

Arts and Cultural Grants – Guidelines

ANNUAL UP TO \$20,000



City of Stonnington Arts and Cultural Grants 2025/2026 Guidelines Annual Grants (Up to \$20,000)

Timeline:

Applications Open	Tuesday, 11 February 2025
Grant Information Session	Tuesday, 4 March 2025
Applications Close	Thursday, 17 April 2025, 12 noon AEST
Assessment Period	April – May 2025
Council Endorsement	May - June 2025
Applicant Notification	June – July 2025

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Overview

The **Arts and Cultural Annual Grants program (Up to \$20,000)** reflects the City of Stonnington's vision to be vibrant, imaginative and creative. Spanning a broad range of art forms and practices this grant supports inclusive, innovative, engaging, empowering, resilient and environmentally friendly projects. Collectively these place value on the importance of our creativity and cultural identity and strengthens the social, community and economic development of the City of Stonnington.

The Arts and Cultural Annual Grants program (Up to \$20,000):

- provides one year of funding or in-kind support for arts organisations, cultural organisations, community groups, emerging artists, and established artists to deliver appealing and contemporary cultural and creative projects
- connects communities through equitable, inclusive and accessible creative arts practice, activity, participation, location and attraction
- embraces and supports the knowledge, experience and cultures of different groups including First Nations people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people living with disability, and LGBTIQ+ people
- raises the profile of arts and cultural activity throughout Stonnington
- recognises the importance of utilising environmentally sustainable practice at project development and delivery stages
- promotes the City of Stonnington as an exciting, attractive, safe, bold, and desired creative destination for community residents and those outside the boundaries
- supports arts organisations, cultural organisations, individuals, and groups to sustainably grow and succeed
- encourages shared connections and networking between members of the local arts and culture ecosystem
- supports promotion and celebration of arts and cultural programs with a wide audience
- evaluates the outcomes and impacts that creative arts and cultural projects have at personal, social, and economic levels.

About Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Up to \$20,000)

The Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Up to \$20,000) are open to all arts organisations, cultural organisations, community groups, emerging artists, and established artists wishing to deliver arts projects within Stonnington. Eligible art forms include: theatre; cabaret; dance; visual art; circus/physical theatre; live art; music; digital media/film; interdisciplinary/ hybrid; and, arts festivals. The total funding pool for our five Arts and Cultural Grants Program is up to \$440,000 per year.

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Please refer to the criteria below to see if you or your organisation is eligible to apply. Our grants are available to individuals and organisations from across Australia but must be delivered within the City of Stonnington.

Please note this grant provides financial support only. A separate application is required to be completed if you are seeking 'Venue Hire In-Kind Support' or 'Chapel Off Chapel Venue In-Kind Support' (please see [terms and conditions](#)).

Eligibility for 'Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Up to \$20,000)'

Eligibility Criteria

Organisations, community groups and individuals can apply for a City of Stonnington Arts and Cultural Grant. Applicants can be located outside of the City of Stonnington, however their project must be delivered within our boundaries. Eligibility is based on the conditions below. Please ensure that that your project meets all criteria before applying.

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible for an 'Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Up to \$20,000)':

- organisations that apply must be incorporated, not-for-profit and have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- individuals or community groups that are not incorporated must be formally auspiced by the type of organisation listed above (please refer to [Auspicing Agreements and Incorporated Organisations](#) for more information)
- applicants must be an 'arts organisation', 'cultural organisation', 'community group', 'emerging artist' and/or 'established artist'
- applicants must be over the age of 18 years
- applications can be made up of a partnership of incorporated not-for-profit organisations
- applications can be made by schools, TAFEs or Universities, provided they have not-for-profit status
- applicants must propose delivery of a project within the City of Stonnington boundaries between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026 (boundary details can be found on the [City of Stonnington website](#))
- applicants can only apply for up to \$20,000 in grant funding
- applicants can only apply for one up to \$20,000 grant project
- applicants must have no pending acquittals or debts with the City of Stonnington

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- applicants must provide proof of current Public Liability Insurance of no less than \$20,000,000 (\$20 million dollars), which may be offered by the auspicing organisation
- City of Stonnington cannot fund grants if the applicant is not able to contribute to the overall cost of the project. This contribution may include in-kind, financial and/or a mix of both.
- We often suggest that the City of Stonnington will fund around 70% of project costs. But you are welcome to speak to the team if you want to discuss your proposed project costs
- Applicants that have previously received a grant from the City of Stonnington for a project can re-apply if it can be demonstrated that further funding will enable ongoing development and/or scalability of the existing project.

