



**Tasmanian
Community
Fund**



Capability Building Grant
Guidelines 2026–27

About Capability Building Grants

TCF's goal is connected, resilient and thriving Tasmanian communities.

Communities are better able to shape their future when people can participate, local leadership is strong, organisations and communities work well together, and useful knowledge and relationships remain over time.

Capability Building Grants invest in these foundations. They support people, community organisations and communities to strengthen the leadership, skills, relationships and ways of working they need to take action and create lasting community benefit.

Capability is about what people, organisations and communities are better able to do - not simply what training they attend or what plan, system or resource they produce.

Through these grants, TCF wants to contribute to:

- **connected communities** with strong relationships, participation and collaboration;
- **resilient communities** with the leadership, knowledge and adaptability to respond to change; and
- **thriving communities** able to create opportunities, influence decisions and take sustained action.

This reflects TCF's theory of change: investing in participation, leadership, capability, relationships, community agency and adaptability helps communities respond, work together and shape their future.

Is Capability Building the right funding pathway for you?

Capability Building Grants are for initiatives where developing and applying capability for community benefit is the main purpose. This may include strengthening the capability of people, community organisations or groups of organisations working together.

A practical community project that is ready to deliver may be better suited to **Community Action Grants**.

A larger, longer-term initiative addressing a significant community challenge or opportunity may be better suited to **Major Initiative Grants**. Reasonable capability costs needed to deliver those projects can be included within those applications.

Capability Building Grants do not fund an organisation's routine responsibility for its own governance, strategy, workforce, financial management, compliance, technology or business processes.

Contact TCF before applying if you are unsure which funding pathway is the best fit.

Key dates

Applications open:	30 October 2026
Applications close:	8 February 2027
Funding decisions:	Applicants will be notified of the outcome in April 2027
Projects can commence:	Only once a TCF funding agreement has been signed.

Funding categories

There are two Capability Building Grant categories.

	Community Skills and Leadership	Shared Capability
Funding amount	\$5,000 to \$50,000	Up to \$250,000
Duration	Up to 12 months	Up to 2 years
Main Purpose	Help people and community organisations build and apply skills, knowledge and leadership for community benefit.	Help multiple organisations or communities build and apply shared capability, such as a way of working, network, model or resource.
Main outcome	People and community organisations are better able to lead, participate or take community action.	Organisations or communities are better able to work and act together

Applications are competitive. Meeting the eligibility requirements does not guarantee funding.

TCF may approve fewer grants than anticipated or leave funding unallocated if applications do not demonstrate sufficiently strong community capability and benefit.

Which category should I choose?

Choose **Community Skills and Leadership** when the main result will be people or a community organisation developing and applying skills, knowledge, confidence or leadership for community benefit.

Choose **Shared Capability** when the main result will be multiple organisations or communities developing and using shared capability together for community benefit, such as a shared approach, network, model, resource or support arrangement.

An initiative is not Shared Capability simply because participants come from several organisations. The organisations or communities must be developing and using shared capability together.

Organisational capability development

TCF recognises that community organisations sometimes need to strengthen their own capability to better support and respond to their communities.

Funding may be available for time-limited initiatives that address an identified capability gap and enable an organisation to work differently or more effectively for community benefit. This could include developing community leadership, strengthening volunteer participation, improving community engagement or building the skills and practices needed to achieve better community outcomes.

The application must demonstrate what new or strengthened capability will result, how it will be applied, and the difference it is expected to make for the community.

TCF will not fund routine organisational responsibilities, including ongoing administration, compliance, general business improvements, or activities that would ordinarily form part of an organisation's normal operations.

The key distinction is whether the initiative develops meaningful capability for community benefit, rather than simply supporting the organisation to undertake its existing responsibilities.

Community Skills and Leadership

These grants help people and community organisations build and apply skills, knowledge, confidence or leadership for community benefit.

Participants might include volunteers, community leaders, board or committee members, people with lived experience, emerging leaders or people working with community organisations. They may come from one community or several organisations.

The defining question is:

What will people or the organisation be better able to do for their community as a result?

