

Tourism Development Support Program

2025/2026

Funding Guidelines



HORSHAM
Rural City Council

What is the Tourism Development Support Program?

The Tourism Development Support Program was established to provide support to new and existing businesses and organisations wanting to expand or increase tourism offerings within the Horsham Rural City Council area.

The program supports initiatives that strengthen the Horsham region as a place to live, work and invest, by encouraging business growth, tourism development, employment creation, innovation, and community benefit.

Examples of this could be:

- New or expanding business operations
- Development of new tourism attractions, events, experiences, or products
- Accessibility and inclusion improvements
- Feasibility studies, business case development, or planning applications

Council support may include financial contributions, in kind support, advocacy, access to data and intelligence, connections to networks, and assistance with approvals or planning processes. Support is discretionary and determined on a case-by-case basis.

Program Objectives

- Support growth, innovation and new initiatives in the tourism sector
- Increase visitation and enhance the tourism offering in the Horsham region
- Support tourism businesses with improved accessibility, sustainability, and inclusivity
- Contribute to the social, economic and environmental needs of the community

Eligibility

To be eligible for support the applicant must:

- Have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or be auspiced by an incorporated organisation with an ABN
- Be starting a new tourism business or event or expanding an existing tourism business or event in the Horsham Rural City Council municipality
- Deliver projects or initiatives that demonstrate long-term benefits to the community
- Use local suppliers and contractors wherever possible
- Demonstrate environmental sustainability
- NOT be an employee of Horsham Rural City Council
- NOT apply for retrospective activities already commenced
- NOT apply for funding if the activity or initiative has received HRCC funding from another source

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed on:

- Demonstrated contribution to tourism growth
- Social, economic and environmental benefits to the Horsham region
- Use of local suppliers
- Alignment with program objectives
- Detailed description of the expected outcomes of the project
- Detailed and accurate budget information
- The group or organisations capacity to implement and report on the project

Types Of Support Available

Support may include:

- Financial assistance for tourism development initiatives
- In kind support for events and activities
- Advocacy to government agencies
- Support for training, workshops, feasibility studies, or planning applications
- Assistance with initial Council fees and charges

Financial contributions will be capped at:

\$1,000 ex GST for training and workshops

\$2,000 ex GST for Council fees and charges

\$4,000 ex GST for master planning, feasibility and business case development fees

\$10,000 ex GST for a major event

Disclosure

Funding or support provided by Council will be publicly disclosed after final negotiations, unless a written request for confidentiality is made on “Commercial-in-Confidence” grounds and approved by Council resolution.

Submitting an Application

Applications can be submitted via the Smarty Grants portal on the Horsham Rural City Council website: <https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/Our-Services/Events-arts-and-recreation/Tourism-and-Events>

If you require assistance to complete the on-line form, our Business and Tourism Team can help, please contact the Wimmera Business Centre to make an appointment by calling 53829507.

Payment and reporting back

Any financial contributions will be made upon completion of projects.

Organisations must:

- Lodge an online [Completion Report](#)
- Attach invoices or evidence of project payments
- Attach invoice from your organisation to Council requesting payment
- Attach photographs of the completed project

Document Control

These guidelines will be reviewed every 12 months or earlier if required by changing circumstances including legislation, strategies, or policies.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information, please contact the HRCC Business and Tourism Development Team

Email: business@hrcc.vic.gov.au

Phone: 5382 9507



Supporting Business Growth and Tourism Development in Horsham