Please note:

- To ensure that there is a wide diversity in the types of projects funded, the City of Stonnington aims to avoid duplication of similar projects. During the assessment process applications will be competitively assessed to help ensure that projects of a similar nature are not repetitively funded (please refer to [Assessment Process](#) for more information).
- Auspice bodies can assist more than one applicant to apply for grants.

Ineligibility for Annual Arts and Cultural Grants (Up to \$20,000)

Organisations, community groups and individuals may not be eligible for a grant for a variety of reasons, as outlined in the conditions below.

Who is ineligible to apply?

The City of Stonnington does not support grant applications that include:

- projects taking place outside the [City of Stonnington boundaries](#)
- projects that have a party-political purpose or applications made by political organisations
- projects that do not occur within the grant period (either before or after)
- projects that rely solely on the City of Stonnington for funding (i.e. applicants cannot apply for 100% of total project costs)
- capital purchase of an asset (e.g. furniture, IT equipment) over the value of \$1,000.
- projects that have secured sponsorship from gaming, tobacco or alcoholic beverage companies
- activities of political, sexist, violent or religious nature
- an organisation's recurring operational costs, such as salaries, rent, and utilities or administrative project costs, such as salaries (excluding artist wages), rent and insurance

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- projects which include fundraising, as grants for fundraising activities can be applied for through the City of Stonnington's Community Grants program
- funding for individuals to attend conferences, training or workshops funding for prizes, donations, awards, scholarships, or gifts.

Application Process

1. Read through these guidelines to get an understanding of what is required and assess whether the Up to \$20,000 grant is right for you.
2. Plan, research and gather information required for your application.
3. Questions can be addressed by calling the Arts and Cultural Grants Team on 8290 1228 or email acgrants@stonnington.vic.gov.au
4. Complete and submit an online application through SmartyGrants by **12 noon** on Thursday, 17 April 2025. **No late applications will be considered.**

Only one application per project will be considered.

What to Provide in Your Application

Providing relevant support documents is a critical part of an application which will be reviewed as part of the assessment process. All applications must include **both** support documents and artistic support material.

Support Documents

- Certificate of Incorporation (your organisation or the auspicing body).
- Certificate of Currency (Public Liability Insurance of \$20,000,000).
- Full budget (via the budget template provided in the application).
- A clear written agreement with your auspice organisation, if applicable.
- Full budget (via the budget template provided in the application).
- Project timeline (as part of the online application form).
- Marketing plan (as part of the online application form).

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Artistic Support Material

Providing materials related to your art form/s helps the assessment team to better understand the project you're proposing.

- Please send examples of current, proposed or past works which relate to your art form:
 - images (up to 3)
 - show reels/moving image excerpts (up to 5 minutes, submitted as direct URLs, including relevant passwords)
 - script excerpts (up to 6 pages)
 - audio tracks (up to 2, submitted as direct URLs, including relevant passwords)
 - direct website links (up to 2).
- Key artist biographies (max 150 words per artist).
- Support letters (up to 2).
- Festival support letter (if the project is proposed as part of a festival).
- Reviews (up to 2 articles).

Please submit all artistic support material as one PDF file. There is a maximum file limit of 25MB, however we recommend that you try to keep files under 5MB.

Assessment Process

All applications go through the following assessment process:

- Eligibility criteria. The Council will review all applications against the eligibility criteria, and those that don't meet eligibility requirements will not progress to the next stage.
- Assessment Panel. A panel made up of Council staff, from various units, and external subject matter expert/s assess eligible applications and then make recommendations to the Council.
- Council decision. The Council reviews recommendations made by the Assessment Panel and makes the final decision on funding provided to successful applicants.

