

Business Facade Improvement Program Grant Guidelines

The aim of the Business Facade Improvement Program is to provide support to businesses with street frontage to undertake high-quality facade improvements that are visible from the front of the property and enhance the visual appearance and function of the building.

Eligibility

Businesses must be located in one of the 10 towns within the Shire and have a visible street frontage. Home based businesses or businesses with no street frontage are not eligible to apply.

How do I apply?

Applicants should initially make an appointment with the Economic Development and Business Facilitation Team. This meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the scope and type of works being proposed, any permit requirements, timing of works, having the consent from the owner of the building, and the availability of contractors.

How much funding is available?

The program is based on a matched funding model of \$1 for \$1 contribution. Applicants may apply for a maximum funding of up to \$3,000 (exc. GST) for physical works.

How many grants can I apply for?

Applications for funding are available once per business and/or premises per year.

Will I need planning permits for my proposed works?

A planning permit may be required however if a grant application is successful, associated permit fees will be waived by Council. Buildings within heritage areas of the Shire will need to comply with relevant guidelines.

Will I need building permits for my proposed works?

Yes, if a building permit is required, the relevant fee will be required.

What can the Business Façade Improvement Grant fund?

- Painting of the business façade
- Professional cleaning of the existing façade
- Removal of redundant signage, air conditioning units and hoardings
- Minor repair, maintenance or reinstatement of missing elements
- Minor repairs to existing façade tile or stone accents
- Minor repairs to structural façade elements and awnings
- New repairs or replacements of verandahs
- Installation of new business signage
- Installation of permanent store lighting visible from the street that improves the façade amenity
- Universal access in front of building (e.g. ramps)

What is excluded?

- Retrospective works (projects already commenced or completed)
- Operational or administrative costs
- Non fixed items, eg, tables and chairs, moveable lights
- Internal shop fittings or infrastructure
- Works where a planning permit has been refused
- Contribution towards the purchase of a building

How do I apply?

- Read these Business Facade Improvement Facade Guidelines
- Check Eligibility
- Discuss application with a member of Council's Economic Development and Business Facilitation Team
- Identify the project, obtain quotations and seek building owner permission (if required)
- Connect with neighbouring businesses about your proposed plans
- View the application form online at <https://sthgrampians.smartygrants.com.au/> when the grant round opens on 1 July 2024
- Fill out the application form in full – including all requested information
- Ensure you attach all supporting documentation to your application (quotations, plans, photos)
- Submit your application before the closing date of 31 July 2024

What documentation do I need:

- Business owner details including an ABN
- Quotations for all proposed works
- Property/ Building Owner details (letter of consent if different to business owner)
- Photographs of the facade before works commence (pre photos)
- Any information you would like considered in your application
- Any permits required for the works to be completed or evidence that the applicant has commenced gaining these

How will my application be assessed?

The assessment of each application is based on the following criteria:

Authority to Undertake Works

- Applications must include the building owner's consent.

Presentation and streetscape

- Applicants must demonstrate how the project will benefit the building's presentation and streetscape.

Project Quotations

- Applicants must provide a minimum of one quote for the proposed works and provide the business address of the contractor proposed to undertake the works.

Economic Development

- Applications which include the use of local tradespersons and/or Indigenous-owned businesses (if available in the region) will be weighted favourably.

Plans

- Applicants must submit a plan detailing the proposed improvements and be willing to obtain all necessary approvals and permits. Applicants must submit "before photos" of the proposed building with the application.

Approval of Applications:

Council will establish an appropriate grant assessment team to assess the applications received.

To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process:

Applications for grant funding will be assessed by three Council officers. Assessment outcomes with recommendations will be presented to Councillors for adoption at the August 2024 Council meeting.

Conflict of Interest:

To ensure probity and fairness, all Council officers involved in grant assessment processes are required to declare their interests prior to assessing any applications. All declarations are recorded in SmartyGrants.

In the event of a conflict of interest, the relevant person must decline to participate in any discussion about the application and have this declaration noted as per Council's conflict of interest process. This process ensures that any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest is promptly identified and managed appropriately.

To ensure impartiality, Council officers who have assisted with an application will not be part of the Grant Assessment Team. Councillors are not involved in assessing grants.

Completion:

If successful in your application, appropriate planning and building permits will need to be obtained before the commencement of works.

Businesses will have until the end of May 2025 to complete all proposed works. All claims must be submitted by the end of May 2025 (to include all associated documentation (including invoices and proof of works)).

Council will use the submitted claim to acquit the grant, and issue reimbursement in the correct financial year.

Now that you have read these guidelines, please speak with a member of Council's Economic Development and Business Facilitation team.