Examples could include initiatives that help people or the organisation:

- lead projects or turn community ideas into action;
- take on volunteer, committee or community leadership roles;
- use lived experience to influence community decisions;
- recruit, support and retain volunteers;
- strengthen governance, succession or volunteer leadership where this is needed to sustain an organisation's community role;
- apply engagement, facilitation or evaluation skills;
- involve community members or people with lived experience in organisational leadership and decision-making;
- measure and improve the community impact of their work; or
- work with others to respond to a shared local issue.

A funded initiative may involve an organisation's own staff, volunteers, board or committee where there is a clear capability need **and** the initiative will strengthen its ability to create community benefit. TCF will not fund routine professional development, compliance training or normal governance and workforce responsibilities.

Participants should help shape the initiative and have opportunities to apply what they learn during the funded period.

A one-off workshop or conference will not normally be sufficient.

Shared Capability Grants

These grants help multiple organisations or communities develop and use shared capability that they could not create effectively by acting alone.

Shared capability might be a way of working, network, model, resource, support arrangement or approach that is jointly developed and used.

The defining question is:

What will organisations or communities be better able to do together as a result?

Examples could include initiatives that help organisations or communities:

- create a community of practice that tests approaches, shares knowledge and improves practice;
- establish a shared approach to measuring and improving community impact;
- develop and test a shared approach to recruiting, training and supporting volunteers across a small group of organisations in one community or across a region;
- develop a train-the-trainer model that makes specialist capability available across Tasmania;
- build a network through which organisations share expertise or resources;
- develop and apply a shared approach to community engagement or decision-making; or
- strengthen the relationships and coordination needed to act on a shared community issue.

The initiative must respond to an identified shared need or opportunity and involve the organisations or communities that will use the resulting capability.

Applicants must demonstrate:

- **Shared purpose:** Why working together is needed and what the organisations or communities want to achieve.
- **Meaningful involvement:** How intended users and partners have helped shape the initiative and will participate in its development.
- **Shared decision-making:** How participating organisations or communities will influence decisions about the development and use of the capability.
- **Access and application:** How the resulting capability will be accessible to and used by participating organisations or communities.
- **Lasting benefit:** How the capability, relationships or ways of working are expected to continue or be applied after TCF funding ends.

Shared capability does not require all partners to contribute equally or have identical roles. However, their involvement must be meaningful and the benefits must extend beyond the lead organisation.

Simply bringing organisations together for training, consultation or networking does not, by itself, demonstrate shared capability.

TCF will not fund systems, plans or resources developed primarily for the lead organisation's own use.

If the main purpose is to deliver a collaborative response to a community issue, consider a **Major Initiative Grant**. If the main purpose is to develop capability that

organisations or communities will use together, consider a **Shared Capability Grant**.

Who can apply?

Capability Building Grants are open to:

- incorporated not-for-profit organisations;
- not-for-profit companies registered under company law;
- Tasmanian local government authorities, subject to the restrictions below;
- eligible school associations applying in their own name; and
- unincorporated groups applying through an eligible sponsoring organisation.

Applicants must:

- be based in Tasmania or propose an initiative that primarily benefits Tasmanian communities;
- be able to enter into and meet the obligations of a TCF funding agreement; and
- have met all obligations for previous TCF grants.

Collaborative applications

Shared Capability applications must nominate one eligible organisation as the lead applicant.

The lead applicant will enter into the funding agreement and take legal and financial responsibility for the grant.

The application must explain:

- who is involved;
- why a shared response is needed;
- the role of each major partner;
- how decisions will be made; and
- how the shared capability will be accessed and sustained.

Letters of support alone will not demonstrate genuine collaboration. Applications should provide evidence that intended partners or users have contributed to shaping the initiative and have a meaningful role in developing, applying or using the shared capability.

Applications from councils

Tasmanian councils may apply where the initiative creates additional community capability and is not part of the council's ordinary responsibilities.

Council-led initiatives must demonstrate meaningful community involvement and benefits extending beyond council staff or internal council operations.

TCF will not fund council workforce development, internal systems, routine community engagement obligations or ordinary council service delivery.

Applications from unincorporated groups

Unincorporated groups may apply through an eligible sponsoring organisation, also called an auspice organisation.

The sponsoring organisation will take legal and financial responsibility for the grant.

The sponsoring organisation should have a genuine connection to the initiative's purpose or intended outcomes rather than acting only as an administrative sponsor.

Applications from school associations

An eligible school association may apply in its own name where it is legally constituted and able to enter into and meet the obligations of a TCF funding agreement.

