



**Tasmanian
Community
Fund**

Major Initiative Grant Guidelines 2026–27

Stage 1: Expression of Interest

HOPES

new connections
learn something new
learn about other people
in our community
clarity about the psychology
creating a reducing
and/or course
learning about how to
better support others
connection with others
in this group + beyond
for my project
grow as a person
open tools... growth to
contribute to community

UNCERTAINTIES

Being vulnerable
what changes...
I don't know what will
be...
letting in support
my capacity to retain info
Being able to be my best
How do I take this forward
where do I fit in?
How to connect so much
info in interesting way
Can I do it on my own?
- will others help me?
That I will have my
dice game (project)
finished

5 FACTORS of Success

Trust

motivation
self belief
trust
following our
passion +
intrinsic self
found our passion
leap of faith
trust yourself
Love & teamwork
therapy

Bravery

open to opportunities
being adaptable
discomfort
openness to learn
+ grow
curiosity
creativity
communication

Support

support network
family support
+ networks
support from
others around
Love
communication

Commitment

being there
perseverance
passion
dedication

Matching

Positive Emotions

walk on beach
sing mindfulness
appreciation
love
yoga
laugh
crawling
creativity nature
feel the
feels

Meaning

full moons
helping others
spontaneous
get out
art
journal be
self
discovery

About Major Initiative Grants

Major Initiative Grants support larger, longer-term initiatives that bring communities and organisations together to respond to significant community challenges or opportunities.

They are intended for work that needs sustained effort, strong collaboration and meaningful community involvement, and where the benefits are expected to extend beyond the life of the grant.

Major Initiative Grants are not simply larger Community Action Grants. They are intended for initiatives where the scale or complexity of the challenge or opportunity requires organisations, communities or sectors to work together over time.

Is a Major Initiative Grant the right funding pathway for you?

A Major Initiative Grant may be suitable where:

- there is a significant community challenge or opportunity that requires sustained action
- the initiative involves meaningful collaboration between organisations, communities or sectors
- the community affected by the initiative has a meaningful role in shaping or supporting the work
- the proposed approach is developed enough to explain what you want to achieve and how you plan to do it
- the initiative has the potential to create lasting community benefit.

Smaller, more focused projects that can be delivered by a single organisation may be better suited to **Community Action Grants**.

Projects primarily focused on strengthening organisational systems, governance, leadership or sector capability may be better suited to **Capability Building Grants**.

If you are unsure which funding pathway is right for your initiative, we strongly encourage you to contact TCF before submitting an Expression of Interest.

Key dates

Expressions of Interest open:	14 September 2026
Expressions of Interest close:	15 November 2026
Applicants notified of Stage 1 outcome:	early 2027
Stage 2 applications due:	Invited applicants will be advised of Stage 2 timeframe and requirements in early 2027
Successful Stage 2 projects announced:	By June 2027

Expressions of Interest must be submitted through SmartyGrants by the closing date. Late Expressions of Interest will not normally be accepted.

Submitting an Expression of Interest does not guarantee an invitation to Stage 2 or funding.

2026–27 funding priorities

Each year, TCF may identify particular areas it wishes to prioritise through Major Initiative Grants.

For 2026–27, TCF will give priority to initiatives that contribute to one or more of the following areas:

- Participation, belonging and connection
- Community leadership, volunteering and skills
- Local collaboration and community-led action

Major Initiatives do not need to address all three priorities. TCF will consider how strongly the proposed initiative responds to the priorities that are relevant to its purpose, community and context.

Major Initiative funding focus for 2026-27

Within these priorities, TCF is particularly interested in Major Initiatives that:

- bring communities and organisations together to respond to important local challenges or opportunities;
- build the relationships, coordination and skills needed for communities to take action over the long term;
- help more people participate, feel included and connected;
- strengthen the places and spaces that enable people to come together, participate and build community connection; and
- develop, test or grow community-led approaches that can create lasting change.

Funding tiers

Major Initiative Grants are available across three funding tiers.

	Funding range	Best suited to	Expected maturity
Tier 1 – Development and Demonstration	\$100,000 to \$400,000	Developing, testing, demonstrating or strengthening a promising collaborative approach	Evidence-informed and developed enough to proceed, with important uncertainties still to be tested
Tier 2 – Expansion and Integration	\$400,001 to \$800,000	Expanding, deepening or embedding an approach that has already been tested	Prior delivery or testing, established partners and readiness for greater scale or complexity
Tier 3 – Transformational Investment	\$800,001 to \$1.5 million	Significant regional, statewide or system-level change	Strong evidence, mature governance, community legitimacy and capacity for a high-consequence investment

Funding may be provided for up to **seven years**, depending on the nature, scale and maturity of the initiative.

