

## **Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Program Guidelines**

*LAST UPDATED 21 FEBRUARY 2020*

### **PURPOSE**

The Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Program commenced in 2019-20 to provide financial support for initiatives within the Community that initiate, progress, foster and capitalise upon existing and targeted Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships both nationally and internationally. The Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Working Group aims to bring together local schools, volunteer and cultural groups, businesses and other interested parties to maximise the benefits arising from existing agreements and to consider the targeted, strategic addition of new alliances.

### **TYPES OF ASSISTANCE**

Council will provide grants for Projects that meet the Program criteria. Those projects which provide less than a 25% co-contribution to the associated project will be eligible for up to \$5,000. Those who demonstrate provision of a 25% or greater co-contribution will be eligible for consideration of grant amounts over \$5,000.

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Each application for assistance will be assessed by the Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Working Group on a case by case basis. Specific incentives offered by the Gunnedah Shire Council may compliment assistance available from Federal, State Government or other agencies.

Applications will be considered on their individual merits, with priority given to those demonstrating delivery of the objectives outlined as follows:

- Extend the hand of friendship within NSW, interstate and internationally to the mutual benefit of all parties;
- Facilitate an understanding between people and cultures;
- Bring together similar interest groups in each "city";
- Foster existing agreements or development of targeted, strategic new sister cities and friendly relationships agreements with Gunnedah Shire;
- Provide a forum for the exchange of sister or friendly relationships experiences and through facilitation maximise the opportunities to capitalise on the agreements between the parties;
- Facilitate networking and the making of contacts across geographic boundaries through all sectors of the community; and
- Develop economic, trade, cultural, educational and other beneficial exchanges.

The assistance offered may be staged upon successful completion of certain stages of the project.

The proponent must identify other support received from Council in the current and previous financial year in relation to the project.

Applicants are eligible for funding once every 12 months unless there are demonstrated extenuating circumstances.

Incomplete Expressions of Interest will not be considered.

## PROJECT TIMELINE

The funds need to be acquitted within 12 months of being awarded and a Declaration of Expenditure on the prescribed format certifying that the funding was expended for the purpose for which it was granted.

It should be noted that projects will not be funded if the project was completed greater than 12 months prior.

## COUNCIL CONSENT

If development is required as part of the project, it is recommended that the applicant make an appointment with a Council Duty Planner to determine if a Development Application is required before considering the Program grant.

Applications will not be considered for business trading without Council consent.

## ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Applications for funding under The Program will be called for twice a year.

Proponents must complete an application form, which is available from either Council's Administration Building or website [www.gunnedah.nsw.gov.au](http://www.gunnedah.nsw.gov.au)

### **Expressions of Interest are to be addressed to:**

General Manager

Gunnedah Shire Council

PO Box 63 (63 Elgin Street) GUNNEDAH NSW 2380

Telephone: (02) 6740 2100

Email: [council@infogunnedah.com.au](mailto:council@infogunnedah.com.au)

Once an application is lodged, the Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Working Group will assess the applications against the eligibility criteria and recommendations for funding will be reported to the following Council meeting for determination. Unsuccessful program applicants will be provided with feedback on their application and will be given advice in respect to the application's potential for success in a sequential period.

The amount of funding provided for each period shall be determined by Council on an annual basis and Council reserve the right to not allocate funding in any given period, should it determine that funding is not warranted.

Any letter of offer of financial assistance will require agreement by the applicant to provide regular progress reports as requested to allow ongoing monitoring.

Payment of a subsidy or provision of assistance may also be withheld at the discretion of the Working Group, if information provided in an application is found to be incorrect or misleading in any way.

In offering assistance through the Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Program, Council reserves the right for such assistance to be the subject of publicity or used for case studies which promote Gunnedah as an investment location.

Council reserves the right to request a return of Sister Cities and Friendly Relationships Program funds if it becomes evident that the funds have not been spent in line with the application in a timely manner.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Client confidentiality will be respected at all times.

Council's records are kept securely with security controls to protect against unauthorised access.