The school association must be the applicant and proposed grant recipient. The application must be authorised in accordance with the association's governance arrangements.

Initiatives must create broader community capability and must not primarily fund:

- school staff professional development;
- curriculum delivery;
- routine education activities;
- internal school governance or administration; or
- costs ordinarily the responsibility of a school, education authority or government agency.

TCF may request evidence of the association's legal status, authority to apply, decision-making arrangements and approval to undertake the proposed initiative.

Who cannot apply?

The following are not eligible:

- Australian Government agencies;
- Tasmanian Government agencies;
- schools and colleges, whether government or non-government, except where an eligible school association applies in its own name;
- individuals and sole traders;
- political parties;
- for-profit organisations and businesses; and
- organisations that have not met their obligations under an existing TCF funding agreement.

Individuals may participate in a funded initiative but cannot apply for or personally receive a grant.

What can be funded?

TCF can fund reasonable costs required to develop, apply and retain eligible community capability, including:

- project staff directly delivering the initiative;
- facilitators, mentors, coaches and specialist advisers;
- participant engagement and co-design;
- peer learning and mentoring;
- governance, succession or volunteer leadership development where it forms part of an eligible capability-building initiative;
- workshops that form part of a broader applied initiative;
- coordination of a cohort, network or collaboration;
- testing and applying new ways of working;
- development of shared resources;
- evaluation and learning;
- venue hire and transport;
- accessibility and participation costs;
- reasonable volunteer expenses;
- minor equipment or technology needed for participation; and
- reasonable administration and overhead costs.

All costs must be connected to the funded initiative and proportionate to the expected community benefit.

Capability must be developed and applied

Capability Building Grants are intended to create meaningful changes in what people, organisations or communities are able to do.

Applicants must explain:

- **What capability will be developed or strengthened**, such as leadership, skills, knowledge, relationships or ways of working.
- **How the capability will be applied** during the funded initiative, rather than simply acquired through training or other activities.
- **What will be different as a result**, including how the strengthened capability is expected to benefit communities.
- **What is likely to remain** after funding ends, and how the capability will continue to be used or shared.

A one-off workshop, training activity or the development of a plan or resource will not normally be sufficient unless there is a clear opportunity to apply the capability for community benefit.

TCF recognises that capability development takes time and outcomes may emerge or evolve as an initiative progresses.

Consultants and advisers

Consultants or specialist advisers may be funded where their expertise is necessary. The applicant must remain actively involved and explain how knowledge will be transferred and applied.

TCF will not fund a consultant primarily to produce a plan, review, framework, system or resource without implementation and capability transfer.

What we generally won't fund

TCF will generally not fund:

- routine governance, compliance or statutory responsibilities;
- ordinary staff professional development;
- normal administration, business systems or organisational operating costs;
- consultant-led plans, reviews, frameworks or systems without implementation and capability transfer;
- one-off conferences, workshops or training with no clear opportunity to apply the learning; or
- activities or costs already funded through another TCF grant.

The key distinction is whether the proposal is addressing routine organisational responsibilities or creating a meaningful new capability that will be applied for community benefit.

Staff costs

Staff costs may be funded where they are directly related to delivering the initiative.

This may include new project staff, additional hours or a clearly identified portion of an existing employee's time specifically allocated to the initiative.

TCF will not fund staffing costs that would be incurred regardless of whether the initiative proceeds.

These costs must be reasonable, proportionate and clearly explained in the budget.

Administration and overheads

Reasonable administration and overhead costs may be included where they support delivery of the initiative or administration of the grant. This may include a proportionate contribution to finance, payroll, insurance, IT, human resources and general administration.

Costs must be clearly explained and reasonable for the initiative's size and complexity. Staff directly delivering or managing the initiative should be included as project staff rather than overheads.

TCF will not fund general operating costs unrelated to the funded initiative.

Do you need to contribute money?

There is no mandatory cash co-contribution.

Applicants may include contributions from their organisation, participants, community or partners where available. Contributions could include:

- cash;
- staff or volunteer time;
- donated expertise;
- use of facilities or equipment;
- partner contributions; or
- access to existing networks and resources.

These contributions can help demonstrate shared commitment. Applicants will not be disadvantaged simply because they cannot provide a cash contribution.

