

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

The 2026 Small Grants Program is focused on ensuring communities are resilient in the face of social, economic, and environmental change and local support networks are accessible and effective. A strong local community creates better outcomes for all.

Our approach is to reduce the administration burden on you, by building efficiencies into the way we facilitate and assess grant rounds. We do this by seeking one application that is considered across multiple, aligned Trusts managed by Equity Trustees.

The Small Grants Program is built on the kindness and generosity of visionary philanthropists including the below contributing Trusts and Foundations.

- The William Buckland Foundation
- The R.M. Ansett Trust
- The Frances & Harold Abbott Foundation
- Sir John Minogue Charitable Trust
- The J.O. & J.R. Wicking Trust
- The Felton Bequest
- The Hazel Peat Perpetual Charitable Trust
- The Selwyn Henry Langston Charitable Trust
- The Lynne Quayle Charitable Trust Fund

GRANT FUNDING

(1)

Community Support & Empowerment
Communities are connected, and support is easily accessible

(2)

Wellbeing
Communities and their members are emotionally and physically healthy

(3)

Education & Skill Development
Communities have access to the skills they need to thrive at work and in the classroom

GRANT REQUESTS

- Single Year
- Up to \$25,000
- New or ongoing programs

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible your organisation and program must:

- Be Victorian-based
- Have charitable status and be registered with the ACNC
- Be a small to medium sized organisation as defined by the [ACNC](#):
 - Small charities - those with annual revenue under \$500,000
 - Medium charities - those with annual revenue of \$500,000 or more, but under \$3 million

No more than one application is to be submitted per organisation.

Put your best foot forward, pick the project you feel is the most closely aligned to the program areas.

GET IN TOUCH

If you have any additional questions, please contact Equity Trustees via charities@eqt.com.au.



FUNDING AREAS

1. COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND EMPOWERMENT

Program Goal	Communities are connected, and support is easily accessible. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investing in community designed and implemented solutions.• Backing trusted local leaders and their expertise.
We will prioritise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisations and programs working with community.• Funding essential resources for communities.• Programs that reach cohorts who have difficulty accessing mainstream support services.• Community voices are imbedded in solutions.

2. WELLBEING

Program Goal	Communities and their members are emotionally and physically healthy. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investing in strengthening the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of communities. <p>Social connectedness is valued as a powerful tool to create community change.</p>
We will prioritise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programs that centre lived experience.• Programs that promote social connectedness to solve or mitigate complex problems (i.e. loneliness, mental wellbeing, ageing well, youth development).• Programs that focus on improving outcomes for those experiencing disadvantage.

3. EDUCATION & SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Program Goal	Communities have access to the skills they need to thrive. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased access to education for diverse communities.• Improved employment outcomes for diverse communities.
We will prioritise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom based initiatives.• Skills development and employment transitions for young people.• Community education hubs.

AREAS OF INTEREST

We welcome applications in all funding areas although please note contributing Trusts & Foundations have a particular focus on the following:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diverse communities• Domestic animal welfare• The Bendigo region• The Hume region• Older Communities• Climate | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programs targeting social isolation & loneliness for older Australians• Children & Young People• Women & Girls• Palliative care for young people. |
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USE OF FUNDS

Funding can be used for:	Funding cannot be used for:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discrete projects and initiatives• Salaries and support• Operational expenses (i.e., program delivery and overheads)• Capital improvement• Measurement and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private benefit• Advocacy• Retrospective activities• Hospitals, Universities & Research Institutes (unless partnering directly with a community organisation)

KEY DATES

19th January 2026	Applications open via https://equitytrustees.smartygrants.com.au/SG26
16th February 2026	Applications close 5pm AEDT.
1st June 2026	Outcomes communicated to applicants.
30 th June 2026	Successful grants paid.

HOW TO APPLY

1. Read the guidelines.
2. Ensure organisation/program eligibility.
3. Apply via the application form, opening 19th January 2026
 - Spend no more than 1-2 hours preparing your application, approximately 20 minutes is allocated to review each application so please be as clear and concise possible.
4. Submit application by no later than COB 16th February 2026.

Please note we do not permit extensions.

APPLICATION WRITING RESOURCES

Our application process is designed to be short, simple, and straightforward.

Some useful grant writing tips are available via [Our Community](#).

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ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Criteria	Weighting	Strong	Moderate	Weak
Alignment to funding area	30%	Proposal has a strong alignment to intended outcomes and a good understanding about how the initiative will contribute to the program goals.	Proposal has some alignment to intended outcomes and some understanding about how the initiative will contribute to the program goals.	Proposal has no or minimal alignment to intended outcomes.
Context and Need	25%	<p>Organisation has a clear mission and vision strongly relating to the issues it aims to address. Proposal clearly outlines the type and level of need clearly and is evidenced with convincing data.</p> <p>Proposal knows what success looks like in the specific context.</p>	<p>Organisation has a vision and mission although it's relevance to the outlined proposal is not immediately clear. Type and level of need is described and evidenced with some data, but there are some gaps/questions.</p> <p>Proposal provides general idea of what success looks like.</p>	<p>Organisation does not demonstrate a good understanding of the issues it aims to address. Type and level of need is poorly described and/or not evidenced with data.</p> <p>There is no understanding of what success looks like.</p>
Program Logic	15%	<p>There is a clear and logical explanation of how the proposed activities/interventions will address the issues/problems/needs and bring about the stated outcomes and end goal.</p> <p>The grant request is proportionate to the budget and any shortfall is appropriately managed for.</p>	<p>There is a good explanation of how the proposed activities/interventions should address the issues/problems/needs and bring about the stated outcomes and end goal, however there are some gaps/questions.</p> <p>The grant request is proportionate to the budget but does not account for shortfall.</p>	<p>It is unclear how the proposed activities/interventions will address the issues/problems/needs and/or bring about the stated outcomes and end goal.</p> <p>The grant request is not proportionate to the budget and here is considerable shortfall.</p>
Community Involvement	15%	Proposal has involved a range of stakeholders including those with lived experience in the development / design of the initiative. Proposal is community led.	Proposal has involved some stakeholders in the development / design of the initiative.	Proposal has not involved intended beneficiaries or other stakeholders in the development / design of the initiative.
Equity & Inclusion	15%	<p>The proposal exclusively targets local under-served or in need communities.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Has a strong application of either a gender, climate, First Nations or other Lens to target underserved groups within a wider population.</p>	<p>The proposal does not specifically target under-served or marginalised community, although may reach those in need through its proposed activities.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Has tried meaningfully to apply either a gender, climate, First Nations or other Lens to target underserved groups within a wider population.</p>	The proposal does not target a specific population group in need.