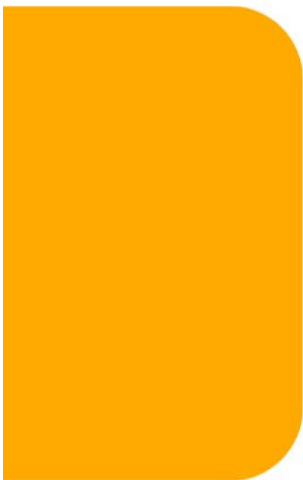


**BALLARAT
INNOVATION
GRANT
GUIDELINES**



JANUARY 2026



Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Ballarat Innovation Grants	1
2.1	Definition of Innovation	1
2.1.1	What a Ballarat Innovation Grant MUST have	1
2.2	Ballarat Innovative Grant Focus Areas	2
2.2.1	Mental health	2
2.2.2	Food Insecurity	2
2.2.3	Youth support	3
3	Grant Activities	3
3.1	What types of activities will be funded?.....	3
3.2	What types of activities will NOT be funded?.....	3
3.3	Eligible expenditure	3
3.4	What grant money cannot be used for	3
4	Eligibility Criteria	4
4.1	Applications from a consortium/ partnership	5
4.2	Current grant holders	5
5	Grant Limits	5
6	How To apply.....	5
6.1	Expression of Interest.....	5
6.2	Full Application	6
6.3	Number of EOIs/applications.....	6
6.4	Assistance with applications	6
6.5	Timing of the grant process	6
7	Selection criteria	7
8	Post assessment	8
8.1	Who will approve the grants.....	8
8.2	Presentations.....	8
8.3	Notification of application outcomes	8
8.4	Grant Contracts for successful applicants.....	8
8.5	Grant payments	9
8.5.1	Grant payments and GST	9

8.6	Activity Period.....	9
8.7	Grant reporting	9
8.8	Grant monitoring and evaluation	10
8.9	Keeping us informed	10

1 INTRODUCTION

This document describes the process to apply for a Ballarat Innovation Grant through the Ballarat Foundation as part of their annual grants program.

The Ballarat Foundation uses the grant management platform Good Grants to administer the grants program.

2 BALLARAT INNOVATION GRANTS

Ballarat Innovation Grants are provided by the Ballarat Foundation to inspire positive community change, reduce disadvantage in the community, and improve social cohesion and connection.

Ballarat Innovative Grants are provided to eligible entities to undertake initiatives that would create long-lasting benefit to the community in specific focus areas.

The Ballarat Innovation Grant program is funded jointly by contributions from the community and through distributions from the Ballarat Foundation sub funds. These sub funds include: Ballarat Foundation Fund, The Courier Charity Fund, Wendouree-Delacombe Fund, Ballarat Connected Communities Fund, James Petrie Fund, Adroit Risk and Insurance, Janine Owen Fund, Advanced Cabinetry Fund, Integra Group Fund, Feed Ballarat Fund, Young Ambition Fund, Canny Family Fund.

2.1 Definition of Innovation

A program is considered innovative if the approach is new or significantly improved and is likely to create tangible, positive change for the Ballarat community. For this grants program, innovation may involve developing a completely new idea or adapting an existing model in a way that delivers greater impact, efficiency, reach or sustainability compared to current practice.

2.1.1 What a Ballarat Innovation Grant MUST have

Proposed Ballarat Innovation Grants should demonstrate the following characteristics of innovation:

- **Novelty:** A new idea, method, program, or partnership not currently used within the Ballarat community, or a proven model being applied in a new local context or with a new population group.
- **Problem-Solving:** A fresh response to one of the identified focus areas addressing root causes rather than symptoms, testing alternatives to traditional service models, or closing gaps in service delivery.

- **Improved Outcomes:** Clear potential to achieve better results than existing approaches, whether through enhanced effectiveness, increased access, reduced barriers, cost savings, or stronger sustainability.

