



Arts & Culture Fund

APPLICANT HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

Baw Baw Shire Council wishes to acknowledge the Traditional Custodian on the lands on which we come together to live, work, play and be a community. We pay respect to the way they have cared for the lands and the waters, and we thank them for sharing their enduring culture and customs with us.



The Five Shields of Gippsland, on display in the Fountain Room at the West Gippsland Arts Centre

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Introduction

In 2024 Baw Baw Shire Council's Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (ACAC) applied for Council budget for an arts and culture grant program as a one-year trial. This program provides creatives funding to help them with their own creative projects, training or ideas. This initiative was successfully extended for a second year for 2025/2026 after positive feedback from community.

Who is a creative?

Creatives or creative practitioners

Creative practitioners as defined by Creative Australia, are people who meet one or more of the following:

- *Develop, produce, and present work in visual, performing, literary, multi-disciplinary and new media arts, screen, design, fashion, broadcasting and recording, publishing, architecture, and the heritage and collections sector*



- *Their work/projects can be commercially driven, not-for-profit and/or community based*

Creative entities

Creative organisations/businesses and collectives of any size.

Collectives

A group of people who work together on a creative project.

Professional Arts Practitioner

A professional artist who:

- has specialist training in their field (not necessarily in academic institutions)
- is recognised by their peers (professional practitioners working in the art form area)
- is committed to devoting significant time to artistic activity
- has a history of professional public presentation

Professional Arts Ensemble

A group of professional artists (e.g., musicians, singers, actors) that are recognised by their peers as a group and have a demonstrated track record of public presentations.

What are the aims of this fund?

The Arts and Cultural Fund is helping to support the work creatives do with small financial boosts. The fund will help creatives develop great work, grow their creative practice, and contribute to the local creative atmosphere – and this helps the whole community.

Baw Baw Shire Council knows that the arts make our lives fuller. Council's long-term vision for our Creative Communities Strategy 2023 – 20229 is a "*connected and cultural enriched community*" shows that they want the arts to be an important part of living life in Baw Baw Shire.

We are looking for applications that can achieve one or more of the following goals:

- Helps to grow creative projects in the community, add value to the local creative community and/or to own individual work,
- Helps to develop the local arts community,
- Gives the wider community the chance to experience and/or participate in the arts,
- Creates opportunities for creatives to work together with other local creatives, residents and local community groups on projects.

All projects will need to be achievable and realistic with the available funds and timeframes.

Your project can help us achieve important goals

This fund aims to help creatives in their work, focusing on their professional development and building on their creative work. It also achieves a key goal set out in the Baw Baw Creative Communities Strategy 2023 – 2029 to *Explore the opportunity to implement a new community arts grant scheme that supports innovative practices and programs.*

The fund will support projects which achieve one or more of the following criteria:

- Delivers creative projects or initiatives that meet goals in Baw Baw Shire's Council's Creative Communities Strategy.
[Adopted – Creative Communities Strategy \(bawbawshire.vic.gov.au\)](https://bawbawshire.vic.gov.au)
- Boosts the professional development or practice of creative practitioners and groups who reside and/or undertake their work primarily within the municipal boundary of Baw Baw Shire.
- Shows broad community benefit.
- Building on the creative industry of the area and demonstrates clear benefit to the local creative sector.

What can you apply for?

- Eligible applicants can apply for a monetary grant of up to \$2,000.
- You can only apply once in a 12-month funding year
(Round 1 & 2 make up the funding year)
- We will only accept one submission per project per funding year
- You can apply for any amount of money up to \$2,000.

Please be aware – if you are successful, you may not be given the entire amount of money you requested. The amount given is at the discretion of the decision panel.

When can you apply?

There will be two funding rounds between September 2025 and February 2026.

Round 1	 Applications open Monday 1 September 2025  Applications close 2.00pm AEST Thursday 16 October 2025	Project delivery period: All successful projects from <u>Round 1</u> must be completed by <u>29 May 2026</u> 
Round 2	 Applications open Monday 5 January 2026  Applications close 2.00pm AEST Thursday 12 February 2026	Project delivery period: All successful projects from <u>Round 2</u> must be completed by <u>25 September 2026</u> 



Eligibility

Who can apply?

- Residents of Baw Baw Shire or creative practitioners with a creative practice primarily located in Baw Baw Shire.
- Organisations and community groups partnering with local creative/s to develop a creative project which will boost the creative practitioners' work and have broad community benefit.
- Projects which are located and delivered in Baw Baw Shire.
- Residents looking to build their professional development in the creative industries.
- The fund strongly encourages applicants from the creative industries serving youth and/or the First Nations community.
- Applicants under 18 years of age can apply but must have proof of consent from a parent/guardian. We will need to confirm in person with a parent/guardian should you be successful.

