



Community Use of Town Halls Scheme (CUTHS) Guidelines

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Purpose of the Community Use of Town Hall Scheme (CUTHS)

City of Melbourne is committed to creating connected and inclusive communities. Community organisations play a critical role in empowering the local community to take action and have an active role in shaping their future. We provide CUTHS grants to enable community groups to hold one-off or special events in the City of Melbourne's civic spaces. The town halls included in CUTHS are:

- Melbourne Town Hall
- Meat Market (North Melbourne)
- Kensington Town Hall

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for CUTHS, applications must meet the following criteria:

- Applicant organisations must be a not-for-profit constituted body (or be auspiced by one, applications from individuals or for profit organisations cannot be auspiced.)
- Applicant organisations must be located within the City of Melbourne or provide services or benefits to the local community or Melbourne as a capital city.
- Events must be open to the general public to attend.

CUTHS will not be considered for:

- Events with a political focus.
- Events with a religious focus. (Except for Interfaith activities).
- ongoing or recurring meetings
- commercial events and/or organisations
- fundraising events where the funds raised will be sent outside of Australia
- events that have already occurred
- events that are being funded through other City of Melbourne grant or sponsorship programs
- organisations with outstanding acquittals or debts owing to the City of Melbourne

Funding level

Applications for CUTHS can be made for any value up to \$7000 to support the following costs:

- room hire
- venue support staff (limited hours)
- security

CUTHS will not cover the following costs:

- catering
- audio visual

Only costs that are listed in the quote / event proposal will be considered for sponsorship.

Key dates

Applications must be received a minimum of six weeks prior to the start of the activity.

Applications will be assessed monthly, cutoff dates for each month are below. If your application is received by the cutoff date you will receive an email with the outcome for your application by the end of the following month.

Application cutoff dates 2025-26
16 May
20 June
18 July
22 August
19 September
17 October
14 November
Applications received from 22 November to 23 January will be assessed in February
16 January
13 February
13 March
17 April
15 May

Application process

Applications to CUTHS are open all year and are assessed on a monthly basis (except January). The scheme is very popular with more applications than there is funding available, so the process is competitive. The following considerations should be noted:

- Budgets are allocated on financial year budgets.
- Applications will close when annual funding is fully allocated.
- Applicants are not guaranteed support to the full extent requested; partial support may be offered.
- An organisation is eligible for a total of \$7000 (including GST) per financial year; this may be spread across multiple applications but a separate application is required for each event.
- Previous support does not guarantee future support.
- Organisations must be capable of planning, promoting and resourcing their own event - the City of Melbourne will not provide event management or promotional support.

- If successful, the applicant organisation does not receive the grant themselves – the City of Melbourne pays the awarded amount directly to the venue operator on behalf of the applicant organisation.

Please complete the following steps to apply for CUTHS for your event:

1. Ensure your application is submitted a minimum of six weeks prior to the scheduled event.
2. Contact the relevant venue staff to check availability and suitability of venues, and to answer your questions.
3. If the venue is available and suitable, make a tentative booking with the venue and you will receive a written quote.
4. Read through all the CUTHS Guidelines prior to filling in your online application form via SmartyGrants. You can edit, save and review your application form prior to submitting the final version. If you have accessibility needs, a printed form can be made available – please contact us in this case.
5. Complete all sections of the online application form and attach a copy of the quote to your application. Applications cannot be considered without the accompanying quote from the venue.
6. Applicants will be notified by email on the outcome of their application around six weeks after the application and quote has been received. (Note, there is no assessment round in January).
7. Applicants need to advise venue staff of the outcome of their application and confirm or cancel their tentative booking directly. (City of Melbourne does not manage this communication with venue staff).