Proposed Ballarat Innovation Grants will be more favourably viewed if they also include the following elements:

- **Evidence-Informed Experimentation:** A willingness to test, pilot, or refine new approaches using data, research, or community insights. Innovation may involve calculated risk-taking, provided the project includes a clear rationale and a plan for monitoring and learning.
- **Collaboration and Co-Design:** Using new partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, or community-led design to generate solutions that would not be possible through business-as-usual approaches.
- **Scalability or Replicability:** Potential for the new approach to be expanded, embedded, or replicated across other parts of the region if successful, contributing to broader systems change.

2.2 Ballarat Innovative Grant Focus Areas

The choice of focus area from year to year is determined based on community need. The need is assessed based on independent research and feedback from the community, which is outlined in the Ballarat Foundation [Vital Signs](#) report.

This years' grant focus areas are:

- [Mental Health](#)
- [Food Insecurity](#)
- [Youth support](#)

2.2.1 Mental health

The Ballarat Foundation is committed to improving mental health and wellbeing across our community, with a particular focus on prevention, early intervention, and community-led approaches that build connection, resilience, and belonging. Our approach to mental health is to address the drivers of poor mental health, not just the symptoms. The community has identified adult mental health as a priority.

2.2.2 Food Insecurity

The Ballarat Foundation supports initiatives that move beyond short-term emergency food relief and instead address the underlying causes of food insecurity, build community capacity, and create long-term change through connection, skills, choice and pathways out of crisis.

2.2.3 Youth support

The Ballarat Foundation supports initiatives that empower young people aged approximately 12-25 years, particularly those experiencing barriers to education, employment, social inclusion or well-being. Programs will be prioritised when they include youth voice or are youth co-designed.

3 GRANT ACTIVITIES

3.1 What types of activities will be funded?

The Ballarat Innovative grant will support any projects that fulfil the definition of innovation as described in Section 2.1 aimed at one or more of the key focus areas. The proposed activity must be new or not have been running for more than 12 months (as of June 2025).

3.2 What types of activities will NOT be funded?

The types of activities that will not be funded include:

- One-off events or programs that are not part of a broader program with necessary wrap-around services
- Programs that duplicate existing funded programs unless the proposed program offers something significantly new and would lead to greater impact
- Stand-alone or ongoing emergency response programs that do not address the root cause of the identified issue

3.3 Eligible expenditure

You can only spend the grant to pay for costs directly attributed to the provision of the project as outlined in the grant agreement.

3.4 What grant money cannot be used for

Applicants cannot use grant money for the following:

- Capital works or major equipment purchases, unless these can be adequately justified
- Political or partisan activities
- Overheads or recurring organisational costs
- Retrospective funding prior to the contract signing date, including costs related to proposal preparation
- International travel
- Activities funded from another funding source for the same purpose
- Activities delivered beyond a 50km radius of the Ballarat CBD.

4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for a Ballarat Innovation Grant with the Ballarat Foundation, you must be able to demonstrate you fulfil the eligibility criteria outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria	Means of verification
Must have charitable status.	Evidence of registration on the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) register.
Established entities must be able to demonstrate a minimum 3 years of operational delivery.	ACNC, ASIC or other relevant regulatory registration
<p>Early-stage entities must meet at least two of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum 12-24 months of demonstrated pilot delivery • Evidence of validated demands (e.g. users, partners, referrals, outcomes) • A confirmed co-funding partner or matched funding • Delivery through auspicing or partner organisation with proven capacity 	Documented evidence
<p>The applicant must not be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual/ Sole trader • A political party • Religious organisations where funds would be used in whole or in part to further the organisation's religious purposes • Government agency. 	ACNC, ASIC or other relevant regulatory registration
Applicants who have failed to acquit any grants from previous completed Ballarat Foundation grant programs will be ineligible to apply. This relates to any projects or programs operated by the applicant.	Ballarat Foundation acquittal receipt records
The applicant must have a bank account in its own name	Declaration statement in the application signed
Must not already be receiving funding for the same activity unless this funding is part of co-funding and the BIG funding will enable the program to reach scale.	Declaration statement in the application signed

4.1 Applications from a consortium/ partnership

Applications from consortia are acceptable, as long as you have a lead applicant who is solely accountable to the Ballarat Foundation for the delivery of grant activities and is an eligible entity as per the list above. Non-lead members of the consortium do not need to be eligible entities.

