

Business Improvement District - Grant Fund Guide and Criteria

Approved 10 August 2020

1. Purpose and objectives

The Business Improvement District Grant Fund provides seed funding to business associations to build capability and to undertake place-making initiatives that help create better local business districts.

Having vibrant and successful business districts throughout the city is important to promote a strong and successful business sector and to ensure residents enjoy our business districts as attractive spaces to meet and socialise as well as to shop and access services.

Having better business districts contributes to Christchurch being seen as a great place to live and visit and help to highlight the distinct lifestyle, qualities and identity of Christchurch.

2. About the grant fund

Funding for the Grant scheme is budgeted each year through the Council's Long Term Plan or Annual Plan. The current total scheme funding is \$50,000 per year. The Council has complete discretion regarding the funding of the grant scheme.

Applications for grants can be made throughout the year until the funds are exhausted.

3. Inspiration and advice

The Council has developed the 'Shape Your Place' toolkit that provides ideas and advice on ways communities can undertake initiatives to make their local area a better space for all. While this toolkit is aimed primarily at community projects, many can be applied to a business district as well. You can find the 'Shape Your Place' toolkit on the Council website at:

<https://ccc.govt.nz/culture-and-community/community-led-development/shape-your-place/>

Your application needs to be endorsed by your local community board or community governance manager so we strongly advise you to have your local community governance team on board from the outset.

Your local Council community governance team can provide advice when preparing your application and can link you up with other Council teams who can assist you depending on your specific project or interest.

4. Applicant criteria

To be eligible for a Business Improvement District grant, a business association must meet the following criteria.

- Operate entirely within the Christchurch City Council territorial boundaries.

- Meet at least quarterly and have members from the local business community.
- Have passed a resolution at a meeting of the association to apply for a Business Improvement District grant.
- Have no outstanding debt or other outstanding liability owing to Christchurch City Council or any council controlled organisations.

5. Project criteria

To be eligible for funding projects need to demonstrate how they meet the following criteria:

- The project must aim to:
 - build the capacity and/ or capability of the business association and/ or
 - make the relevant business district a more attractive, interesting and welcoming place.
- The project must be ready to be implemented as soon as possible following grant approval and must be fully delivered within 9 months of grant approval.
- The project must not have already have been delivered at the date the grant funding is allocated.
- Projects which include funding or in-kind contributions from the applicant will be viewed more favourably than those with no applicant contribution.
- Projects that will deliver wider social, environmental or community benefits in addition to benefiting the business district will be viewed more favourably.
- The maximum single grant amount is normally \$5,000.
- The Council's General Manager Strategy and Transformation can award a higher grant amount up to \$15,000 for projects considered to deliver exceptional value to the business district and/ or local community.

6. Project examples

The Business Improvement District grant scheme has been established to assist business associations to be able to effectively participate in improving their local business environment. In general the projects need to provide the following types of benefits:

- Building the capability and/ or capacity of the business association. This could include developing a website, creating branding, or undertaking membership recruitment.
- Improving the built environment. This could include additional footpath cleaning, installing additional planting or lighting, installing additional street furniture like seating.
- Marketing the business district.

It is expected that as a business association matures and undertakes more complex projects that partnering with the Council would become more common and mutually beneficial.

7. Ineligible projects

The following are projects that are deemed inappropriate to be funded in any way by the Council and/ or by this grant scheme.

- functions, lunches or dinners
- political events

- projects that promote religious, ministry or political purposes
- projects aimed at solely providing commercial profit or individual gain
- projects that denigrate, exclude or offend parts of the community
- projects that present a hazard to the community or pose a significant risk to the public or council
- projects that have already been delivered
- purchase of alcohol
- purchasing or leasing a motor vehicle
- service and maintenance costs including utilities such as power and phone
- retrospective costs
- overseas travel
- debt repayments
- medical expenses
- prize money or entrance fees

8. Preparing your application

Key application requirements

- You must complete all sections of the application form and email it to the address on the application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Applications must be endorsed by either the community board within whose ward the business district is located or the community governance manager responsible for that ward. See <https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/how-the-council-works/elected-members/community-boards/> to find your community board and key contacts.
- Your application must identify how your project aligns with the criteria of the fund.
- Make sure you are clear about the details of the project for which you are applying for council funding. Once the application is approved, these cannot be changed.

Disclosure of interest

- All applicants must disclose if a Christchurch City councillor or community board member or a council employee, or their immediate family, has any interest or involvement in the business association or the project in any way.
- All applicants must disclose any other central government or local government funding for the project (either confirmed or in application), as well as any corporate or commercial sponsorship or funding arrangements.

Terms and conditions regarding all applications for funding

- Christchurch City Council has the right to share application details with all relevant units of Council and to consult with them on applications.
- Applicants must not directly or indirectly seek to influence Christchurch City Council's funding decisions in any improper or unethical manner (or in any way which might have the appearance of being so), nor attempt to solicit or garner non-public information from Christchurch City Council which might give an unfair advantage in the application process.
- Each applicant warrants that all information provided in relation to its application is true and correct in all material particulars, at all times, and is not misleading whether by

omission or otherwise. Each applicant must disclose all matters likely to be material to Christchurch City Council's consideration of its application or which might have a bearing on the outcomes the council expects to be delivered from the funding.

- Each applicant consents to Christchurch City Council carrying out due diligence on its application, including the organisation and personnel involved. The applicant consents to Christchurch City Council making enquiries from third parties in this regard, and shall provide access to referees upon request.
- If circumstances or information changes after making an application, the applicant must immediately notify Christchurch City Council.

9. Decisions

The Council's General Manager Strategy and Transformation has delegated authority to approve or decline Better Business District Grant applications.

You will be contacted by a Council officer within 20 working days of a complete application being received advising whether your application has been successful or not.

10. Funding Agreement - terms and conditions

Once funding has been approved, successful applicants will receive a funding agreement. This is a formal document detailing the amount of funding the Council is granting, any conditions of the funding and the reporting requirements.

If circumstances or information changes after signing the funding agreement, the applicant must immediately notify the Christchurch City Council representative named in the funding agreement advising what has changed and detailing any possible risks to project delivery.

11. Reporting requirements

Within three months of project completion, grant recipients must report on the following:

- Proof of delivery of the project as described in the application form
- How the conditions of the funding contract have been met
- A project evaluation by the business association that includes details of the specific outcomes achieved
- Copies of receipts showing the expenditure of the funding or audited accounts

A reporting template will be provided with the Funding Agreement.