Venue contacts:

- Melbourne Town Hall - Epicure - Phone 03 9682 1777 or events@seq.melbourne
- Meat Market (North Melbourne) - Phone 03 9329 9966 or meatmarket@melbourne.vic.gov.au
- Kensington Town Hall – Phone 03 9372 5315 or kensington@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Assessment criteria

CUTHS applications are assessed against the assessment criteria below. The City of Melbourne reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet the eligibility or assessment criteria. We also reserve the right to request further information in considering applications. Successful applications are those that best respond to the assessment criteria:

1. **Applicant's relationship with to the City of Melbourne:** is your organisation located within the City of Melbourne? If not, can you demonstrate that you provide services or benefits to the local community or Melbourne as a capital city.
2. **City of Melbourne community participation in the event:** will the City of Melbourne community be involved in the planning and running of the event and/or will the City of Melbourne community be specifically targeted to attend or volunteer at the event? Please note, all CUTHS events must be open to the general public to attend.
3. **Benefit to people who are vulnerable:** does your event target or support people who are vulnerable? This could include people who are socially or financially disadvantaged; people who have a disability; people who are experiencing homelessness; or newly arrived migrants or refugees.
4. **Uniqueness of event:** is your event unique or of a special nature, or has the City of Melbourne already sponsored similar events in the current financial year? (This is an assessment management will make - applicants are not expected to know the answer to this criteria.)

Terms and conditions

Organisations successful in receiving CUTHS are required to:

- comply with the law
- offer free access to carers of people with disabilities who require essential support, in accordance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- comply with venue hire contract and conditions
- include the City of Melbourne logo on all promotional materials for the event and have written approval for its specific application
- pay all other costs associated with the event outside of the CUTHS sponsorship, including any cancellation fees that may be incurred if you cancel the event
- complete an evaluation form within four weeks of the completed event.

Contacts

For general enquiries or in the case of accessibility needs:

Please contact the City of Melbourne Grants and Projects Officer via [email](#)¹ or call (03) 9658 9901.

SmartyGrants technical assistance:

If you experience technical issues with the SmartyGrants system please contact them directly on [email](#)² or by phone: (03) 9320 6888.

Got questions or need help?

Q: Are there any other community venues in the City of Melbourne that I can hire for my event?

A: Yes, the City of Melbourne has many venues that may be suitable for your event. You can find out more on our [website](#)³.

Q: My organisation doesn't have an ABN, can I apply for CUTHS?

A: No, applicants must have an ABN to apply for sponsorship. You may use an auspice for the application however they must meet the eligibility criteria and they must be involved in the event.

Q: My organisation is registered as a for-profit or a sole trader, can I apply for CUTHS using an auspice?

A: No, applicants and auspice organisations must be not-for profit organisations/groups.

Q: Can I apply for sponsorship for a fundraising event?

A: Yes, the CUTHS program will consider applications for fundraising events. Note that the amount raised by the event must be more than the sponsorship amount.

¹ commstrength@melbourne.vic.gov.au

¹ service@smartygrants.com.au

³ <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/hubs-bookable-spaces/Pages/bookable-spaces.aspx>

Q: My organisation wants to hold a fundraiser for a project overseas, is this eligible?

A: No, under the CUTHS program all funds raised at fundraising events must be distributed within Australia.

Q: Can we charge an entry fee to cover the other costs of the event?

A: Yes you can charge an entry fee to cover event costs.

Q: We want our event to be 'by-invitation only', not open to the public. Is this allowed?

A: No, only events that are open to the general public to attend are eligible for a CUTHS grant.

Q: Can we use our own caterers or bring our food into the Melbourne Town Hall?

A: No, Melbourne Town Hall has exclusive providers of catering and you cannot bring in your own food or use another caterer.

Q: Will CUTHS cover the catering costs for our event?

A: No, catering is not covered under CUTHS. Any catering costs are the responsibility of the applicant.

Q: If I need to cancel my event, will CUTHS cover the cancellation fee?

A: No, if you cancel your event your organisation will be responsible for paying any associated cancellation fees.