

COUNCIL POLICY



Access Incentive Scheme Grant Funding Guidelines

Commencement Date	25 September 2023
Council Department	Environmental Services
Contact Officer	Director – Environmental Services
Revision Required	Every 4 years

Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed at four (4) yearly intervals at least, to ensure it meets all statutory requirements and the needs of council. It may also be reviewed at other times as determined by council.

Revision History

Version	Council Meeting Date	Resolution No.	Responsible Officer
1	28/11/2005	177/05	Director-Environmental Services
2	25/09/2023	189/2023	Director-Environmental Services

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Appendix 1 - Access Incentive Scheme Grant: Application Form

Appendix 2 - Access Incentive Scheme Grant: Acquittal Form

1. Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) makes it against the law to discriminate against people with disability in relation to access and use of public premises. This applies to places such as shops, cafes, restaurants, pubs, banks, offices, clubs, community halls, sporting venues, etc. Public premises can also include a place (whether enclosed or built on or not) and a part of premises, for example, customer bathrooms.

It is against the law for public places to be inaccessible to people with disabilities and the DDA requires owners/lessees to make adjustments to their premises so that they are accessible to people with disabilities. This applies to existing places, as well as places under construction.

In some circumstances however, it may be unreasonable to provide complete accessibility if the cost or difficulties of providing access will place an 'unjustifiable hardship' on a person or organisation.

Cowra Shire Council offers the Access Incentive Scheme Grant to local business, not for profit community organisations and community service providers for the provision of financial assistance to improve access to and within local buildings, premises and businesses.

It has been apparent since inception of the scheme, that due to the costs of upgrading an existing premise to be compliant with the DDA many local businesses / property owners have not utilised the scheme as the out-of-pocket portion is quite significant and the preparation to install ramps, doors etc is quite lengthy. Therefore, the scheme will be open all year round for applications to be submitted at any time.

This document has been prepared to set the guidelines for the allocation of Access Incentive Scheme Funding.

2. Purpose

The aim of the scheme is:

- ✦ Provide financial assistance to improve access to and within public buildings for the community and general public.
- ✦ Encourage businesses, community groups/organisations and property owners to provide dignified and equitable access to and within their premises for people with disability.
- ✦ Improve opportunities for people with disability to participate in and contribute to the economic, cultural, social and political life of our community.
- ✦ Encourage the development of partnerships between local business, community organisations/services, local government and the general public.
- ✦ To meet Cowra's Strategic and Operational Plan - Council will *'deliver and ensure all high movement areas, public buildings and appropriate Council resources and services are accessible for all the community'*. One action to achieve this goal is the 'Access Incentive Fund', Strategic Action R3.1. b.

3. Eligibility

- Each organisation is limited to one Council Grant or Donation per financial year.
- The maximum level of funding per project will be limited to \$10,000 subject to the availability of Council funds.

3.1 Eligible Projects

Owners, lessees, building agents of buildings and other facilities located within Cowra Shire Council are invited to apply.

Projects are eligible to apply for the Access Incentive Scheme Grant if:

- ✦ The premises and works are carried out within the Cowra Shire;
- ✦ The applicant is either a –
 - Not-for profit community organisation
 - Local Incorporated Community group, club or progress association
 - Local business
 - Local Community Service Provider
- ✦ Only one grant application and approval per applicant per year
- ✦ There will clearly be cases where groups may wish to contribute to the project.
- ✦ The works / projects being applied for improve access to and/or within premises and disability facilities, such as (but not limited to);
 - Automated access doors, widening of doorways
 - Access ramps, lifts
 - Hand rails, fit-outs
 - Tactile indicators, signage
 - Auditory aides
 - Visual Assistance, such as - doorway colour contrasting, braille and tactile signage

Council employees or Councillors may apply for funding on the same basis, as any member of the public.

3.2 Non-Eligible Projects

Funding will **NOT** be provided:

- ✦ Where financial assistance is available from other funding bodies, where Council has approved grant funding or donations from other pools of funding for the same project/premise, and within one's own company.
- ✦ Where previous funding or approved funding for the same project/plan of works has been provided under the Access Incentive Scheme Grant.
- ✦ Where the applicant has an incomplete project concerning access issues.
- ✦ For projects that were undertaken prior to approval of a grant.
- ✦ For works that do not comply with the Australian Building Standards and the Disability (Access to Premises-Buildings) Standards 2010, Australian Standard 1428.1 2021 - Design for Access and Mobility.
- ✦ For work on government owned buildings still used for a government purpose.
- ✦ For private residential premises
- ✦ For any non-public premises

4. Assessment

All applications must be lodged using an Access Incentive Scheme Grant Application Form with all relevant areas completed and supporting documents attached. Applications may be submitted at any time, noting that only one approval per premises is granted per year.

The application is assessed against the criteria by the Section 355 Cowra Access Committee and if it is deemed to meet the guidelines and sufficient funds are available a report is compiled to the monthly Council meeting for consideration.

Council officers may contact the applicant after receiving an application seeking additional information or clarification.

