

Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy

The Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund provides the opportunity for the Mayor and Councillors to respond to requests for financial assistance from individuals and community groups, community organisations and small local businesses involved in community projects.

The Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy recognises that some activities and events arise which do not fall within the guidelines for other Northern Beaches Council funding programs but are still deserving of support by Council.

The Policy identifies the key responsibilities of authorisation and accountability for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillors and Council staff and ensures transparency in the expenditure and reporting of funds allocated.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Applicants must be individuals, community groups, community organisations or small local businesses involved in community projects who either reside on the Northern Beaches or their initiatives and services will benefit the local Northern Beaches community.
2. Community groups and community organisations who make an application do not have to be incorporated.
3. Applicants will only be eligible to receive funding once within a financial year and funds must be utilised within the financial year in which they are allocated.
4. Applicants cannot apply for funding if they have applied for funding or received funding under any other Northern Beaches Council funding program during the same financial year for the same or similar activity.
5. Individuals can apply for funding to assist with opportunities for education and information exchange, attend as a representative at regional, national and/or international events and activities that will further develop their education or sporting endeavours at a representative level.
 - (a) If an applicant is a member of a team and subsequent requests are received from other team members that incur combined assistance over the \$1000 maximum payment under the Policy, an amount of \$1,000 will be made to the team and not the individual applicants.
 - (b) Funding for interstate and national representation is limited to \$250 per applicant and \$500 per applicant for international representation.
 - (c) If an applicant who is selected to attend representative events as part of a team who for financial hardship reasons wishes to apply as an individual and not as part of the team's application, evidence will need to be provided demonstrating financial hardship for an application to be considered separately.
6. The Applicant must complete the Northern Beaches Discretionary Fund Application Form demonstrating their eligibility for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund.
7. The Applicant must identify the amount of funding required where possible and clearly outline the purpose for which the funding is required.
8. Applicants cannot apply for funding if it is for the purpose of funding projects / programs aimed to support or promote political parties and/or candidates.

FUNDING

The amount allocated to the Fund is designated each year in the Annual Budget.

The maximum amount able to be allocated to an individual or community organisation is \$1000. (Only one payment can be made to an individual, community group, community organisation or local business within the same financial year and applicants cannot apply for funding if they have applied or received funding under any other Northern Beaches Council funding program within the same financial year for the same or similar activity).

PROCESS

1. Applications for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund must be received in writing by the Council and submitted either directly to the Mayor or through a Councillor.
2. The Mayor and Councillors may put forward their own initiatives for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund to an individual or group who they believe meets the eligibility criteria and, also meets with the requirements under Part 4 – Pecuniary Interests of the Northern Beaches Council Code of Conduct.
3. Applications for funding under the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund will be processed by the Office of the Mayor which will be responsible for certifying that the expenditure is in accordance with the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy and that the funds are available within the current Budget.
4. Applications will then be submitted for consideration and approval by –
 - i. the Mayor, and
 - ii. Deputy Mayor or Councillor, and
 - iii. Chief Executive Officer or Director, Corporate and Legal
5. Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.
6. Recipient and project details will be reported to the Elected Council quarterly.
(Individuals' details will not be identified in the report. The report will state 'resident' and provide the 'suburb' in which they reside to confirm they are a local resident).
7. Where they can be separately identified, costs associated with the Mayor, and or Councillor's participation in charity events will be deducted from their individual general expenses entitlement under the *Councillor Expense & Facilities Policy* instead of the Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Budget. Any costs incurred by a Councillor is publicly tabled at a Council meeting every twelve months and published on Council's website.

Scope and application

This policy applies to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors, employees, agents and officers of the Northern Beaches Council and members of the community.

References and related documents

Local Government Act 1993 Sect 226, Sect 356 and Sect 377

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Sect 207 (Responsibility for Accounting Records)

Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy

Responsible Officer

Chief Executive Officer

Review Date

September 2026

Revision History

Revision	Date	Change	TRIM Ref
1	25/7/2017	Policy adopted by Council with no changes following exhibition	2017/136008
2	19/12/2017	Changes made by Council Resolution 187/17 including change of title, that councillors can apply for funding, that a third signatory be required for allocation of funds and that all funding allocated be reported to Council quarterly.	2017/136008
3	21/3/2022	Revised draft for review	2022/170140
4	27/09/2022	Outcome of Public Exhibition of the Draft Northern Beaches Council Discretionary Fund Policy – Policy Adopted	2022/588040
5	22.08/2023	Administrative amendments to Point 5 of the Eligibility Criteria	2023/