The tiers are not simply different funding amounts.

For higher funding tiers, TCF will expect stronger evidence of:

- initiative maturity and readiness
- collaboration and community involvement
- governance and delivery capability
- evidence supporting the proposed approach
- scale and reach of the expected benefit
- risk management and financial capability
- evaluation and learning arrangements
- appropriate financial and governance assurance.

You should choose the tier that best reflects the purpose, maturity and scale of your initiative rather than simply the amount of funding you would like to request.

TCF may discuss a different tier with you if we consider another tier is a better fit.

Progressing between funding tiers

Major Initiative funding can support different stages of an initiative as it develops.

If an initiative has previously received a Major Initiative Grant, it may apply for a higher tier later if it has progressed and the next stage is a good fit for that tier.

A new application cannot include costs or activities that are already funded through an existing TCF grant.

Previous TCF funding does not guarantee future funding. Any new application will be assessed competitively against the guidelines, priorities and funding available at that time.

Where an initiative has previously received Major Initiative funding, TCF will expect the applicant to demonstrate:

- what the earlier funding achieved and what was learned
- how the initiative has changed or developed
- evidence that supports moving to the proposed next stage
- why further TCF investment is needed
- how the proposed next phase differs from activity already funded
- how the proposed next phase aligns with the priorities and purpose of the funding round in which the new application is being submitted, and with the intent of the relevant Major Initiative tier.

Initiatives do not need to move through each tier in sequence. The appropriate tier will depend on the maturity, evidence, scale and purpose of the initiative at the time of application.

Who can apply?

Major Initiative Grants are open to applications from:

- Incorporated not-for-profit organisations
- Not-for-profit companies registered under company law
- A Tasmanian Local Government authority (Council) – see below for restrictions.
- Eligible school associations – see below for requirements.
- Unincorporated organisations (must be auspiced by an incorporated organisation. See below.)

Applicants must:

- be based in Tasmania or be delivering a project that primarily benefits Tasmanian communities
- be meeting their obligations under any existing TCF funding agreements.

Deductible Gift Recipient status is not required.

Unincorporated groups or collaborations that do not have their own eligible legal entity should contact TCF before submitting an Expression of Interest to discuss whether an appropriate auspicing or lead-organisation arrangement may be possible.

Applications from Councils

Tasmanian councils may apply for eligible Major Initiatives where the proposal is strongly community-led and involves meaningful community participation and collaboration.

Council infrastructure and capital works projects are not eligible for Major Initiative funding. TCF does not intend this pathway to substitute for council infrastructure funding that may be available through council revenue or other government funding programs.

TCF will also not fund routine council services or activities that form part of a council's normal responsibilities.

Applications from unincorporated groups

Unincorporated groups may apply through an eligible auspice organisation. The auspice organisation will take legal and financial responsibility for the grant.

The community group must meet the relevant applicant and project requirements, and the auspice organisation must meet TCF's legal and financial eligibility requirements.

The auspice organisation should have a genuine connection to the initiative and what it is trying to achieve, rather than acting solely as a legal or administrative sponsor.

Applications from school associations

An eligible school association may apply in its own name where it is a legally constituted entity 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 meet all eligibility requirements and provide a clear community benefit. They must not primarily fund core school operations, curriculum delivery, routine education activities or costs that are ordinarily the responsibility of a school, education authority or government agency.

TCF will not fund playgrounds or other infrastructure, capital works, refurbishment or facility upgrades located on school land through an application from a school association.

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

Who can't apply

The following entities are not eligible to apply for funding under this grant:

- 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 as described above.
- Individuals or sole traders
- Political parties
- For-profit organisations and businesses
- Projects that are already receiving TCF funding for the same activities.

- Existing projects or activities that have previously been funded by another source and are seeking TCF funding primarily to replace that funding or continue the same activity without a clearly distinct next phase, development or additional community benefit.

Collaboration

Collaboration is a central feature of Major Initiative Grants. TCF is looking for initiatives where organisations, communities or other partners need to work together to achieve the intended outcomes.

We want to understand who needs to be involved, why collaboration is necessary, and the role different organisations, communities or partners are expected to play.