All applications are treated with the utmost of confidentiality and, due to privacy restrictions, will not be disclosed to any person outside the grants team and assessment panel.

Assessment criteria

Applications are assessed on a weighted average scoring system, as shown below:

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Theme	Criteria (what we are looking for)	Weighting (%)
Artistic merit	Extent to which the project's purpose, artistic approach, and desired outcomes are clearly described.	30%
	Extent to which the project embraces and celebrates innovation, originality, high standards, lessons learned, accessibility, social differences, and equity.	
	Demonstrates previous or emerging strengths in arts and cultural ability and achievements and engagement with relevant artists. This includes submission of support letters and relevant artistic support material.	
Capacity and viability	Shows strong financial and operational management planning, through provision of a realistic budget (including other sources of income and reasonable artist fees), project timeline plan and marketing plan.	20%
	Shows planned resource and support confirmation, through details of tentative venue booking(s), contingency planning, project collaborator(s) if required (e.g. artists, partners) and public liability insurance.	
Community engagement and reach	Extent to which the project will enhance social cohesion, wellbeing, and a sense of inclusion through participation and/or attendance by members of diverse communities.	20%
	Extent to which the project event is likely to attract attendance from local community members, state-wide and/or national audiences.	
Benefit and value	Demonstrates the project will be respectful of environmental sustainability.	20%
	Extent to which economic returns on investment are possible, through partnerships with local businesses.	
	Extent to which the project may lead to potential career advancement, skill development and/or creative practitioner network development.	
Alignment with Council Plans and Values	Shows alignment with the City of Stonnington Council Plan.	10%
	Shows alignment with the City of Stonnington's creative and cultural identity.	

What Happens After the Assessment Process?

Applicant Notification

- Unsuccessful applicants will be advised by post or email in July 2025

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- Successful applicants will be contacted and required to enter into a contractual agreement with the City of Stonnington in accordance with the City of Stonnington's Arts and Cultural Grant Policy'.

Payment

To receive the first payment, successful applicants must:

- return a signed copy of the Sponsorship Agreement
- return a complete New Vendor Application form
- return a Recipient Created Tax Invoice (RCTI)
- meet with Arts and Cultural Grant Team, in person, to discuss your project and all requirements.

Unless otherwise agreed, payment shall be made in two instalments:

- 75% upon receipt of signed Agreement, New Vendor Form, RCTI and initial meeting.
- 25% within 30 days of receipt of the Project Acquittal Report or by 8 July 2025 whichever date occurs first.

Changes to Your Project

The City of Stonnington requires written notification of any proposed changes to the concept as originally submitted, including date changes should they occur before the activity is complete. Subsequent to any changes, the City of Stonnington retains the right to withdraw its support and request repayment of any funds.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Grants provided by the City of Stonnington to organisations that are GST registered and have an Australian Business Number (ABN) will generally be subject to GST. Where this is the case, the City of Stonnington has decided to 'gross up' the base grant by 10 per cent and forward the full GST inclusive amount to the organisation.

The organisation will then be obligated to forward the GST proportion of the grant (one-eleventh) to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

If organisations have any doubt about their GST obligations, the City of Stonnington strongly recommends they seek guidance from the ATO on 13 24 78.

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City of Stonnington Council Plan 2021-25

Our vision for Stonnington is to be a safe, inclusive and creative city; one where we celebrate our people, history and culture, and embrace a healthy and sustainable way of life.

In 2021 the City of Stonnington adopted '[Future Stonnington](#)' which incorporates two important documents:

- the Stonnington Community Vision 2040 – articulating the community's aspirations for the future
- our Council Plan 2021-25 – how we will strive towards this vision over four years.

Developed with our community, the Council Plan 2021-25 is one of the most critical pieces of work we will undertake in the four-year term. It must consider our Community Vision, the challenges and opportunities we face as a city, as well as the functions and obligations required of councils by law.