All projects should align with the strategies and objectives set out in Council's Community Strategic Plan.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposal with Council officers prior to lodging an application to ensure that all necessary information is provided and eligibility criteria is met.

All applications are to be reviewed by Council's Environmental Services to determine compliance with the premises Standards, AS1428.1 and the Building Code of Australia prior to the application being considered by Council.

If a project is approved and requires a Development Application and Construction Certificate, works are not to commence until all necessary Approvals have been obtained.

Funds will be acquitted upon completion of the project and an Access Incentive Scheme Grant Acquittal is lodged with Council.

All projects are to be completed within 12 months of grant approval.

4.1 Assessment Criteria

The project/applicant must:

- ✦ Be for premises that are used by the local community and/or visitors to Cowra Shire
- ✦ Conform to Australian Standard 1428.1 Design for Access and Mobility, and Australian Premises Standard;
- ✦ Be located in the local government area of Cowra Shire;
- ✦ Obtain all development approvals from Council if required; and

Preference will be given to projects/applicants that:

- ✦ Clearly complement broader access objectives e.g. improve access to Main Street of towns and villages within the Cowra Shire;
- ✦ Improve access to buildings which house essential services or are used by people with limited mobility.

5. Level of Funding

Funds may be available for a project to a maximum amount of \$10,000. This is subject to the terms of the signed agreement.

Council reserves the right to allocate additional funds to any one particular project or not to fund a project.

6. Conditions of Approval

If the application submitted is successful, grant conditions will apply.

An application for access funding can be submitted prior to a Development Application being approved, on the condition that funding will only be provided following all conditions of the agreement are met and an acquittal is submitted on completion of the project.

Access Incentive funds will be paid on completion of the project (unless otherwise approved by Council) and with the submission of an Access Incentive Scheme Acquittal form.

7. Applications

Please ensure that you have completed all components of the Application Form; that all support material and documents requested in the checklist have been provided and the Declaration has been signed.

Applications should be submitted on the Cowra Shire Council Access Incentive Scheme Grant form and must address the above aims and criteria.

Applications should be sent to:

Director – Environmental Services
Cowra Council
Private Bag 342
COWRA NSW 2794

Or emailed to: council@cowra.nsw.gov.au

Any enquiries should be directed to Environmental Services by Telephone on 6340 2040 or email to council@cowra.nsw.gov.au

All applications received by Council are submitted to the next available Access Committee meeting for assessment and a recommendation is tabled to the following Council meeting for consideration.

8. Acquittals

Funding payment will be provided on completion of the project and submission of an Access Incentive Scheme Acquittal form and following satisfactory inspection by Cowra Shire Council's Director – Environmental Services.

9. Appendix

1. Application Form
2. Acquittal Form



Cowra Shire Council
Private Bag 342
Cowra NSW 2794
Phone: 02 6340 2000

council@cowra.nsw.gov.au
www.cowracouncil.com.au

Access Incentive Scheme Grant: Application Form

Guidelines for applicants

Refer to the Cowra Access Incentive Scheme Grant – Funding Guidelines Policy for full application details of the Scheme and terms and conditions.

What is the Access Incentive Scheme Grant?

The scheme assists property owners/lessees by providing funding assistance to upgrade their premises to enable people with disabilities to access and use their premises.

Who can apply?

- Not-for profit community organisations
- Local Incorporated Community groups, clubs & progress associations
- Local businesses
- Local Community Service Providers

What type of projects can be applied for?

The types of projects that may be applied for include;

- Improve access to building, such as - automated doors, access ramps, lifts, hand rails, tactile markers
- Improve access to Disability facilities, such as – doorways, hand rails, tactile indicators, signage, fitouts
- Improving the Visual access to and in buildings - defining doorways with colour contrasting materials, - Improving Auditory access to and in buildings

The project must

- be located in the Cowra Shire and must be completed within 12 months of approval of the application
- Be for premises used by the local community/general public
- Conform to Australian Standard 1428.1 Design for Access and Mobility, and Australian Premises Standard

Ineligible

Funding will not be provided for the following:

- Projects that have already commenced or completed.
- Activities that are considered the core business of Commonwealth, State or Local Government
- Ongoing operational or administrative costs of an organisation. This includes purchase of capital equipment.
- Individual pursuits
- Gifts and prizes
- Private properties

How to apply?

You must submit your application using this below form, and;

- Ensure all questions are answered
- May use dot points to convey your message effectively.
- Ensure written approval from the property owner is obtained
- Provide current quotes of all works required to support the budget • Site plans and photos of the project area

Documents that may be included to support and strengthen your application include:

- Location maps
- Detailed plan
- Letters of support from organisations your project partners with

Additional information may be requested by the assessment panel to support your application.

Assessment

All applications will be assessed by the Access Committee and will then be tabled to the next Council meeting for approval. All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application and an agreement form provided which is to be submitted within 6-weeks of approval.

Contacts

Contact Cassandra Gailey or Larissa Hackett at Cowra Council for any assistance in completing your application on 6340 2048 or by email at: council@cowra.nsw.gov.au

Certification

By submitting this application, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the information made available by Cowra Shire Council regarding the Access Incentive Scheme Grant and to the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application is true and correct.