Partners do not need to have final agreements or formal governance arrangements in place at EOI stage, but there should be enough evidence of genuine interest and collaboration for TCF to have confidence that the initiative is being developed with the right people.

Formal partnership agreements, governance arrangements or other documentation may be required if you are invited to Stage 2.

Community involvement and support

Major Initiatives should be grounded in the local community context.

Tell us how you know the challenge or opportunity matters and how relevant communities have informed or shaped the proposed initiative. This might draw on community knowledge and experience, previous engagement, feedback, local plans, partner information, research or data.

You do not need to undertake new formal consultation simply to submit an EOI. TCF recognises community and local knowledge as valuable forms of evidence.

What can Major Initiative funding support?

TCF can only fund activities that are consistent with the purposes of the Tasmanian Community Fund Act 2005 and provide a clear benefit to the Tasmanian community.

Major Initiative funding may support the reasonable costs needed to design, coordinate and deliver an eligible initiative.

This may include:

- initiative staff, including coordination or backbone functions
- community engagement and participation
- partnership and collaboration costs
- specialist expertise
- research, evidence gathering and development work
- evaluation, learning and outcomes measurement
- materials and project resources
- venue hire, travel and transport
- volunteer expenses
- accessibility and participation costs
- reasonable administration and overhead costs directly associated with delivering the initiative
- infrastructure where it is a necessary enabler of a broader community-led initiative and contributes directly to the intended outcomes.

TCF encourages applicants to consider the reasonable full cost of delivering the initiative rather than expecting organisations or partners to absorb legitimate initiative costs.

Detailed budgets and supporting information are **not required at the Expression of Interest stage**. Applicants invited to Stage 2 will be asked for further financial information. The amount of financial information required will depend on the funding tier, size, complexity and risk of the initiative.

Staff costs

Staff costs are eligible where they are directly related to delivering the funded initiative. This can include new project-specific staff, additional staff hours, or a clearly identified portion of an existing staff member's time that is specifically required to deliver the initiative.

Where existing staff time is included in the funding request, applicants will need to demonstrate that the time represents additional or specifically allocated capacity required to deliver the initiative. Evidence may be required at Stage 2.

Eligible staff costs may include reasonable employment on-costs directly associated with the funded staff time, such as superannuation, workers' compensation and other statutory employment costs.

Existing staff time contributed without being funded by TCF may be shown as an in-kind contribution.

Administration and overheads

Reasonable administration and overhead costs directly associated with delivering the funded initiative and administering the TCF grant may be included in the budget.

These might include initiative-related costs for finance, payroll, insurance, IT, human resources and general administration.

TCF will not fund general organisational overheads or operating costs that would be incurred regardless of whether the initiative proceeds.

Staff who are directly delivering or managing the initiative should normally be shown as Initiative staff costs rather than overheads.

Administration and overhead costs should be reasonable and proportionate to the size and nature of the initiative and clearly explained in the application.

Infrastructure and capital works

Major Initiative Grants are not a general building, infrastructure or capital works funding program.

Infrastructure may be considered where a physical space or asset is an enabling part of a broader community-led initiative and contributes directly to the intended community outcomes. TCF will generally not support an initiative where construction, refurbishment or asset acquisition is the primary purpose and the broader community outcomes are secondary.

Where infrastructure is proposed, the applicant must have sufficient ownership, tenure or other rights to use the land to support the intended long-term community benefit. This may include land owned by the applicant, publicly owned land such as council or Crown land, or land owned by another not-for-profit organisation where the applicant has a sufficiently secure lease, licence or other formal arrangement.

TCF will generally not fund infrastructure on privately owned land where the funded works would primarily increase the value or utility of the private property, or where tenure is insufficient to protect the intended community benefit.

Infrastructure must provide reasonable ongoing community access and benefit. Detailed requirements relating to tenure, ownership, approvals, maintenance, access and long-term use will be considered at Stage 2.

Council infrastructure and capital works projects are not eligible for Major Initiative funding.

