

Coastal-Burwood-Linwood

Strengthening Communities and Discretionary Response Funding

Frequently asked Questions and Troubleshooting

Includes questions that have been asked from workshops and drop-in sessions.

Making An Application

What's the timeline for applications and projects?

- **Strengthening Communities Fund:** Apply during May (1 May to Friday 30 May at 12noon) for projects from happening between September 2025 to August 2026. This fund is for your usual or planned projects- things you already know about.
- **Discretionary Response Fund:** Open year-round, subject to funding availability. Processing may take up to eight weeks. For new, unforeseen, or projects outside Strengthening Communities Fund's timeframe. The fund opens on 1 July each year and is available until all the funds have been allocated. If you're applying in February through to June, it will pay to contact one of the advisers to check the availability of funding.

Does the later application time-frame this year mean that we won't get funding until later in the year?

- As in previous years, funding decisions for the Strengthening Communities Fund will still be made in August with money granted available from the end of September onwards. It is just the processing time that has been shortened. (So please get your applications in as early as you can).

Can we apply for funding in more than one Community Board area?

- Only if you are applying for separate and distinctive projects. You can't apply for the same project to two different Community Boards.
- You should only apply for administration costs that reflect the amount of administration that is spent on each project.
- You should not apply for funding for any project that you are also seeking city-wide funding for.

Our sports club has members across Christchurch. Should we apply to the city-wide fund?

- As the city-wide sports funding is mainly allocated to regional sports organisations (RSO), clubs which fall under a RSO are not likely to receive funding from this source. Therefore, you should apply in the Community Board area where most of your members live.
- If you're applying for a project for your club's facilities, then you should apply in the Board area that your facility is located in.

What if our participants come from more than one community board area?

- Consider where most of your participants come from. This will be the Community Board that you apply for funding from.
- Applications will no longer be considered by more than one Community Board for the same project.

- To find the Community Board areas, [access the map on the Council website and through the application form](#).

Can we apply for multi-year funding this year?

- Not this year. Multi-year funding is linked to electoral terms therefore, it is not available for the 2025/26 funding round. Community Boards may choose to allocate funding for up to three years, this is only done for the length of their term.

Do we need to submit a registration form annually before completing an application form?

- Not anymore. With our new Smarty Grants platform, you complete a registration to log in.
- Once you complete this, you can log in again to edit your organisation's information as well as having the option to create a SmartyFile profile for your organisation.
- SmartyFile allows organisations to collaborate with team members, pre-fill information into forms and manage, view, search and sort submissions across multiple funders in one spot.
- When you register, please register using the name on your bank account.

If we create a SmartyFile profile, will the information we upload be seen by other organisations and/or Council staff?

- No, what you put in your SmartyFile profile is only available to those in your organisation that can log in.
- A major advantage of SmartyFile is that you can put all your information in one location that all of your grant makers can access when making applications not just to Council, but also to other organisations that may use the Smarty Grants platform.

Can the application form be completed in stages, or must it be done in one hit?

- You can complete the form in stages. At the bottom of each page, you will find a link to either "save" or "save and close". Use the save option throughout the form to fill in the application as you go, or the 'save and close' option to save and come back later.
- You can also scroll to other pages using the 'previous' or 'next' buttons.

Can we use a grant writer or consultant to make the application on our behalf?

- Yes, using a specialist grant maker can be useful. However, you need to make sure that they have as much information as possible to put your project in the best light. Additionally, you need to be aware that money from the grant cannot be used to pay for someone to write your application. You'll need to find these funds elsewhere.
- Furthermore, the contact person who is listed in your application should be someone be able to supply any additional information about your organisation and application that our assessors may need.
- We recommend that the contact person for your application is a member of your organisation with the knowledge necessary.

Do you prioritise applications or organisations for funding?

- We do assess how much your application meets the Council's funding priorities and outcomes as well as the Strengthening Communities Together Strategy. The Community Board's priorities are also considered. An application which strongly meets these will be prioritised.

