This document must detail the outcomes of the project and how the funds were spent. It must demonstrate that funding has been used for the purpose for which it was provided, include a report of financial transactions, and provide evidence that the project achieved its intended objectives.

Successful applicants will receive a link to the acquittal form that will be attached to their application in SmartyGrants.

Enquiries

Further information is available by contacting Council 07 3403 8888 and asking to speak with an officer from Safe Communities, Arts and Community Development, Community and the Arts Services or send us an email.

If applicants have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service:

- TTY users phone 133 677 and then ask for 07 3403 8888
- Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 and then ask for 07 3403 8888
- internet relay users connect to the NRS (www.relayservice.com.au) and then ask for 07 3403 8888.

If applicants require this information in other languages, phone the Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS) on 131 450 and ask to be connected to Brisbane City Council on 07 3403 8888. All enquiry services are free.