What we do not fund

Major Initiative Grants will not normally fund:

- costs incurred before a TCF funding agreement is signed;
- activities or projects that mainly create a private or commercial benefit;
- normal business-as-usual operating costs that would be incurred regardless of whether the initiative proceeds;
- routine service delivery that would ordinarily be funded through government programs;
- activities that are ordinarily the responsibility of government, unless there is a clear rationale for TCF involvement, such as filling an identified gap, testing a new approach, extending community benefit or enabling stronger community involvement that would not otherwise occur;
- activities already fully funded through another grant, contract or funding arrangement;
- activities that are primarily for a political or party-political purpose;
- routine maintenance, asset renewal or projects primarily seeking to acquire or replace an organisational asset;
- routine council responsibilities or council infrastructure and capital works;
- playgrounds or other infrastructure, capital works, refurbishment or facility upgrades located on school land;
- standalone building or infrastructure projects;
- property purchases;
- loans, prizes or gifts;
- projects primarily delivered outside Tasmania;
- unnecessary duplication of existing services or initiatives;
- vague or unexplained budget items;
- construction, refurbishment or infrastructure projects where the main purpose is to create or improve an asset, rather than enable broader community outcomes;
- initiatives without meaningful community involvement;
- initiatives where collaboration is nominal rather than necessary to achieving the proposed outcomes;
- proposals that are more appropriately supported through another TCF funding pathway.

If you are unsure whether your initiative is eligible, contact TCF before applying.

Co-investment and other funding

TCF recognises that the ability to secure funding from other sources will vary between initiatives and communities.

You may identify cash, in-kind or other contributions from participating organisations, communities, government, philanthropy or other partners.

At the Expression of Interest stage, these contributions do not need to be fully secured unless they are necessary for the initiative to proceed.

For larger or more complex initiatives, TCF may discuss appropriate co-investment and the overall funding model with applicants invited to Stage 2.

In general, as the amount of TCF funding requested increases, TCF will expect a stronger level of co-investment or contribution from the applicant and/or other partners, where this is reasonable in the context of the initiative.

An initiative will not be considered stronger simply because it has a larger cash co-contribution. TCF will consider the overall funding model, community context and what is reasonable for the initiative.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Major Initiative Grant funding limits are exclusive of GST.

When identifying the indicative amount of TCF funding sought, enter the amount before GST.

Applicants invited to Stage 2 must also enter all detailed budget amounts excluding GST, regardless of the proposed 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. If an auspice or lead organisation will receive the grant, the GST treatment will be based on that organisation's circumstances.

How to submit an Expression of Interest

Expressions of Interest are completed online through **SmartyGrants**.

A link to the Expression of Interest form will be available on the TCF website at **tascomfund.org**.

Stage 1 is deliberately short.

We do not expect applicants to prepare a complete business case, evaluation plan, partnership agreement or detailed implementation plan at this stage.

We mainly want to understand:

1. What challenge or opportunity are you responding to?

Tell us what is happening, why it matters and why a larger or longer-term response may be needed.

2. What are you proposing to do?

Describe the initiative and the overall approach you want to take.

We are interested in the direction and core idea rather than a detailed implementation plan.

3. Who will benefit and what change are you seeking?

Tell us who the initiative is intended to benefit and what you hope will be different as a result.

4. How has the community shaped the initiative?

Tell us how you know the initiative responds to community needs or opportunities and how relevant communities have been involved so far.

5. Who needs to be involved?

Tell us about the organisations, communities or other partners involved or expected to be involved, why collaboration is needed and the role they may play.

6. Why is the initiative ready for this tier of Major Initiative investment?

Tell us what has already been developed, tested, learned or established, what important things still need to be worked through, and why you think the initiative is ready for the funding tier you have selected.

We will also ask you to identify:

- the proposed funding tier

- an indicative amount of TCF funding sought
- the anticipated duration of the initiative
- the geographic area or communities the initiative will benefit
- the lead applicant and key partners.

You do not need to be a grant writer.

Write in your own words. We want to understand the challenge, the initiative, the people involved and why you believe it has the potential to create lasting community benefit.

Your Expression of Interest will not be assessed on grammar, writing style or how professionally it is presented.

How Expressions of Interest will be assessed

Stage 1 is designed to identify initiatives that are a strong fit with Major Initiative Grants and developed enough to justify progressing to the more detailed Stage 2 process.

Expressions of Interest will be considered against four areas.

- **Significance and community benefit** - Is there a significant community challenge or opportunity, and is the proposed initiative likely to create meaningful and lasting community benefit?
- **Fit with Major Initiative funding** - Is the initiative a good fit with the purpose of Major Initiative Grants and relevant priorities for the current funding round?
- **Community involvement and collaboration** - Is the initiative appropriately informed by the community, and are the right organisations, communities or partners involved or likely to be involved?
- **Approach and readiness** - Is there a credible proposed approach, and is the initiative sufficiently developed and ready to progress to a detailed Stage 2 application?

