



HOW TO FUND YOUR CARER SUPPORT GROUP

HANDBOOK

DISCLAIMER

The content in this handbook is provided for information purposes in New South Wales only.

The contents of this handbook does not constitute legal advice and should not be used as such. Every care has been taken in relation to its accuracy, however no warranty is given or implied. Formal legal advice should be sought in particular matters.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
GRANTS	5
ClubGRANTS.....	6
Small Community Grants	6
Applying for grants	6
SPONSORSHIP	8
MEMBERSHIP FEES	8
GOLD COIN DONATION	9
DONATIONS	9
Online Donations	9
Personal asking	10
General appeals	10
Direct mail	10
Appeals to your group database, former carers, and supporters.....	10
Deductible gift recipient	11
Asking for Donations	11
IN-KIND SUPPORT	12
FUNDRAISING	13
Fundraising Events.....	13
Fundraising Products.....	13
Fundraising Legal Requirement.....	13

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR A CARER SUPPORT GROUP 15

- Incorporation of a carer support group 15
- Deciding to incorporate..... 15
- Committee roles 16
- Accounting considerations 16
- Disclaimer 16

AUSPICE..... 17

RESOURCES..... 18

INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest challenges for carer support groups is seeking funding for the group. Many carer support groups, especially groups run by volunteer carers, operate with little to no support, relying on member donations, in-kind support, and small grants to cover the ongoing cost of running the group.

How to fund your carer support group explores the various types of funding available to carer support groups. These types of funding include:

- grants
- sponsorship
- membership fees
- gold coin donation
- donations
- in-kind support
- fundraising events.

Some options may have legal ramifications and may require the group to become incorporated or form an auspice agreement with a local community organisation.

Whilst there are many different types of funding available, your support group may be limited in what it can apply for based on the group's legal structure. Funding from government and philanthropic organisations will have funding guidelines that describe the purpose of the funding, as well as limitations about who is eligible to apply.

GRANTS

Grants are non-repayable funds distributed by one party (grant makers) to a recipient, often (but not always) a non-profit entity, educational institution, or an individual.

There are different types of small grants and funding opportunities for carer support groups in NSW. Your group may not be able to apply for some grants if you are not under the auspice* of an organisation.

* 'Auspice' refers to an organisation taking legal responsibility for the funds within the grant-giving process. The organisation will receive your grant funds on behalf of your support group and the organisation will be responsible for ensuring the funds are spent as you have said they would be and are acquitted on time. To find out more about auspice agreements turn to page 17 of this guide.

CLUBGRANTS

ClubGRANTS are small grants provided by local clubs in your area generally for community projects. ClubGRANTS was established in 1998 to ensure registered Clubs in NSW with profits over \$1 million contribute financial or in-kind support to local community services, programs, and projects. Charities, sporting organisations, and not-for-profit community groups are among the causes funded through the program each year.

Due in part to the different sizes of ClubGRANTS-eligible Clubs, there is no standard limit on the amount Clubs may provide. However, applicants should contact their Local Committee and consider the amount of funding available in their area. Local Committees and Clubs are also in a position to advise on any area-specific limits on funding amounts.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply, you must be a not-for-profit organisation and provide the following project and/or services:

- community welfare or social services,
- community development,
- community health services or employment assistance activities.

ClubGRANTS require an auspice organisation. If your carer support group is run informally and wishes to apply for funding, your group may form a link with an incorporated organisation such as a local Council or a community organisation that can endorse or auspice the application. To find out more about auspice agreements turn to page 17 of this guide.

Further information on ClubGRANTS and current grants available visit the website at:

ClubGRANTS - <https://www.clubgrants.com.au/>

Liquor and Gaming NSW - <https://www.liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au/operating-a-business/gaming-licences/clubgrants>

SMALL COMMUNITY GRANTS

Small Community grants are provided by various organisations, foundations and local councils. Numerous small grants are specific to smaller communities, often they require that a carer support group be linked with an organisation. These grants are diverse and frequently change in availability.

APPLYING FOR GRANTS

Most grants are made to fund a specific project and require some level of compliance and reporting. It is important to look at the key details in the grant guidelines when applying. Knowing when you should apply and when your project will happen helps you submit everything on time and plan well. If you submit your application late, it might not be considered.

It is important to make sure you qualify for the grant. Read the critical information for your chosen program to ensure the project is eligible under the grant you're applying for. When you adjust your application to match what the grantor is looking for, it improves your chance of getting the grant. It is crucial to go through the needed documents. If you forget to include something important, your proposal might be turned down. Understanding what your project involves, sticking to the budget rules, and being ready for reporting and evaluation requirements also help in making your application strong and competitive.