Who cannot apply?

- For-profit applicants whose primary business is not within the creative industries.
 - Community groups, organisations or clubs that host or promote.



Gambling



Tobacco/vaping



Mining industries.



Alcohol

- Community groups, organisations or clubs that currently receive funding from Baw Baw Shire Council or have an outstanding debt with Baw Baw Shire Council.
- Government departments, agencies, authorities; and organisations.
- Individuals or organisations who are employing a creative practitioner mainly for their own profit-making activities.
- Baw Baw Shire Council staff.

What will not be funded?

- Items that are part of an organisation's core business or normal operating expenses, e.g., insurance, utilities, rental, staff salaries or the payment of debts or loans.
- Projects or items that have already been purchased, started or have been completed.
- Purchase of land or building.
- Projects where the focus is to advocate any one religion or faith.
- Projects that promote racism, sexism, violence / aggression or homophobia.
- Projects that promote politics or a political party.
- Alcohol, fireworks or firearms.
- Projects that duplicate existing services and programs.
- Prize or competition fees.
- Baw Baw Shire Council owned or run activities, projects, programs and events.
- Projects that create capital improvement for privately owned or rented properties.
- Projects where the creative practitioner/s or community are not the primary beneficiaries.
- Any project not considered a creative pursuit in accordance with the definition in this guide.





What can be funded?

- Events, projects, programs, initiatives, materials and equipment purchases that align with Baw Baw Shire Council's Creative Communities Strategy.
- Costs to develop or deliver a creative project or work: such as venue hire, artist fees, travel, etc.
- Materials, printing, advertising, translations, developing accessible and inclusive supporting materials, promotion, travel expenses and freight costs directly associated with the proposed project.
- Study and professional development, which can clearly show how it will improve the work of the Baw Baw Shire based creative practitioner/s.
- Delivery of free or low-cost community workshops, events, performances, talks, lectures, seminars etc. which are directly related to the creative industries.

What you need to be eligible:

- Have public liability insurance with a minimum \$20 million cover or supported by an auspice organisation with the same cover for projects that will be out in the public.
- Must comply with the Victorian Child Safe Standards.
- Have no outstanding debts at Baw Baw Shire Council.
- Have no outstanding project grant acquittals with Baw Baw Shire Council.
- If you are under 18 years of age, you will need to have signed approval from a parent/guardian
- Applications must be received on time; late applications will not be eligible.

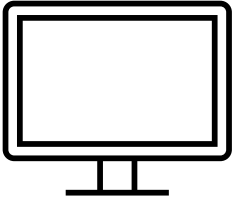


Assessment

There are 5 criteria we will use to evaluate your application. We have added some advice on how to best address each of these in your application.

Criteria	Advice on how to address each criterion in your application
How well does the proposal align with the Creative Communities Strategy?	Read the Creative Communities Strategy 2023 – 2029 and tell us how your proposal addresses any of the key initiatives. You can view the strategy here: Adopted – Creative Communities Strategy (bawbawshire.vic.gov.au)
How does the proposal meet the Funding Aims	Read the 'Aims' at the start of this guide and tell us how your proposal achieves one or more of those points.
Planning and management	Tell us how you are going to make your project happen. Some great things to add are timelines, showing the tasks, you need to complete to make it happen and how long they will take. Have a clear idea of your project and explain it so that anyone will understand what it is. Make sure it is not too ambitious; you must show us that you can realistically make it happen.
Evaluation Approach	Tell us how you will know if your project was a success? Is it based on audience/attendance numbers? Positive feedback? A completed work? Learning a new skill? Or something else? Tell us what your successful project will look like. Lastly, let us know how you will acknowledge Baw Baw Shire in your project, keeping in mind that any marketing material will need to show that the project is supported by Baw Baw Shire.
Budget	How much will your project cost? Will the amount you are asking us for cover all costs or will you be getting more money elsewhere? Have you got reliable quotes? Do you have a realistic idea of your costs? Does your money coming in and going out balance? Will you be contributing money or in-kind?

Application Process



An **online live session** will be held for all potential applicants to attend. The session will be run by the Coordinator Arts & Culture who will answer any questions about the grant and application process. This will happen two weeks before applications close.

Only one online session will be available per funding round.

** We strongly recommend you attend the session as it will help you with your application.*

The **application form** will be available to complete via Smarty Grants. You can find the link on Baw Baw Shire website – [Arts and Culture Fund \(bawbawshire.vic.gov.au\)](https://bawbawshire.vic.gov.au)

Applications must be in by the cutoff date and time. **Late applications will not be accepted.**



We encourage any supporting documents, such as.