TCF will consider the overall value of the initiative and the community capability and benefit it is expected to create.

Community involvement and evidence of need

Tell us how you know the proposed capability is needed and how intended participants, users or communities have helped shape the initiative.

Evidence may include:

- conversations with intended participants;
- local and community knowledge;
- participant feedback;
- requests received by the applicant;
- community meetings;
- previous program learning;
- participation, workforce or volunteering information;
- information from partners;
- surveys or consultation; or
- relevant research.

Formal research is not required simply to apply for a grant.

Local and community knowledge is valuable evidence. Shared Capability applications will be expected to provide stronger evidence of demand because of their scale and level of funding.

Community involvement could include people:

- identifying the capability need;
- helping design the approach;
- contributing knowledge or experience;
- participating in decisions;
- testing activities or resources;
- helping determine whether the initiative is working.

Community involvement should be meaningful. It should not be limited to asking people to endorse an initiative that has already been designed.

Evidence of support

Community Skills and Leadership applicants do not need formal letters of support unless the initiative depends on another organisation or sponsoring body.

Shared Capability applicants should provide appropriate evidence that intended users and major partners support the initiative.

This could include emails, meeting records, evidence of joint planning or confirmation of agreed roles.

Generic letters of support will not automatically make an application stronger.

How to apply

Applications are to be completed online through **SmartyGrants**. Links to the application form are available on the TCF website at **tascomfund.org**.

You do not need to be a grant writer. Write in your own words. We want to understand the need, who is involved, what you propose to do and what will be different as a result.

Applications will not be assessed on grammar, writing style or how professionally they are presented.

Community Skills and Leadership Grant applications

The Community Skills and Leadership application is designed to be short.

We will mainly ask:

1. What leadership, skill or capability need are you responding to?
2. Who will participate, and how do you know the initiative is needed?
3. What do you propose to do?
4. How will participants apply what they learn?
5. What will participants or organisations be better able to do as a result of the initiative, how will this make a difference for the community, and what capability is likely to remain after funding ends?
6. Who will deliver the initiative, and what will it cost?

We may also ask about important risks, accessibility and how you will know whether the initiative worked.

Shared Capability Grant applications

Shared Capability applicants will provide the same core information, with more detail about:

- why a shared response is needed;
- which organisations or communities will use the capability;
- evidence of demand;
- partners and their roles;
- governance and decision-making;

- how participating organisations or communities will apply and continue to use the shared capability developed through the initiative;
- how capability will be maintained after the grant;
- key risks; and
- a detailed budget.

The amount of information requested will be proportionate to the size, complexity and risk of the initiative.

Can I submit more than one application?

An organisation may submit:

- one Community Skills and Leadership application as the lead applicant; and
- one Shared Capability application as the lead applicant.

An organisation may participate as a genuine partner in other applications.

TCF may consider the total amount of funding sought by, or flowing to, one organisation when making portfolio decisions.

Can I apply if I already have a TCF-funded project?

Yes.

The organisation must be meeting its obligations under existing TCF funding agreements.

The proposed initiative must be distinct and must not seek funding for costs or activities already funded through another TCF grant.

Capability costs needed to deliver an existing TCF-funded project will not normally be funded separately where they should reasonably have formed part of that project's budget.

Preparing your budget

The budget should clearly show:

- the full cost of the initiative;
- what TCF funding will pay for;
- the basis of significant costs;
- other funding or contributions where relevant.

Budgets should include realistic costs and reasonable full costs for delivering the initiative.

TCF may request quotes or further information for significant expenditure.

Shared Capability applicants should also identify:

- expenditure managed by the lead applicant;
 - contributions from partners;
 - payments to partner organisations;
 - staff and specialist costs;
 - administration and overheads; and
 - any ongoing costs associated with the shared capability.
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Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Capability Building Grant limits are exclusive of GST.

Enter the amount requested from TCF and all budget amounts excluding GST, regardless of the grant recipient's GST registration status.

Where the grant is subject to GST, TCF will pay GST in addition to the approved grant amount in accordance with the funding agreement.

Where an applicant uses a sponsoring organisation, GST treatment will be based on the sponsoring organisation's GST status.