- While we don't prioritise organisations, we do look at the factors that organisations demonstrate such stability, strategic direction and organisational practices as part of the assessment process.

Your Organisation Information

What does the umbrella organisation question mean?

- If the application you are making is not for a project that your organisation is delivering or you are applying on behalf of a different organisation, you should answer yes to this question.
- Generally, this will be for an organisation that does not have its own bank account or is an informal group wanting to apply for more than \$2,000.
- If yes is answered to this question, you must attach the agreement between the two organisations that sets out this arrangement.

We are based at a number of locations or don't have one set location. What address should we use?

Consider these physical locations

- Where your staff are based at
- If you're a volunteer led organisation, where you meet together regularly to organise your project
- The one place you deliver most of your activities from.

Our organisation doesn't have its own phone number

- Use the number of your main contact.

Why are we being asked for a Charity Commission number and/or an Incorporated Societies number?

- Instead of asking you to attach evidence of your Charities Commission or Incorporated Societies registration, we are asking you to enter your registration number.
- The information that is automatically generated tells us your status. For it to be populated, enter the number (not your organisation name) exactly as it appears on your certificate.

Our bank account name is different to our organisation name.

- For any grants to be paid out, your organisation name must match the bank account name. If your bank account includes a 'trading as' notation, please include this.

Your Request Details

We have more than one project that we would like to apply for funding for. Do we fill in just one application form, or do we need to fill out a different application for each project?

- You should fill in just one application to the Board. Consider the different projects as sub-projects of a bigger one.

How do we work out the numbers of people benefitting?

- To identify the groups/individuals who will benefit from your project, look at figures such as membership numbers, expected and past attendance numbers. You won't be able to be exact, but you can estimate the figures.

Volunteer hours can be hard to assess. Do we need to supply these per week, month or year?

- Try and work out the volunteer hours per year. Then you can look at different factors such as:
 - The number of meetings you hold to organise your project per year. Multiply these with the number who attend.
 - If you're running an event, how many volunteers are involved for the event and then the number of hours the event lasts for. Don't forget to include setup and take down costs.
 - The amount of time that your key volunteers spend in non-meeting and event time – such as maintenance, marketing, organising. Multiple that by per week/month or other as applicable.

Our activity doesn't fit into any of the sectors that are listed.

- Use the community development sector as your main sector and then choose any of the other sectors that are listed within the next question.

Does your project have no set start and end date or have multiple dates?

- If your project is delivered throughout the year put the start date as 1 September 2025 and the finish date as 31 August 2026.
- If you have multiple dates (e.g. delivering four workshops throughout the year) put the date of the first one as the start date and the date of the last one as the end date.

Income and Expenditure

How do I know what we can and can't apply for?

- Before you start your application, check out what items are eligible for each fund on the funding pages of the Christchurch City Council website. If you are unsure, contact an adviser to discuss.

How much can we apply for?

- If your organisation is a distinct legal entity, such as an incorporated society or a trust, you are eligible to apply for amounts exceeding \$2,000 (or less if needed). However, if you are an informal group without legal registration, your application is limited to a maximum of \$2,000.

Our organisation has a vehicle that we use. What could we apply for to cover that cost?

- The purchase of vehicles and any related ongoing maintenance repair, overhead costs or road user charges cannot be funded by the Strengthening Communities Fund.
- Check out what can and can't be funded here: [Strengthening Communities Fund](#) – [Discretionary Response Fund](#)

What physical items can we apply for?

- You can only apply for items in Strengthening Communities applications that are NOT physically fixed to a building or location. If it is an item such as fixed heating, building additions or a garden shed that cannot be uplifted without any dismantling, then it is a capital item.

- Check out what can and can't be funded here: Check out what can and can't be funded here: [Strengthening Communities Fund](#) – [Discretionary Response Fund](#).

Does the exclusion of projects promoting religious ministry mean that our church cannot get funding for an event or programme that we provide for the wider community?

- If your project is provided for the community beyond your church and the main purpose of it is NOT to deliver any type of religious ministry or messaging, then your project may be eligible for funding. There shouldn't be any encouragement for those participating to attend your church.
- If you have any questions with this, contact one of the advisors.