The City of Stonnington has developed this Council Plan centred on three strategic directions representing our broad aspirations in achieving the community's vision:

- A thriving and unique place
- An inclusive and healthy community
- A people-centred and future ready city

The following Council strategies, plans, services and ongoing activities support the Council Plan and may also be considered when preparing your application.

- [Creative Stonnington: Arts and Culture Strategy 2023-2026](#)
- [Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2026](#)
- [Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025](#)
- [Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#).

Terms and Conditions

Applicants are required to comply with the following terms and conditions. Council has the right to exclude an application if these terms and conditions are not adhered to.

- Canvassing or lobbying of Councillors, employees of the City of Stonnington or assessment panel members in relation to any grant application is prohibited during the application process. No further consideration will be given to an application submitted by

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an applicant that canvasses or lobbies a Councillor, City of Stonnington employee or assessment panel member in relation to their application.

- Applying for an Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Up to \$20,000) means that you are applying for financial support only. If you would like to apply for venue hire in-kind, a triennial grant, or an annual grant of over \$20,000 you will need to complete a different grant application.
- An Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Up to \$20,000) application can be submitted along with an application for either an Arts and Cultural Grant (Venue Hire In-Kind) or an Arts and Cultural Grant (Chapel Off Chapel Venue Hire In-Kind). It cannot be submitted with an application for a Triennial Arts and Cultural Grant or an Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Over \$20,000).
- Upon successful application, applicants must sign a Sponsorship Agreement which details full grant obligations, and complete all other required documentation.
- Copyright of any works created during the course of the funding period remains the property of the successful applicant organisation or individual.
- The City of Stonnington has the right to request progress information such as financial records relating to the project at any time. This information must be provided within five business days.
- The City of Stonnington will not be responsible for shortfalls in project budgets if the grant recipient is unable to meet project costs.
- Receiving a grant from City of Stonnington in one financial year does not guarantee funding in subsequent financial years.
- Previously successful applicants are expected to outline long term planning, development and outcomes.
- Unsuccessful applications can be reviewed and resubmitted for future rounds of Arts and Cultural Grants. They will be reviewed against the new round of applications.
- Applicants must provide proof of current Public Liability Insurance of no less than \$20,000,000.
- The City of Stonnington must receive acknowledgement as a sponsor on all printed and digital promotional material.
- Applicants must present a completed application by the closing date and time, including attachments. No late applications will be accepted.
- The City of Stonnington retains the right to request the repayment of any unspent funds from any of the Arts and Cultural Grants.

Other Information

Features of a Strong Funding Application

Applications for Arts and Cultural Grants are very competitive and appeal to a wide range of organisations and individuals. A strong application should be clear and compelling and respond to all key submission requirements and questions. The strength and vigour of applications may also be increased through:

- attending the Grant Session as this provides a chance to learn tips and strategies and an opportunity to ask questions and hear from others
- reading the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) grants page on the City of Stonnington website
- checking eligibility, and whether an auspice agreement needs to be made
- reviewing the [Council Plan 2021-2025](#), and other relevant strategies, to determine whether the project aligns with the vision, values, strategies, and objectives
- carefully considering whether the project is realistic, needed, and will appeal to targeted and/or diverse community members.
- ensuring that participating artists can be paid in line with their level of contribution
- understanding the importance of contingency and risk and thinking about issues that may affect your project
- determining what the desired project outcomes are, such as community, participant and attendee benefits, and how these impacts will be assessed.
- providing responses to questions which clearly show how the project aligns with items listed in the weighted merit criterion
- ensuring that relevant support documents are developed and collected, so these can be easily uploaded as part of the application process
- ensuring that relevant artistic support material is developed and collected, so these can be easily and appropriately uploaded as part of the application process
- contacting the Arts and Cultural Grants team to discuss the project idea and ask any application questions.

Auspicing Agreements and Incorporated Organisations

Auspicing can be viewed as a larger organisation assisting an individual or community group to apply for a grant and then manage/oversee elements of it if successful. Often auspice organisations will enter into agreements to assist individual artists and local community groups so that valuable community projects get off the ground.

