

Business Improvement Grant.

BIG Ideas Program

Gilgandra Shire Council invites you to make an application for funding through the BIG Ideas Program.

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Background & Objectives

Gilgandra Shire Council (GSC) recognises that local businesses and business activity contribute to the vibrancy and energy of our town and region. The ability to generate new ideas and turn those ideas into profitable business ventures is critical to drive our region's competitive advantage and economic growth.

The Business Improvement Grant (BIG Ideas) Program was established in order to assist with economic development opportunities and investment in businesses in the Gilgandra Region. Funding will be provided to property owners and authorised tenants for infrastructure or initiatives that support the improvement of local businesses.

The BIG Ideas Program has the following objectives:

- 1. Business growth**
To support the growth of business in the Gilgandra Region by encouraging new investment, and greater employment opportunities.
- 2. Sustainable economy**
To encourage business innovation and enhance the diversity of the Gilgandra Region's retail mix.
- 3. Premise and precinct activation**
To support private sector initiatives that complement Council's and the Gilgandra Region's activation and revitalisation projects, including Gilgandra's Activation Blueprint.
- 4. Investment promotion**
To promote the Gilgandra Region as an attractive place to work, live and invest.

Grants will be considered in one competitive funding round in the 2023/24 Financial Year, for business improvement projects or initiatives.

The total pool of funding available for 2023/24 is \$50,000.

There are two funding categories:

Stream 1: Up to \$5,000 (ex GST) - Non-matched funding.

Stream 2: Up to \$10,000 (ex GST) - Matched funding (\$ for \$).

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding assistance under the Business Improvement Grant Program applications must satisfy the following:

- Businesses must be located within the Gilgandra LGA;
- Business must have a physical shop front.
- Applicants must be the owners of the business premises or have a signed tenancy agreement current for a period of at least six months from the date of application;
- Owner approval is necessary for an application from a tenant to be considered for a Business Improvement Grant;
- The business must have a minimum trading history of 6 months at the time of application;
- The business must have fewer than 50 employees at the time of applying for the grant;
- Applicants applying for stream 2 must submit a business plan covering a minimum of three years.
- Businesses must be a legally constituted entity and be the holder of an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- Have all appropriate insurances, permits and licenses or can demonstrate that all relevant paperwork for these processes has been lodged with the relevant authorities.
- Have contacted Council's Marketing & Communications Team prior to submitting an application.

The following applicants or applications are ineligible:

- Applications for unincorporated associations, branches, large and/ or established franchisees or subsidiaries of larger companies (exceptions can be considered in instances where the applicant can demonstrate there is a strong alignment to the objectives of the BIG Ideas Program);
- If there is more than one application relating to the same business or property, unless there is a strata lease arrangement in place;
- Applications for online businesses or businesses operating from home or virtual/ serviced offices/co-working spaces;
- Applications for businesses that have an adverse effect on public health, safety, the environment and/or heritage;
- Applications for one-off events, temporary or short-term projects;
- An applicant with overdue debts owing to Gilgandra Shire Council;
- Properties owned or managed by Gilgandra Shire Council;
- Applicants that are insolvent or have owners/directors that are an undischarged bankrupt.

What will be funded

Some examples of projects that may be funded as part of the BIG Ideas Program

- Reasonable property or infrastructure works
- Upgraded utilities connections
- Store fit-outs
- Grease traps & exhaust canopies
- Outdoor dining infrastructure
- Façade improvements
- Repainting of external shop frontage. Paint colours will need to be submitted and approved by Council, particularly where in areas of heritage significance
- Improvements to branding if part of a broader shopfront enhancement project
- Adding external materials and treatments that provide attractive detail, such as texture or tiling improving accessibility for all users
- Adding greening elements such as planting vines, green walls or window boxes
- Improvements to frontages to interact with the street, such as the addition of folding windows removal of security shutters and replacement with glass or security glazing improvements to under awnings
- Removal of fixed outdoor dining furniture (including planter boxes) and replacement with non-fixed furniture
- Preservation of internal features in publicly visible areas.
- Façade and/or awning (shop front) repairs and upgrades;
- Retail/office fit-outs or refurbishments;
- Works providing amenity to, and/ or improvements interfacing the public and private realm;
- Works required for fire, service and access upgrades to comply with Building Code of Australia requirements;
- Lighting projects that achieve aesthetic and amenity outcomes;
- Professional fees (payable only after granting of occupancy certificate, or that demonstrate
- Improvements to safety and amenity of a locality or property, including installation of approved security devices and/or alarm systems, CCTV, security lighting and anti-graffiti treatment;
- Activation of underutilised space and/or adaptive re-use of a property e.g., vacant upper floors, rooftops and laneways; and
- Accredited acoustic audits for eligible venues seeking to offer live music and performance programs.