How applications are assessed

Capability Building Grants are competitive. Applications will be assessed against five weighted criteria:

1. **Need and community benefit (25%)**
Is there a clear capability need or opportunity, why does it matter, and how will addressing it contribute to more connected, resilient or thriving communities?
2. **Community involvement and approach (25%)**
Have intended participants or users helped shape the initiative, and is the proposed approach practical, inclusive and suited to the capability being developed?
3. **Capability development and lasting benefit (25%)**
Is the initiative likely to develop or strengthen meaningful leadership, skills, knowledge, relationships, organisational or shared capability? Is there a

clear approach to applying that capability for community benefit, and are useful capabilities or ways of working likely to remain after funding ends?

4. **Ability to deliver** (15%)

Is there reasonable confidence that the applicant and any partners can deliver the initiative and manage the important risks?

5. **Value for money** (10%)

Are the proposed costs reasonable and proportionate to the capability and community benefit expected, and does the initiative represent an appropriate use of TCF funding?

Assessment will be proportionate to the amount requested, the initiative's complexity and its risk.

Shared Capability applications will be expected to provide stronger evidence of demand, collaboration, governance and shared benefit.

Local context

TCF recognises that capability needs and delivery approaches will differ across Tasmania.

Assessment will consider:

- population and geographic scale;
- regional, rural and island circumstances;
- travel and participation costs;
- digital access;
- availability of facilitators, services and specialist support;
- workforce and volunteer capacity;
- existing relationships and networks;
- cultural safety and accessibility.

A smaller population does not automatically mean an initiative will create less community benefit.

What happens after you apply?

TCF staff will check that the applicant and initiative are eligible and that there is enough information to assess the application.

Staff may contact applicants if minor information is unclear or missing.

Eligible applications will be assessed against these guidelines. TCF may use an independent assessment panel to assess applications and make funding recommendations.

Applications will be assessed through a documented process, with appropriate arrangements to identify and manage conflicts of interest and support fair and consistent assessment.

The TCF Board makes the final funding decisions.

The Board may also consider the overall mix of initiatives, including available funding, geographic and community reach, duplication, risk and balance across TCF's funding portfolio.

A strong application may not be funded where demand exceeds the funding available.

TCF may:

- approve the amount requested;
- offer a different amount;
- approve funding subject to conditions; or
- decline the application.

Where TCF offers less than the amount requested, it will discuss any necessary changes to the initiative, outcomes, budget or timeframe before entering into a funding agreement.

If your application is successful:

Successful applicants must enter into a funding agreement with TCF before the initiative starts.

The agreement will set out:

- the approved purpose and outcomes;
- the budget;
- the initiative's timeframe;
- payment arrangements;
- reporting requirements; and
- any special conditions.

Successful applicants must enter into the agreement within three months of being notified, unless TCF approves an extension.

Recipients must:

- use the grant for the approved purpose;

- keep appropriate financial and project records;
- tell TCF about significant changes;
- obtain approval before making significant changes to the purpose, budget or timeframe; and
- complete the required reporting.

Public information about successful applications

TCF publishes information about the grants it awards.

This may include the recipient's name, initiative title, a short description, location or geographic reach, amount awarded and duration.

Reporting

Reporting will be proportionate to the amount, duration and risk of the grant.

All recipients will report on:

- what was delivered and who participated;
- what changed in people's or organisations' leadership, skills, capability, relationships or ways of working;
- how the capability was applied;
- what difference this made for communities;
- what capability, practices or relationships remain;
- what was learned; and
- how the grant was spent.

Participation numbers, attendance and satisfaction may be included, but they will not be sufficient evidence of capability outcomes by themselves.

Shared Capability recipients may also be asked about partner involvement, use across organisations or communities, shared governance and how the capability will be sustained.

Recipients must be able to demonstrate how TCF funding was spent. TCF may request financial records or other evidence as part of reporting, acquittal or audit processes.

Unspent grant funds must be returned to TCF unless TCF agrees otherwise in writing.

If your application is unsuccessful

TCF will advise you of the outcome.

Applicants may contact TCF for feedback. TCF will aim to provide useful feedback, recognising that the program is competitive and not every eligible or strong application can be funded.

Need help?

We encourage you to contact TCF before applying if you are unsure:

- whether your organisation is eligible;
- whether Capability Building is the correct funding pathway;
- which funding category is the best fit;
- whether an activity or cost is eligible; or
- what information you need to provide.

Tasmanian Community Fund

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