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Your application will require an auspice if you are an individual or community group that is not incorporated. To apply for the grant you will need to enter into an auspice arrangement with a not-for-profit incorporated organisation that has an Australian Business Number (ABN).

What is an incorporated organisation?

An incorporated organisation, or incorporated association, is incorporated in a state or territory under that jurisdiction's laws. Incorporation establishes it as a not-for-profit legal entity separate from its individual members. You can recognise an incorporated association by the word 'Incorporated' or the abbreviation 'Inc' after its name. An incorporated association should also appear on the [ACNC Charity Register](#).

Often arts, cultural, recreational and diverse community groups are established as an incorporated organisation. An incorporated organisation must meet the requirements and regulations of the state or territory in which it is incorporated. More information about incorporated organisations can be found in the [Consumer Affairs Victoria](#) website.

What does the auspice organisation do?

The auspice organisation is responsible for ensuring that the grant funds are utilised as outlined in the formal 'Sponsorship Agreement':

- receiving, banking, managing, and administering the grant funds
- ensuring that the applicant uses the funding on time
- making sure the money is accounted for (acquitted)
- signing the acquittal form.

An auspice organisation may also provide additional support and/or request additional involvement, such as:

- providing insurance for the project
- acting as a mentor for the successful applicant
- monitoring project progress
- a fee for auspice services, negotiated between you and the organisation.

What auspice arrangements are required for a grant application?

As part of the grant application, you are required to provide the auspice organisation's contact information, financial documents, evidence that they are an appropriate legal entity (such as their Certificate of Incorporation), and an Auspice Agreement Form.

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It is important to spend time with the auspice organisation so that they understand your proposed project and you both agree with the auspice arrangement. Once a written Auspice Agreement Form has been obtained and signed, you must provide a copy as part of your Application Form.

Both the auspice organisation and you can learn more about auspice arrangements by visiting the [Justice Connect](#) website.

What if an Auspice Agreement is not received in time?

Preferably, we would like applicants to have finalised their auspice agreement prior to submitting their application. However, if for some reason you have not received the final agreement prior to submission, you can receive a one-week extension to submit your agreement. After this time, pre-eligibility checks of applications commence. If you require this extension, please include in your grant application all correspondence had with your auspice organisation and advise that the agreement will be provided within the week. It is the applicant's responsibility to submit this agreement via email to Arts and Cultural Grant Officers.

Contingency and Risk Planning

Contingency means thinking about what could unexpectedly change in relation to your project and pose risks. It means considering anything that could potentially go wrong, what you will do to minimise the risk and how you will manage it. Contingency planning may include financial and/or situational risks.

It's a good idea to consider risks and how you will manage these in your application, as it provides confidence to grant assessors that you'll be able to deliver your proposed project.

Contingency issues to consider?

Every arts and cultural project is different, and therefore many have unique risks. Although projects might differ, we've provided some possible contingency matters to consider.

- Can you progress with the project if the City of Stonnington offers you less funding than was requested in your application?
- Can you manage the financial aspects of your project if your event is reliant on ticket sales and you don't sell them all?
- What will you do if the venue you have booked suddenly can't host your event?
- What will you do if a pandemic emerges and you need to postpone your event, transfer it from being place-based to online delivery, or alter the dates?

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- What if there is change in staff, artists, or partnership organisations?
- What if the employment rates for artists or other workers increases during the project period?

How to manage contingency and risks?

Some effective ways of planning for and managing contingency and risks over the course of your project is to diversify income and think ahead.

- Identify and define potential financial or situational risks to the project and prioritise them.
- Evaluate and assess each potential risk to identify:
 - Consequence – what are the outcomes if this happens?
 - Delivery impact – how will your project and/or event delivery be affected?
 - Financial impacts – will there be any additional costs or losses, will the budget need to be amended and do you have additional reserves to cover unfunded costs?
 - Responsibility – who will be responsible for managing any risks and how will any change decisions be communicated to everyone involved?
 - Probability – how likely is it that risks will occur?
- Consider the actions you will undertake to minimise the likelihood of risks occurring (although some may be out of your control).
- Consider who you can speak to for support and advice if a situation occurs (e.g. colleagues, mentors, partners, the Board).
- Create a Contingency and Risk Plan so you can monitor changes and activity undertaken.