What other exclusions are there?

- Other notable exclusions include retrospective projects and those that are the responsibility of central government.
- Check out what can and can't be funded here: [Strengthening Communities Fund](#) – [Discretionary Response Fund](#).
- If you have any questions with this, contact one of the advisors.

Why are we being asked to enter information both into the income boxes as well as the other funding box?

- When you enter your income information, this will include money that you may already have on hand, sponsorship, donations, fundraising, membership fees and grants that you have already secured (physically or received confirmation of).
- Where you are asked to identify your other sources of funding, include the other sources (mainly grants) that you are looking to apply for, or source. Please indicate if you have made the application and are waiting for notification by placing (pending) after the source.

What if our income is tagged for a particular purpose?

- In the description box indicate (tagged) beside the description. An adviser will be in contact with you to clarify this.

Should we apply for all costs for a project?

- While you can apply for all project costs, we do not advise this. Furthermore, it is unlikely that you will receive funding for all the costs.
- Projects where funding is secured from multiple sources can be seen to be more sustainable than those that rely on a single source or a smaller number of sources.

Supporting Information

What attachments do I need to add to my application?

Essential Attachments:

- Verified bank account number (e.g., deposit slip or bank statement).
- Copy of the most recent bank statement.
- Budget for each project seeking funding.

- Copy of the most recent annual accounts (include a recent financial update if older than 12 months).

Additional Attachments (as needed):

- For wage applications: Include a job description and a copy of the employment contract.
- For purchasing items: Attach quotes for individual items, especially those costing \$500 or more.
- For multi-year funding: Include a business or strategic plan covering the relevant years.
- If your project involves working adults and/or children you may be asked to provide evidence of a Child Protection Policy.
- Other information that can support your application.

My attachments are too big.

- If you cannot reduce the size or have trouble, you can email the documents to your funding advisor (if you know who it is) or to the funding team (communitygrants@ccc.govt.nz). Don't forget to mention the group you are with, which scheme you are applying to and the application number if you have one.

We haven't had our AGM yet. Do we still need to supply our annual accounts?

- We do require your most recent accounts. If they haven't yet been ratified by a meeting or are provisional, you can still include them – we won't be distributing them anywhere. If the date on them is prior to April 2024, then please also include a recent financial summary.

Why do we need a Child Protection Policy?

- If you are working with young people, children or in fact any vulnerable people, you should have practices in place that protect those people. We want to know that your organisation and the people working in it (paid and unpaid) are aware of how you should be working with vulnerable people in the community to keep them safe.

Can we attach other documents that provide information about our project?

- Certainly. If you feel that you don't have enough space to let us know about your project, feel free to provide further information that could help with the assessment of your project. It's likely that the extra information will not be able to be shown in whole to the elected members, but information from it may form part of the staff assessment that the Board members receive.

Do we need to attach a job description for everyone in our organisation?

- You only need to provide the job description for the position that you are seeking funding assistance towards.

Why do we need to make a declaration and how can we be sure that the information we've supplied is not going to be distributed elsewhere?

- Firstly, we need to know that you have the permission or agreement from your organisation to make this application.
- Information is shared with decision makers (the Board) that enables them to make the decisions they need to make. Because the funding you are seeking is publicly sourced, decision-making meetings are open to the public.
- Meeting agendas are published, meetings live streamed with the recordings publicly available.

Members may ask questions about applications and organisations during this meeting.

- Please talk to us if you have any concerns with any information you provide.

Submitting Your Application

Keen to keep a record of your application? Here's how to get a copy!

- Once you have started an application, click onto the Review and Submit page, which is the final page of the application form. From the Review and Submit page, you will see a button to download a PDF of your form.

How do I know if my application has been submitted?

- The system sends you an automatic reply saying that we have received your application. If you do not get the automatic reply please check that you have submitted the form. There is a submit button and a confirmation that you are submitting the form. Please make sure you have pressed both.