Completing a grant application can be a labour-intensive process, and working with group members can significantly enhance the quality of the submission. Working on a grant application as a group allows for the spread of tasks among group members, leveraging individual strengths and expertise. This collaborative effort not only eases the workload but also ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to a more well-rounded and comprehensive proposal.

The support group's unique ideas coupled with funder requirements also offer great opportunities for the long-term sustainability of the group.

Good grant applications clearly state:

- Who will benefit?
- What is going to happen?
- Where is it going to happen?
- Why does it need to happen?
- When is it going to happen?
- How is it going to happen?
- How much will it cost?
- How will you show that it was effective?

You have to know this clearly in order to communicate it.

Before you start to look for funding, make sure that you are clear in your mind what type of project you want to do, what kind of grant you require, and why you want it.

Hold a brainstorming session and make a list of all the things your carer support group would do, if only it had the money. Make it a living list that's available to key people within the group and can be added to and refined as new needs arise and old ones subside.

Words like Objective, Output, and Outcome are commonly used by grant providers, so it can be good to consider ideas using this framework.

Only use jargon if you understand what the term means and can apply it in the correct context. If you are not sure about a question or word in the grant guidelines or grant application, there is usually information about how to contact the grant funder on the website or guidelines.

Grant writing course

Non Profit Training offers Grant Writing Training for non-profit organisations and individuals. Training sessions are held online, and the registration fee is \$350.

For more information visit the Non Profit Training website at:

<https://nonprofittraining.com.au/grant-writing-for-non-profit-organisations/>

SPONSORSHIP

Local councils and community organisations may offer sponsorship to carer support groups, provided the sponsorship aligns with the priorities of the sponsoring organisation and meets the relevant selection criteria. Sponsorship helps stimulate business activity and encourages organisations to work together in partnership.

Sponsorship provides funding or in-kind support, such as a reduced or no-rate for the use of venues, to local organisations and community groups. In-kind support may also include the use of materials, public relations, graphic design, and printing needs.

SPONSORSHIP VS DONATIONS

Sponsorships are a marketing tactic, putting a company's name on an event or associating the company with the carer support group to boost patronage. Donations are charitable in nature and purely benefit the carer support group.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

A membership structure, such as an annual fee, allows you to bring together carers who share a common purpose, while also providing an important fundraising structure for your group. Membership can provide a constant stream of revenue, providing a little more income flow certainty. This revenue can be used to cover the operating costs that crop up during the year.

It is important to have member support before introducing a membership structure. A membership scheme can increase the loyalty of group members, who, with the right sort of encouragement and personalised treatment, will become great advocates for the carer support group and its work.

It's important to balance the need to draw funds from your members with the need to keep them happy.

For more information on implementing a membership structure visit the Communities in Control website at: <https://communitiesincontrol.com.au/help-sheets/membership-basics>.

GOLD COIN DONATION

The term “gold coin donation” is an often-used phrase, used for informal charity events, to mean that the cost of something (such as entry to the groups meeting) is a gold coin donation. This can be either a donation of a one or two-dollar coin.

Asking for a gold coin contribution at the beginning of each carer support group may assist in the purchasing of tea and coffee for the carer support group meeting as well as the purchasing of light refreshments.

DONATIONS

Asking directly for financial assistance can provide an important source of funding for a carer support group. Asking individuals for donations isn't always an easy task. It's important to know the difference between the types of individual donations before asking for money.

ONLINE DONATIONS

Online donations refer to contributions made through digital fundraising platforms (such as GoFundMe). These sites are convenient for donors as it allows them to contribute from anywhere with internet access and involves an easy transaction process.



PERSONAL ASKING

Personal asking involves directly approaching individuals, either in person or through personal communication channels, and requesting them to make a donation. Personally asking builds a personal connection and trust between the requester and the potential donor.

GENERAL APPEALS

General appeals involve making a broad call for donations without specifically targeting individuals or groups. This type of approach can be useful in raising awareness of the group and may appeal to a wide audience.

DIRECT MAIL

Direct mail fundraising involves sending physical mail, such as letters or brochures, to potential donors to solicit contributions. Direct mail can appeal to individuals who may prefer traditional communication methods.

APPEALS TO YOUR GROUP DATABASE, FORMER CARERS, AND SUPPORTERS

Appeals to your email database target individuals who have opted to receive communications from the organization, including carers, former carers, and supporters. Appeals to email lists targets an audience already interested in or supportive of the cause.



DEDUCTIBLE GIFT RECIPIENT

Some businesses or individuals may wish to make a donation to your carer support group. They may also request a tax-deductible receipt for their donation.

To be able to provide them with such a receipt your carer support group will have to become a registered 'deductible gift recipient' with the Australian Tax Office.

To register with the Australian Tax Office, visit the Australian Tax Office website at: <https://www.ato.gov.au/forms-and-instructions/deductible-gift-recipient-endorsement-application>.

