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Who can apply?

Not for profit organisations that provide community-based social services within the area of the 37 Local Distribution Committees.

When can we apply?

Applications open on 1 June and close on the last Friday of July each year.

Do we need to be a legal entity to apply?

No – but it will affect the amount you are able to apply for – organisations that are not legal entities may apply for a maximum of \$10,000.

How can we apply?

The easiest way to apply for COGS funding is to apply online. From 1 June go to the website www.cdgo.govt.nz or you can request an application pack from any regional office of the Local Government and Community Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs, or call toll free 0800 824 824.

How much can we apply for?

- organisations that are legal entities, e.g. incorporated society or charitable trust, are eligible to receive grants over \$10,000
- organisations that are not legal entities may apply for a maximum of \$10,000.

If we are a national or regional organisation, can we apply to COGS?

Yes you can – but you need to complete a separate application for each LDC. In your application you will need to demonstrate that the project or service you are applying for has a direct benefit to the local community. In Section C of the application form you are required to refer to the local priorities of the respective LDC when answering these questions.

It should also be noted, it is a requirement of funding that the organisation agrees in condition 4 of the Applicant Declaration *“To acknowledge the receipt of a COGS grant as a separate entry in our accounts, or in a note to our accounts, in our organisation’s annual report and in any media publicity arising from the grant”*.

If you are completing your application online then local priorities for that LDC are displayed at Section C. If you require a hardcopy of priorities for all LDCs, contact your nearest COGS Advisor at the regional office of the Local Government and Community Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs, or call toll free 0800 824 824.

National and regional organisations must provide the name and contact details of the organisation’s local representative who is based in the area the service or programme is being delivered. See Question A4 in the Application Form.

If we are a national organisation, how should we go about applying for funds for a project or service in a local area?

Ensure that the project or service can demonstrate a local focus and responds to an identified need in the community. Contact your local affiliate or networks to establish the merits of the proposed project or service prior to submitting your application.

Can I apply for funding as or for an individual?

No - individuals are not eligible for COGS funding.

Can I apply for funding for activities or programmes taking place overseas?

No – COGS grants may NOT be used for activities or programmes taking place outside New Zealand

Can we apply for funding for a commercial business?

Grants are not approved for commercial purposes. Not-for-profit organisations or charitable organisations are eligible for funding. Some limited liability companies, which operate charitable services under constitution, may be eligible. Please call toll free 0800 824 824 for assistance.

Can we apply for vehicles, furniture, office equipment, purchase land or building/alterations?

No – grants may not be used for capital items.

Can we apply for a project that has already happened?

No – grants may not be used for activities that have already happened by the application closing date.

Is it difficult to apply online?

The online application process has been designed to guide organisations through the registration and application. Grants Online has been upgraded to include help sections to assist applicants and make the process easy and user friendly. Further assistance is available by calling toll free 0800 824 824.

Note: you are able to save your application and finish at a later time by clicking on the Save and Finish Later button. The application will sit on your workbench and be available for you to return to when you are ready to complete and submit.

What priorities does COGS funding have?

COGS funding is for projects and services:

- that respond to a locally identified need in the community
- that are initiated by local community groups & organisations
- that work with one or more of the COGS priority sectors (i.e. Māori, women, Pacific communities, other ethnic communities, older people, the rurally isolated, people with disabilities, families, youth and children, and unemployed people), and
- where community groups and organisations have limited access to other government funding.

Each Local Distribution Committee (LDC) sets local priorities, which are determined after Public Meetings held in each local LDC area prior to the opening of the funding round.

If you are completing your application online then local priorities for that LDC are displayed at the start of Section C. If you require a hardcopy of all priorities, contact your nearest COGS Advisor at the regional office of the Local Government and Community Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs, or call toll free 0800 824 824.

Do we have to declare that we are registered for GST and give the GST number?

Yes – before commencing the application, check that your GST details are in the Registration Form. When registering, or checking your registration on Grants Online, you will be asked whether you are GST registered. If yes, you are required to declare your GST number. Declaration of this status will carry through to your application, and will determine how your grant is treated i.e. if you are registered for GST any grant payments will include 12.5% GST.

Do we include COGS grants in our GST returns?

Yes, if GST registered - the total paid amount has been based on your declared GST status. In accordance with Section 5 (6D) of the GST Act 1985, you need to be aware that, if GST registered, you must declare this grant income to Inland Revenue in your GST return.