The lead organisation completes and submits the application on behalf of the consortium members. The lead organisation must identify all other members of the proposed consortium in the application. Only the lead organisation will enter into a grant agreement with the Ballarat Foundation.

4.2 Current grant holders

The lead organisation cannot apply for a Ballarat Innovative Grant if they have an outstanding grant acquittal report with the Ballarat Foundation for any grant type. Existing grant holders can apply for a Ballarat Innovative Grant while having a current grant agreement in place if the grant period is still active.

5 GRANT LIMITS

The Community Impact Grants have an **upper limit** of \$50,000 for a 12-month period excluding GST. Multi-year grants are considered but eligible organisations are encouraged to speak to the Ballarat Foundation about their proposal idea before submitting a multi-year proposal.

6 HOW TO APPLY

Your application must be submitted online through the platform “Good Grants”, where the form will guide you through the information required.

If you do not have an existing account with Good Grants, you will need to log in and establish an account. You can do this by visiting the Ballarat Foundation [website](#). Once you have reached the Good Grants site, click “register” on the top right of the screen and enter the necessary details.

Once you have verified your email, your account will be activated, and you will choose the grant you want to apply for.

The application process for the Ballarat Innovation Grant is a two-phase process, first with an Expression of Interest (EOI) and then, if successful, a full Application.

6.1 Expression of Interest

The EOI must be submitted through Good Grants. The EOI must outline:

- What the problem is – what community issue or unmet need are you seeking to address
- The innovation – what is the proposal and why it is innovative

- Stage of development – what stage of development is the initiative currently at
- Organisational capacity and partnerships – proof of eligibility

If your EOI passes, then you will be invited to submit a full Application.

6.2 Full Application

The full Application will be undertaken in Good Grants. The Application will also be supplemented with a presentation to the Ballarat Foundation Allocations Committee, which makes recommendations to the Ballarat Foundation Board.

In the Application, you will first need to demonstrate your eligibility to apply. The Application will then ask you to outline your program rationale, aims and objectives, expected outputs and outcomes, target participants (including numbers and types), and monitoring and evaluation plan.

You can find the link to the applications on the Ballarat Foundation [website](#).

6.3 Number of EOIs/applications

Applicants can submit more than one EOI for a Ballarat Innovative Grant, either on their own or in a consortium.

6.4 Assistance with applications

The Application form includes help information.

If you need more help with the Application (for example you find a mistake) after submission, but prior to the closing date, you can contact the Ballarat Foundation on info@ballaratfoundation.org.au

6.5 Timing of the grant process

You can submit an EOI at any time through Good Grants.

Below are the anticipated timeframes for the Ballarat Innovation Grant.

Activity	Timeframes
Application period	BIG is open for expressions of interest at any time.
Assessment of EOIs	EOIs are assessed as they are received.
Assessment of Applications	The assessment of the Application is lengthy because once your EOI is accepted there will be extensive discussions and refinement of the idea before the Application is ready for presentation.

7 SELECTION CRITERIA

EOIs and Applications will be assessed by a panel made up of members of the Ballarat Foundation Board, community members, and sector experts. The selection criteria are outlined in Table 2.

One of the keys to a successful application will be providing the necessary information and evidence to meet the assessment criteria.