This can be complicated, however, without the advice from the taxation office, or qualified accountant or solicitor.

For more information visit the Funding Centre website at: <https://explore.fundingcentre.com.au/help-sheets/donations-basics>

There are legal requirements that a group must meet in order to receive donations.

ASKING FOR DONATIONS

Requesting donations can be daunting if you've never done it. The website Gofundme (www.gofundme.com) has dedicated a webpage focused on how to ask for donations and how to create a sense of urgency.

Some of the key points for asking for donations include the following:

Inspire giving by truthfully telling your story

Honesty is the best policy. People want to trust that their donations are going toward a legitimate cause. Be honest in telling the story of your group and how the group impacts on its members lives. If a donor connects with your story they will be more willing to donate.

Tailor your message to who you're asking

The best way to receive a positive response—and a donation—is to appeal to each potential donor's individual interests. If you know someone who would respond better to a warm, lighthearted request, keep your wording informal and bright. For someone such as a colleague who may respond better to a formal approach, deliver your message accordingly.

Be specific in your ask

Give potential donors clear-cut reasons why they should donate to your carer support group. Some ways to be specific include providing a breakdown of what the donation would be used for and listing expenses – for example "A donation of \$125 will provide tea and coffee for a year."

To read the article *Starting Your First Fundraiser? Here's How to Ask for Donations on the GoFundMe website* visit: <https://www.gofundme.com/c/blog/ask-for-donations>.

To learn more about crafting a compelling fundraiser story visit: <https://www.gofundme.com/c/blog/campaign-story>

IN-KIND SUPPORT

In-kind support is the donation of goods or services towards the running of the carer support group. Often, the carer support group members fund the supply of their own resources. Instead of receiving the money to buy needed goods and services, organisations may provide the goods in lieu of gifts of cash. In-kind support may reduce the amount of actual dollars required by the group.

In-kind support can include:

- venue hire
- office supplies
- printing and photocopying
- transport
- entertainment
- pro bono work (legal, accounting, IT, marketing/Public relations, auditing)
- gifts.



FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Special events are social engagements that bring together people from the carer support group and community to raise awareness of a need, awareness of the group, and support for a cause. Fundraising events can generate significant revenue for groups, but they often require more time to plan and market, and higher upfront costs than non-event fundraising endeavours.

Types of Fundraising Events:

- Fun run/walk
- A-thon events (walkathon, readathon, skipathon, workathon, etc)
- Competition (non-sport)
- Auction
- Art Exhibit
- Gala
- Concert
- Sporting Event
- Car Boot Sale

For more information on these events, visit the Classy.org website:

<https://www.classy.org/blog/which-type-of-fundraising-event-is-best-for-your-nonprofit/>



FUNDRAISING PRODUCTS

Fundraising products are items or goods that carer support group members can sell to raise money for the group or a specific cause. These products are typically marketed to supporters, donors, or the general public, with the proceeds going toward the group or fundraising goal.

Types of fundraising products:

- Merchandise: branded items such as T-shirts, hats, mugs, or tote bags
- Food and Beverages: selling chocolates, lollies, coffee, or other consumable items
- Customised Items: personalised items such as calendars, photo books, or holiday cards featuring images and messages related to the cause
- Coupon Books: books containing discount coupons for local businesses
- Event Tickets: selling tickets to events such as concerts, shows, or charity galas
- Art and Crafts: Handmade crafts, artwork, or other creative items produced by members of the group.

For more information on these products, visit the Fundraising Directory at:

<https://www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au/>

FUNDRAISING LEGAL REQUIREMENT

To be able to raise money for your carer support group through fundraising activities, such as cake stalls, raffles, etc., your group must have an 'authority to fundraise'. Having an authority to fundraise, allows an individual or organisation to appeal to the public for funds. An authority may be granted for a maximum period of up to 5 years.

There is no cost to apply for this authority and you can download the form from Services NSW by visiting their website: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-authoritylicence-fundraise>

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR A CARER SUPPORT GROUP

Before undertaking the raising of funds it's important to be clear idea about the structure of your carer support group.

INCORPORATION OF A CARER SUPPORT GROUP

Incorporation gives your carer support group its own legal identity (the group becomes a 'separate legal entity' from its members). The incorporated carer support group can enter into contracts, apply for grants, accept donations, sign a lease, and sue and be sued.

Incorporated carer support groups are incorporated under law (which can be either state or federal) and report to the regulator responsible for their type of structure, for example the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC).

Incorporated carer support groups follow a particular structure, with group rules (or constitution), members, and a governing body (often called a board or committee).

Being incorporated has consequences for people who are going to be on the board or committee of management of a not-for-profit group, as legal duties attach to these roles.