Acquittal Process

- The complete Project Acquittal Report must be received within 30 days of the Project's completion or by 7 July 2026 whichever date occurs first.
- In the Project Acquittal Report you must answer all questions required, include final budgets, marketing material and photographs of your project (as photographs may be used to advertise the Arts and Cultural Grants Program in the future - please provide all photography credits).
- The final 25% of the grant payment will not be made until the Project Acquittal Report has been received by City of Stonnington and is deemed to include sufficient information.
- The City of Stonnington retains the right to request the repayment of any unspent funds from the Arts and Cultural Grant.

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- Failure to acquit the grant may result in the City of Stonnington requesting repayment of all relevant Arts and Cultural Grant funds.

Finding a Venue

Tentative bookings/quotes must be included with your application regardless of whether you are wanting to use a City of Stonnington or an external venue.

The following contacts may be useful in regard to [City of Stonnington venue](#) bookings:

Venues bookings:	T 8290 1246	venues_booking@stonnington.vic.gov.au
Parks information:	T 8290 1177	recreationservices@stonnington.vic.gov.au
Chapel Off Chapel:	T 8290 7004	chapel@stonnington.vic.gov.au
Prahran Square:	T 8290 1333	pahransquare@stonnington.vic.gov.au

It should be noted that the demand for Chapel Off Chapel and the Malvern Town Hall is very high and it is recommended that you enquire as to venue availability as early as possible.

In-kind support for venue hire will not be awarded to applicants who have not tentatively booked their venue/s in advance.

Please note that if you are applying for any venue in-kind support you must complete a separate grant application.

- Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Venue Hire In-Kind)
- Annual Arts and Cultural Grant (Chapel Off Chapel Venue Hire In-Kind)

Outdoor Spaces / Film and Event Permits

Council offers a number of parks and open spaces for the staging of events, however an event permit must be issued to ensure community events are run safely. If you are planning a community event and wish to use one of our parks or open spaces please visit our [Plan an Event webpage](#) and contact filmandeventpermits@stonnington.vic.gov.au for further information.

Acknowledgement of the City of Stonnington

All successful applicants must provide the following acknowledgements to the City of Stonnington:

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- Acknowledgment of the City of Stonnington as a sponsor on all printed and digital promotional material including letterheads, invitations, posters, flyers and signage, media releases, video and digital materials.
- An opportunity for a City of Stonnington representative to speak at key events.
- All promotional materials, including design artwork and media releases, are submitted to City of Stonnington for approval before publishing. City of Stonnington retains the right to request changes.
- Invitations to the opening or complimentary tickets to your project (where applicable) will be made available to key City of Stonnington representatives (x20 tickets or as negotiated).
- When the recipient's project is a festival, the City of Stonnington will be recognised as:
 - a major sponsor of the specific event or project, and
 - a general sponsor of the festival (in entirety).
- Promotion of any subsequent productions of the project (after the initial season/performance/viewing) will contain the City of Stonnington logo and written acknowledgment.
- The provision of the below materials for potential inclusion in City of Stonnington's e-news, social media content calendar or any other City of Stonnington publications:
 - A brief description of your event including key dates, times and features.
 - At least three publishable, high-res images (300dpi or greater).
 - A website address.
 - Social media links.

Other Funding Opportunities

The City of Stonnington offers other funding opportunities to the community. Details of these other opportunities can be found on our [Grants webpage](#).

How to Use SmartyGrants

To apply for an Arts and Cultural Grant you need to apply through our online system via SmartyGrants. The application link can be found on the City of Stonnington website.

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For help on how use SmartyGrants and ways to make your online application easier please refer to the SmartyGrants [help guide](#). If you are still having trouble completing your application please contact our office before the application closing date.

Contact Details

For further information about the Arts and Cultural Grants or to discuss your application, contact:

Arts and Cultural Grants Team
City of Stonnington
acgrants@stonnington.vic.gov.au