What financial information do we supply with our application?

The annual accounts must be for the most recent financial year, which shows the current and previous years' income and expenditure.

If your organisation:

1. has audited annual accounts, as part of your constitution or compliance with legal status, then provide this in all cases; and
2. does not have audited annual accounts and you are applying for up to \$10,000 then provide your annual accounts, which have been approved by your governing body.

If you are applying for over \$10,000 you must provide audited annual accounts.

What if we don't have recent or up to date annual accounts to support our application?

Attach the most recent annual accounts you have, but if they are older than 9 months i.e. 30 September end date, then you will need to attach financial update showing year to date income and expenditure. This may be your Treasurer's report approved at your last governing body meeting. See Section E of the Application Form.

If we fill out our application online, how long do we have to submit the signed Applicant Declaration and attachments?

Once you have submitted your application online, you need to send your signed Applicant Declaration and supporting documentation to your regional office of Department of Internal Affairs, Local Government and Community Branch within 10 working days of the date you submit your application. On the last page of the application form there is an Application Checklist to assist you with attachments that must be submitted.

Please note: Failure to provide the information by the due date will almost certainly result in the Committee considering your application ineligible for this funding round.

If you need assistance, talk with your local COGS Advisor by calling toll free 0800 824 824 well before the closing date

What happens with conflict of interest of COGS Advisors or LDC Members?

The COGS Funding Scheme has policy and procedures in place to ensure where there is a conflict of interest that due process about declaration and management of any conflict of interest is followed and documented.

What happens after we apply?

The COGS Advisor will do a number of administrative checks of your application, including eligibility, your financial and legal status, and check that all appropriate supporting documentation is completed. Your application will then be submitted to the Local Distribution Committee for assessment. This assessment process is generally completed within 3 months of the closing date.

Note: Applications that are incomplete i.e. have not provided all the necessary documentation; will almost certainly be considered ineligible and the applicant will be advised accordingly.

How does the assessment process work?

The Local Distribution Committee will allocate applications to committee members for assessment. The LDC member will usually arrange to visit your group to discuss your application. The member may arrange an interview, or telephone the nominated contact person in your application. The member will complete an assessment tool during their discussions with you. This will be used at the full committee meeting - the whole LDC committee does the final assessment of applications.

Can we appeal the decision and how?

There is no appeal process. You will, however, be advised in the decision letter that if your organisation wishes to seek further clarification of the Committee's decision, then you can write to the Committee within 14 days from the date of the letter.

The committee will be able to clarify aspects as to why your application was declined e.g.:

- it is outside the funding criteria
- financial statements indicate your organisation is well resourced
- the request for funding is a duplication of services that are already being provided
- the service is not yet commenced and therefore unproven.

Can we access a list of grants approved in our area?

A list of approved grants is available in the Department of Internal Affairs website www.dia.govt.nz

If I have not provided my accountability report, will this prevent me from entering my application to Grants Online?

No – but please be aware that the agreement form that was signed by your organisation for a previous grant requires you to provide an accountability report within 12 months of the grant being approved, or within 10 days of applying for another COGS grant. A signed copy of the accountability report must be provided to your regional office of the Department of Internal Affairs. If necessary, call toll free 0800 824 824 for assistance.

Failure to provide the accountability report will mean your current application will be incomplete and therefore ineligible.

What if I have not fully expended my previous grant?

You must complete a Provisional Accountability Report to inform about unspent funds, any change of purpose or time extension requests. You must provide this within 10 days of applying for another COGS grant.

Can we access a list of other funders/gaming machine trusts?

You can access details of Lottery grants on www.cdgo.govt.nz. The registration form you have completed allows you to apply for both COGS and Lottery grants. For information on funding from gaming machine trusts please contact Pub Charities on toll free 0800 426 464. For a range of other funding options, you may like to visit the funding information website at www.fis.org.nz

How do I find out the decision for my application?

When the Local Distribution Committee (LDC) has made its decision, you will receive a letter advising of the outcome. Please allow three months from the closing of applications for a decision to be made.

How long does it take for the grant to be paid?

From when the decision is made at the Allocation Meeting it will take 20 working days to be processed and paid by direct credit to the organisations nominated bank account.

If we do get a COGS grants, how is it paid?

All grants are paid by direct credit only. When completing your application you will be asked for details about your account name, account number and the bank where the account is held. You are required to attach a bank statement which clearly shows the account name, account number and bank logo.