



Managing grant funding

In most instances, grant bodies require their funding to be held and managed by an incorporated association. The Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance (Inc) can do this for local Sustainable Neighbourhood Groups.

The Alliance as an auspicing or sponsoring organisation

Most funding bodies (eg government, corporate or other grants) require your grant project to have an auspicing or sponsoring organisation that is an incorporated body. The Alliance is set up to be this incorporated body for local Sustainable Neighbourhood groups.

When acting as the auspicing organisation, the Alliance is ultimately responsible for managing the grant, and ensuring:

- the funds are only spent on approved activities, as detailed in the funding agreement / application;
- ongoing monitoring of the project to ensure adherence to grant guidelines;
- the project is completed, and grant funds are spent by the grant due date; and
- once completed, a final report, including budget breakdown is submitted to the funding body.

For this reason, the Alliance Board will need to review and approve your grant application prior to it being submitted. At least 3 weeks notice is preferred.

Top tips to win grant funding

- Plan in advance. Develop your project concept, possible activities, and funding requirements well in advance; before you even see a suitable grant opportunity.
- Seek support and approvals from relevant organisations and partners well in advance. Include a letter of support with your application if relevant.
- Tailor your application. Ensure your grant application fits with the funding agency's aims, and addresses the grant's criteria.
- Be clear and concise about what you will actually spend the money on.
- Highlight the impacts of your project. How will your project change people's lives, change behaviour, or result in a healthier Lake Macquarie environment?

Applying for a grant

Please take the following steps if your local Sustainable Neighbourhood group is considering applying for grant funding.

1. Notify the Alliance

Notify the Alliance of your project idea and the grant details as soon as possible. A simple email or phone call to admin@sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au or 4921 0117 will suffice. The Alliance will be able to provide advice to help make your grant successful, and to ensure the relevant permissions and criteria are addressed.

2. Consider eligibility and grant criteria

Carefully read the grant guidelines, and ensure your group and project are eligible. Consider the grant criteria, and design your project to fulfil the grant body's requirements.

3. Seek relevant support and permissions

Depending on the nature of your project, you may be required to include written permission for your project with your grant application. It can also be helpful to seek written support from project partners or relevant organisations to demonstrate that your project has been well considered, and has broader support for implementation.

4. Complete your grant application

Complete all parts of the grant application. Please let the Alliance know if you want some help with it. Try to be clear, concise, and describe what you are going to do, and what the benefits will be.

5. Alliance Board review and approval

Submit your draft grant application to the Alliance Board for their review and approval. At least 3 weeks notice is preferred.

The Alliance Board will provide advice where required, and notification of approval or otherwise.

6. Submit grant application

Grant applications will usually require signatures from representatives of your local group, and the Alliance Board. Once approved, the Alliance Secretariat can manage the collection of Alliance Board signatures if required. The Alliance will submit the application to the funding body, and provide copies of all the final documentation to the local Sustainable Neighbourhood group and Alliance Board.

Successful grants

There is often a 1-3 month waiting period to hear whether grant applications are successful or not.

The Alliance will notify local groups of the outcome of their grant application. If successful, there is usually a requirement for:

- a formal grant agreement to be signed between the Alliance and the funding body; and
- the Alliance to generate an invoice for payment.

Once this is completed, the funds may take up to a month to be paid into the Alliance's bank account.

Spending grant funds

There are 2 ways the Alliance can manage grant funding.

- **Invoice**

Some retailers, suppliers, or service providers may be happy to give you an invoice. If so, you can email the invoice to the Alliance, and the Alliance will make the payment directly to the supplier.

- **Reimbursement**

In many cases, grant funds are used for small retail purchases where the retailer or supplier will require an up-front payment. In these cases, ensure you receive an official receipt. The amount can then be reimbursed to you from the grant funds.

Please send the following information with your request for reimbursement:

	Description	Example
Amount	How much needs to be reimbursed?	\$150.00
What for?	What was the payment for? Please ensure this is consistent with your grant agreement.	Printing for 300 booklets
Bank account details to transfer funds to, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account name • Bank (eg Newc Perm / CBA etc) • BSB number • Account number 	Who needs to receive the reimbursement? Please include:	John Smith Newcastle Permanent BSB: 650 000 Account number: 1234 56789
Grant project	What grant should the money be coming from?	Grant from Council, 'Making everything better project'.
Also include copies of relevant receipt(s)		

Please send invoices or requests for reimbursement to the Alliance via admin@sustainableighbourhoods.org.au. The Alliance Treasurer will endeavour to process all requests within 7 working days.

In all cases, you must ensure that any money spent or promised must be consistent with your project's grant funding agreement and guidelines.

If you need to vary your project from the original grant application, please let the Alliance know. The Alliance will need to seek permission from the funding body to vary the project activities, scope, budget or schedule.

Other funding sources

Some groups may have funds held in the Alliance's bank account from sources other than grants. For example it may have come from volunteering for the Bicycle Network's bike counts, or some other fundraising effort or donation. These funds often do not have the same reporting or transparency requirements attached to them, and can be spent at the local group's discretion.

In these cases, the whole amount can be transferred to the local group's bank account on request.