Table 2: Selection criteria

Criteria	Weighting
Need and suitability	40%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application clearly demonstrates how it is innovative and is evidence-based The application adequately describes the need or issue that the application will address and why the initiative is important and necessary The application clearly addresses how the initiative will address the focus area in a way that will lead to meaningful long-term change 	
Approach and methodology	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design and program methodology is clearly articulated and adequately demonstrates how the proposed activities will lead the expected change and can describe that change adequately The activity is feasible and likely to succeed beyond the grant period 	
Organisational capacity and capability	10%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application demonstrates the organisation (and its networks) has the necessary skills, experience, and resources to deliver the initiative The application adequately describes how the project will be managed 	
Ability to determine and measure success	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The expected outputs and outcomes are outlined and align with the focus area 	

- The applicant adequately outlines the number of people who will benefit from the project.
- The applicant can demonstrate the thinking on how the proposed activities will lead to the expected outcomes
- The application has a plan on how to measure the proposed impact (commensurate with the size of the grant)

8 POST ASSESSMENT

8.1 Who will approve the grants

The Board of the Ballarat Foundation approves the selection of grants based on recommendations from the assessment panel and availability of grant funds for Ballarat Innovative grants.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

8.2 Presentations

Short listed applicants may be invited to do a presentation to the assessment panel prior to a final decision being made on the grant recipient(s).

8.3 Notification of application outcomes

Following the assessment process, applicants will be notified through good grants via email regarding whether their application has been successful or not.

Unfortunately, individual feedback cannot be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

8.4 Grant Contracts for successful applicants

Successful applicants must enter into a grant contract with the Ballarat Foundation, which will set out the respective obligations of each party. Prior to doing this applicants must be aware that:

- b. Applications that require revision based on assessor feedback will need to do this prior to finalising the grant agreement.
- d. Third party interest, finance or commitment to your project must be disclosed with all relevant details provided.
- e. Co-funding with other funding bodies, corporate entities or individuals is encouraged, but any co-funding must be detailed in the application form.
- f. Projects that are funded cannot be deferred and must progress according to the timelines detailed in the application form unless agreed in writing by the Ballarat Foundation.

- g. You acknowledge and agree that Ballarat Foundation may make any press or other announcement or release relating to the granting of funds to you without your prior written consent and prior to the grant contract being signed. You also agree that you will participate in any media events or promotions to be conducted if you are granted any funding.
- h. You acknowledge and agree that any personal information submitted as part of the application process may be used and disclosed for the purpose of making any press or other announcement or release relating to the grant of funds to you.
- i. In situations not covered by these conditions, or where there is ambiguity, the Ballarat Foundation reserves the right to exercise their discretion, and the decision of the Board of the Ballarat Foundation will be final.

8.5 Grant payments

The grant contract will state the maximum grant amount to be paid. We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet these yourself.

The grant will be paid via electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) into the bank account nominated by the applicant in the Application Form. No other payment options are available.

The payment will be made following the execution of the grant contract and based on the terms of payment outlined in the Grant Contract.

8.5.1 Grant payments and GST

Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement.

If the successful applicant indicates that it is registered for GST, a GST payment of 10% of the value of the grant will be added to the grant amount requested in the application.

Organisations that are not registered for GST at the time of signing the grant agreement will not be paid a GST component.

8.6 Activity Period

The granting period will be around 12 months, with all grants to be acquitted by the date outlined in the Grant Contract. Multi-year grants may have a stop-go clause in the Contract allowing for an assessment of progress before further grant funding is disbursed.

8.7 Grant reporting

Successful applicants will be required to submit an end of grant report, which will include reporting on:

- Outputs and outcomes achieved

- What worked and what didn't
- Any significant learning
- A financial acquittal

Other reports or milestone achievement may be required and will be determined in consultation with the successful Applicant to be included as part of the Grant Contract.

The end of grant report will use a template provided by the Ballarat Foundation. Successful applicants are encouraged to discuss their monitoring and evaluation plan with the Ballarat Foundation at the beginning of the project, if additional support is needed in this area.

8.8 Grant monitoring and evaluation

There will be a requirement for you to do regular monitoring of your program and to collect the data outlined in your application. There will be an expectation to evaluate the impact of your program against the outcomes you identify in your application.

In addition, the Ballarat Foundation may undertake a visit to your program or request you to complete surveys or questionnaires in relation to your grant outcomes.

8.9 Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant project, services or organisation.

We need to know of any changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your grant, carry on business and pay debts due because of these changes.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- a) name
- b) addresses
- c) nominated contact details
- d) bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of the terms and conditions under the grant contract, you must contact us immediately.