Assessment will take account of the proposed tier, scale and context of the initiative.

A Tier 1 initiative developing or testing an approach will not be expected to demonstrate the same level of evidence, maturity or established partnership arrangements as a Tier 3 transformational initiative.

TCF may also consider how an initiative fits within the overall mix of Major Initiatives being considered. This may include geographic and community reach, the range of communities or cohorts supported, diversity of approaches and activities, duplication with other proposals, and the balance of funding across TCF's portfolio.

This means a strong initiative may not always progress where other proposals provide a stronger overall mix of community benefit, reach and strategic value.

Local context

TCF recognises that Major Initiatives will look different across Tasmania. We will consider local and regional circumstances when assessing Expressions of Interest, including:

- population and geographic scale
- regional, rural and island circumstances
- availability of organisations, services and infrastructure
- workforce and volunteer capacity
- existing community relationships and networks
- the scale of the challenge or opportunity relative to the community.

Scale does not necessarily mean statewide reach. An initiative focused on a particular place or community may still be a strong fit for Major Initiative funding where the scale of the challenge, level of collaboration and potential community benefit justify a larger or longer-term response.

Readiness will be considered in the context of the funding tier. Lower-tier initiatives may still have important relationships, planning or capability to develop, while higher-tier initiatives will be expected to demonstrate greater maturity and readiness.

Sustainability / lasting benefit

TCF does not expect every funded activity to continue indefinitely. For Major Initiatives, sustainability means that important benefits from the investment are expected to endure beyond the funding period. This could include stronger relationships, capability, systems, community connections, knowledge, coordination, assets or new ways of working.

At Stage 1, you only need to explain the lasting change you are seeking. More detailed sustainability considerations will be explored at Stage 2.

What happens after you submit an Expression of Interest?

TCF staff will first check that the applicant and proposed initiative are eligible and that there is enough information to assess the Expression of Interest.

If minor information is unclear or missing, we may contact you for clarification.

Eligible Expressions of Interest will be assessed against the published Stage 1 criteria.

TCF may use an assessment panel to consider Expressions of Interest and recommend which initiatives should progress to Stage 2.

TCF may also seek specialist or independent advice where this would help assess a particular application.

Following Stage 1 assessment, TCF may:

- invite the applicant to submit a Stage 2 application
- invite further discussion or clarification before deciding whether the initiative should progress
- suggest that further development or readiness work is needed before the initiative is reconsidered in a future round
- suggest that the initiative be considered under a different funding pathway
- not invite the initiative to Stage 2.

An invitation to Stage 2 does **not** guarantee funding.

The purpose of the invitation is to indicate that TCF considers the initiative sufficiently aligned and promising to warrant more detailed development and assessment.

TCF may also discuss the proposed funding tier, scope or amount with an applicant before Stage 2.

If there is a significant change to your proposed initiative after you submit your EOI, please let TCF know. This might include a major change in partners, scope, funding, approvals or circumstances that could affect the initiative.

EOIs shortlisted to progress to Stage 2

Applicants invited to Stage 2 will receive separate **Major Initiative Grant – Stage 2 Guidelines**.

Stage 2 will examine the initiative in greater detail and may include information about:

- initiative design and delivery
- evidence supporting the proposed approach
- community involvement
- partnership and governance arrangements
- outcomes and evaluation
- implementation and milestones
- detailed budget and funding model
- organisational and financial capability
- risks and mitigation
- sustainability and longer-term benefit
- due diligence and assurance requirements.

The information required will be proportionate to the funding tier, scale, complexity and risk of the proposed initiative.

TCF staff will work with invited applicants to clarify the Stage 2 requirements.

If your Expression of Interest is not invited to Stage 2

We will let you know the outcome of your Expression of Interest.

You may contact TCF if you would like feedback.

We will aim to provide useful feedback about the assessment and, where relevant, whether another TCF funding pathway may be more appropriate.

Major Initiative Grants are competitive. An initiative may be eligible and worthwhile but not progress where other proposals are more strongly aligned, more ready for investment or better fit the available funding portfolio.

Need help?

We strongly encourage prospective Major Initiative applicants to talk with TCF before submitting an Expression of Interest.

Contact us if you would like to discuss:

- whether Major Initiative funding is the right pathway
- which funding tier may be appropriate
- eligibility
- whether the proposed initiative is sufficiently developed for Stage 1
- how collaboration or auspicing arrangements may work
- anything in these guidelines or the Expression of Interest form.

Tasmanian Community Fund

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