What will NOT be funded

- Reductions in rental costs
- Payment of commercial rates
- Payment of Building or Planning approval costs
- Requests for retrospective funding, where projects have been commenced or are completed prior to funding approval
- Purchase of land
- Projects that require ongoing funding or support beyond the initial grant

- Routine or cyclical maintenance to properties with existing tenants
- Repair of facilities damaged by vandalism, fire or other natural disasters where the damage should be covered by insurance
- Operational costs- staffing, outgoings etc
- Organisations that have previously failed to complete projects funded by Gilgandra Shire Council
- Business operating costs (e.g., staff wages, rent and utilities);
- Consumables (e.g., food and office stationery);
- Relocatable equipment (e.g., coffee machines and computers);
- Standard operating equipment (e.g., cash registers and EFTPOS facilities)
- Advertising and/or marketing campaigns.

Budget

A full budget for the project must be provided as part of the application. This budget will outline the scope of works to be undertaken and quotes from suppliers. The budget should include details on all income sources, which will be used to fund the project and appropriately balanced expenditure breakdown.

Quotes must be supplied for all works that will be undertaken using grant funding.

Applications for a contribution over \$5,000 will only be considered if there is a minimum 1 to 1 dollar matching investment by the applicant or relevant property owner of the amount requested.

Local Suppliers

Applicants should consider giving priority to local suppliers for delivery of their project. Applications that include the use of local suppliers will be given a higher priority for selection.

Compliance

Applications will only be approved for funding if they comply with Council's relevant Building and Planning requirements. Funds from the grant cannot be used to cover costs incurred from obtaining relevant approvals.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed on the following four criteria areas:

1. Objectives:

- The project's ability to meet one or more of the BIG Ideas Program Objectives:
 - **Business growth**
To support the growth of business in the Gilgandra Region by encouraging new investment, and greater employment opportunities.
 - **Sustainable economy**
To encourage business innovation and enhance the diversity of the Gilgandra Region's retail mix.
 - **Premise and precinct activation**
To support private sector initiatives that complement Council's and the Gilgandra Region's activation and revitalisation projects, including Gilgandra's Activation Blueprint.
 - **Investment promotion**
To promote the Gilgandra Region as an attractive place to work, live and invest.

2. Budget:

- Scale of works - is there a matching investment?
- Impact - to what extent will the works contribute to the local economy?
- Use of local suppliers - has the applicant sourced quotations from local suppliers?

3. Business Improvement:

- Suitability of business initiative - does it compete with and/or compliment an existing offering?
- Tenure of business - what is the length of lease commitment?
- Demonstrates potential for market growth within the next two years in terms of increased turnover and/or employment.
- Commitment to being part of a Council identified business planning program, such as Biz HQs Steps for Success.

4. Benefit to the Gilgandra Region:

- The degree to which the project improves the streetscape and/or the overall desirability of the location.
- Employment opportunities that the project may create.
- Improves Gilgandra Region's competitive advantage or provides strong point of difference allowing positive publicity and promotion of the region.
- Provides a community benefit.
- Likelihood of completion within the timeframe required to acquit grant funding (this can be assessed by including evidence of engagement with statutory planning and building approval processes within the overall schedule of works).

Assessment

Applications will be assessed by a panel of representatives comprising Council's Economic Development Committee, Council and staff.

The Assessment Panel's recommendations will be:

- Presented to Council's Economic Development Committee for recommendation to Council.
- Presented to Council who will consider the recommended funding allocations at a formal Ordinary Council Meeting.
- All applicants will be notified in writing as to the outcome of their application.

Please refer to the timetable on our website to confirm the date we aim to notify you of the outcome of your application.

Acquittal

All successful applicants will be required to report to Council when the project is completed. The Acquittal process is important because it enables Council to evaluate the success of the BIG Ideas Program.

Your acquittal should include:

- A summary of the project including your feedback on the things that went well and also things that you have learnt from the project.
- Project expenditure must be completed together with receipts attached.
- Copies of promotional materials, photographs or video for the purpose of promoting the grants scheme through Council publications and website.
- All projects must be completed and acquitted by 30 June 2025.

A group which fails to complete their acquittal documents is ineligible to apply for funding under any future rounds of the BIG Ideas Program until their acquittal is completed and reviewed by Council.

Mandatory Requirements

There are several mandatory requirements specific to the BIG Ideas Program. Organisations must provide copies/evidence of the following mandatory requirements with their application for support from the BIG Ideas Program.

Please note that applications will not be assessed until all mandatory requirements are included or attached.



- **Business Plan**
Applicants applying for the matched funding (stream 2) must submit a business plan covering a minimum of three years. This is optional for stream 1.
- **ABN**
Applicants must hold a current registered Australian Business Number (ABN).
- **Public Liability Insurance Certificate from your organisation**
Organisation must provide a copy of their current Public Liability Insurance to the value of \$20 million

How to Apply

All applications must be received through Council's website with the online application asking questions relevant to the criteria noted within this document.

Application must be received prior to the due date and time through this online form.

It is required that you contact Council's Activations and Communications team to discuss your project before you can make your application.

Phone: 6817 8800

Email: enjoy@gilgandra.nsw.gov.au

www.gilgandra.nsw.gov.au

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We look forward to receiving your application.