- Letters of support
- CV's
- Video and audio materials
- Images
- Examples of previous projects
- Any quotes you have for the project

Please note, there will be limits on the quantity of supporting materials accepted.

Acquittal

All successful recipients must acquit their grant 30 days after the completion of their project.

The acquittal will be made up of a short survey and report. Recipients can choose to submit their acquittal report in the following formats.



- As a written report
- A live in person presentation to the ACAC at a meeting.
- Send in a video presentation

If an acquittal is not returned in the agreed upon period, the recipient may be required to return the funds back to Baw Baw Shire Council.

Terms & Conditions

1. Unspent monies:

- a. Any unspent money over \$100 must be returned to Baw Baw Shire Council within 90 days of the completed project.
- b. Recipients must make the Coordinator Arts & Culture aware of the unspent monies as soon as possible.
- c. Recipients who need to return unspent monies will have 90 days; the process will involve Baw Baw Shire providing the Recipient with an invoice for payment.

2. Changes in the project scope: Any changes made to the project after it has been awarded a grant must be submitted to the Coordinator Arts & Culture in writing. This advice of changes must include the reasons for change and how the project still aligns with eligibility criteria of the fund. These changes must be approved by the Manager Arts & Culture before the Recipient can continue with their project.

- a. If the changes are not approved the Recipient will have the option to either:
 - Amend their project to fit within the eligibility parameters (if applicable), or,
 - Return the funds to Baw Baw Shire Council and continue without the fund's assistance.

3. Grant Evaluation and Feedback

All applicants will be requested to complete a short survey on the grant and the application process. *This feedback will help to improve the process and funds in the future.* Grant Recipients must complete the survey as a part of their acquittal process.

4. Media and Image Release

All Recipients will be asked to allow Baw Baw Shire to use their name and project for media and publicity purposes. Media release forms will be included as a part of funding acceptance paperwork. Recipients will not be forced to partake in media opportunities but will need to be available to discuss outcomes with Baw Baw Shire staff and allow for their work/ project to be presented to the Executive team and Council.

5. Disputes

Any disputes regarding the Grant and its outcomes need to be sent in writing to the Coordinator Arts & Culture. All disputes will be taken seriously and responded to.

Baw Baw Shire Council has zero tolerance towards any harm, abuse or threats directed towards our staff, Councillors, or other customers. Disputes or communications which exhibit unreasonable conduct will be dealt with in line with councils Complaints Handling Policy which can be found at - [A-Z Policies and Documents \(bawbawshire.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au)

Glossary of definitions

ACAC

An acronym for Baw Baw Shire Council's Arts & Culture Advisory Committee.

Acquittal

Acquitting a grant entails accurately reporting on the funded activities and associated expenditure of the grant funds received. Acquittal is required to ensure the obligations of both the recipient and grant provider have been met. It is a formal condition of funding.

Applicant

Person/s who have applied for or are applying for the grant.

CALD

An acronym that covers people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, including but not limited to people born overseas, people with one or both parents born overseas and people who speak a language other than English at home.

Collectives

An ensemble or group of professional creatives who work together.

Creatives or creative practitioners

People who:

- develop, produce, and present work in visual, performing, literary, multi-disciplinary and new media arts, screen, design, fashion, broadcasting and recording, publishing, architecture, and the heritage and collections sector
- work in contexts that are commercially driven, not-for-profit and/or community based

Creative entities

Creative organisations/businesses and collectives of any size.

Deaf and Disabled people

A lived experience of disability can be visible or invisible, including physical, sensory, cognitive, intellectual, developmental, mental illness and/or neurodiversity.

We recognise and support the right of the Deaf community to label their experience as one of cultural and linguistic differences. We recognise the diversity within the Deaf and Disabled communities and that the terminology and language used is evolving.

First Peoples

Traditional Custodians of Australia and all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who reside here.

Legally Constituted Organisation

An organisation/business that has been created by law (for example, university or government statutory authority) or registered under law (for example, incorporated association, company limited by guarantee, Pty Ltd company or Aboriginal Corporation).

Micro to small creative organisations/businesses and collectives

Micro to small organisations/businesses and collectives that do not have more than 10 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.

Non-creative personnel/projects

Includes people working in a non-creative capacity, such as administration, marketing and promotional projects, business or operational roles or providing production/technical support.

Professional Arts Ensemble

A group of professional artists (e.g., musicians, singers, actors) that are recognised by their peers as a group and have a demonstrated track record of public presentations.

Professional Arts Practitioner

A professional artist who:

- has specialist training in their field (not necessarily in academic institutions)
- is recognised by their peers (professional practitioners working in the art form area)
- is committed to devoting significant time to artistic activity
- has a history of professional public presentation

Recipient

The person/s who are successfully awarded a grant.