I also acknowledge that this application is submitted with both the full awareness and authority of the organisation under which it is submitted (if applicable).

Yes

Signature	
Please print name	

Applicant Details

Contact Name	
Name of Organisation applying on behalf	
Mailing Address	
Contact number during office hours	
Email	

Project Site details

Property/Business Name	
Property address	
Location on site where project will be completed (e.g. front entrance)	

Property Owners Consent – owner of property where project is to be completed													
Owners Name													
Owners Contact address													
Owners contact number													
Owners contact email													
<input type="checkbox"/> Owners signature below (under seal if applicable) or <input type="checkbox"/> Owners consent attached (under seal and/or letterhead)													
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Project Details	
Project Name	
Estimated Timeframe	Project will commence: Project will be completed by:
Funding amount requested	\$
What is the Aim of the project? <i>Example: Install complying ramp to enable access for wheelchairs to front entrance.</i>	

Present use of the premises	
What improvements are to be made?	
How will the project benefit the community?	
How will the project be managed?	

Budget		
<p>(A) What are the individual budget items/works for your project that are being requested to be funded by the Access Incentive Scheme Grant?</p> <p>(additional fields and spaces may be inserted as required)</p>		
Item Description	Estimated cost	Amount requested to be funded

Access Incentive Scheme Grant Funding Guidelines

Total (A)		\$

Application Checklist

Have you:

- Checked that you are eligible to apply?
- Ensured all appropriate persons (property owners, committee members, etc) are aware that this application is being submitted?
- Attached detailed quotes or advertising brochures from suppliers?
- Completed all sections of the Application Form?
- Kept a copy of this Application Form for your records?
- Attached owners' consent, if necessary?
- Attached any additional documents if applicable (e.g. Site plan, photos, proposed project plans)?

Submitting Your Application

Email to: council@cowra.nsw.gov.au

Include a subject line of: Application – Access Incentive Scheme Grant – *your organisation*

Alternatively complete a paper copy of the application and deliver to:

Environmental Services
Cowra Shire Council
Private Bag 342
Cowra NSW 2794

Contact the Director-Environmental Services or the Director-Environmental Services Personal Assistant at Cowra Council for any assistance in completing your form on 6340 2048 or by email at: council@cowra.nsw.gov.au



Cowra Shire Council
 Private Bag 342
 Cowra NSW 2794
 Phone: 02 6340 2000
council@cowra.nsw.gov.au
www.cowracouncil.com.au

Access Incentive Scheme Grant: Acquittal Form

Please submit your completed form to:
 Cowra Shire Council, Environmental Services, 116 Kendal Street, Cowra NSW 2794 or,
 email to: council@cowra.nsw.gov.au

Applicant Details	
Contact Name	
Name of Organisation	
Mailing Address	
Contact number during office hours	
Email	

Project Details	
Project Name	
Funding Amount Approved	\$
Property/Business Name of project site	
Property address of project	
Location on site where project was completed (e.g. front door)	

Project Results

Aim of the Project

(i.e. what will be the outcome? What do you hope to achieve? Who/what will benefit?)

Example: Enable access for wheelchairs to front entrance.

Project Activities.

(Brief Description of what you did, where and when, who was involved, were there any variations to the original application)

Example: New ramp installed to front of building to facilitate equitable access to the building. Ramp was installed on 3 July 2022 by Joe Smith Contractors. Additional handrail was required to be installed to afford stable access to premises

This may be conveyed using dot points.

Project Outcomes

(Brief description of what you achieved, what the benefits were/are to the community / public)

Please include photos

Budget and Expenditure

Brief outcome of grant expenditure: attach copies of receipts and invoices, materials, services, etc.

This page is for record keeping only (with all personal bank details redacted) and will be removed before the form appears in any Council agendas and/or Councils website and/or any social media platform.

Photos

Please attach good quality photos of your project during progress (if any) and of the completed project.

DISCLOSURE: photos may be used on Councils social media, Councils website and in the local newspapers/social media.

Please tick one of the below options.

- I consent to all images provided being used on;
(please tick all options below that you give consent to)
- Councils website
 - Social media where the images may be shared by the public
 - Featuring in the local newspaper.
- I do not consent to images provided being used on Councils website, on Social media or in the local media publications.

Payment Options

Preferred Payment Method and Details

- Cheque Payee: _____
- EFT
- Account Name: _____
- BSB Number: _____
- Account Number: _____

Important Notes

- Please note, your form may appear in an Access Committee and/or Council meeting agenda where it will then be available online. It may also appear on Council's Facebook page where the post may potentially be shared by the public. All personal information will be redacted before appearing online.
- Please ensure you have ticked whether you give consent or not for the use of any photos provided to appear in a public article and/or online post where it may be shared.

Contact the Director-Environmental Services or the Director-Environmental Services Personal Assistant at Cowra Council for any assistance in completing your form on 6340 2048 or by email at: council@cowra.nsw.gov.au