Given the importance of the decision about whether to incorporate, this may be an issue on which your group may want to seek specific legal advice.

For more information on incorporation visit the Not-for-Profit Law website at:

<https://www.nfplaw.org.au/free-resources/getting-started/incorporation>

DECIDING TO INCORPORATE

Not-for-profit Law have developed a free fact sheet to help your group consider the incorporation decision.

The fact sheet explains in more detail what incorporation means and provides a general overview of some of the main differences between an 'unincorporated' and an 'incorporated' group, including information on:

- what does it mean to 'incorporate'?
- what are the advantages of incorporating?
- what are the obligations of incorporated groups?
- checklists to help your group decide whether to incorporate
- you have decided to incorporate, what's next?
- you have decided not to incorporate, what's next?
- resources to help your group with next steps

To download the fact sheet: How to decide whether your group should incorporate [click here](#)

Please note: For all financial and legal matters please talk to an accountant or solicitor. The information contained in this document is a general guide only.

COMMITTEE ROLES

Some carer support groups may require a more formal structure and assign roles or committees for the group.

Below is a list of possible roles:

President or Chairperson:

- Runs and leads the meeting
- Informs relevant organisations of the aims of the carer support group and asks for their support
- Secretary:
 - Looks after paperwork, types up minutes, sends out meeting reminders, etc.
- The contact person for the carer support group for telephone, mail and email enquiries.
- Treasurer:
 - Pays the bills, receives incoming money, keeps accurate financial records.

ACCOUNTING CONSIDERATIONS

Australian Business Number and GST

Your carer support group may wish to apply for an Australian Business Number (ABN). You don't have to, but it may make it easier to apply for and receive funding if you have an ABN as some organisations only fund groups that have an ABN. It may also help when you open a bank account.

To apply for an ABN visit the Australian Business Register website (www.abr.gov.au) or call 13 28 66. The application is free and only takes a few minutes. Most carer support groups don't have to register for Goods and Services Tax (GST) because non-profit organisations that have an annual turnover of less than \$150,000 are not required to register for GST.

For more information about an ABN, GST registration, and taxation issues talk to an accountant or call the Australian Taxation Office on 13 28 66.

Charitable fundraising and taxation

To be able to raise money for your carer support group through fundraising activities such as cake stalls, raffles, etc. your group must have an 'authority to fundraise'. There is no cost to apply for this authority and you can download the form from the Services NSW by visiting their website www.service.nsw.gov.au to download a form.

Some businesses or individuals may wish to make a donation to your carer support group. They may also request a tax-deductible receipt for their donation. To be able to provide them with such a receipt your carer support group will have to become a registered 'deductible gift recipient' with the Australian Taxation Office. However, this can be complicated without advice from the taxation office or qualified accountant or solicitor. For all financial and legal matters please talk to an accountant or solicitor. The information contained in this document is a general guide only.

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AUSPICE

An auspice is an organisation who manages grant funding on your behalf. For example, a carer support group may use a larger community organisation as their auspice. The community organisation will receive and manage the grant funding, with the carer support group undertaking the actual project work.

Auspice arrangements are reasonably common when a funding body requires applicants to have Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. A carer support group may be able to find a service provider with DGR status to auspice their application so that they can still apply for funding.

When approaching an organisation to be your auspice, it's a good idea to:

- make sure you are on the same page philosophically and ethically
- check that you are both aiming for the same goals
- have a good working relationship before applying for funding.

For more information visit the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website at: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/topic-guides/deductible-gift-recipient-dgr>

RESOURCES

COMMUNITY GRANTS: PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

This guide provides links to select sources of financial assistance to community groups in New South Wales.

https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2021/Quick_Guides/ComGrants

OURCOMMUNITY.COM.AU

Our Community is an Australian social entrepreneurship body set up to build capacity in Australia's 600,000 community groups and grant making bodies.

<https://ourcommunity.com.au>

CLUBGRANTS

ClubGRANTS is one of Australia's largest grant programs, providing more than \$100 million in cash each year to a variety of causes across NSW. Charities, sporting organisations and not-for-profit community groups are among the causes that are funded through the program each year.

<https://www.clubgrants.com.au/>

NOT-FOR-PROFIT LAW

Justice Connect's Not-for-profit Law program is a national legal service that offers free and affordable legal supports for not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises.

<https://www.nfplaw.org.au/>

LIQUOR AND GAMING NSW

The Office of Responsible Gambling leads the development of responsible gambling strategy and public policy advice to the NSW Government and supports and manages grants and funding such as the Responsible Gambling Fund, the Clubgrants Category 3 Fund and the Community Development Fund.

<https://www.liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au/operating-a-business/gaming-licences/clubgrants>

AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION WEBSITE

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) is the regulatory authority for charities and not-for-profit organisations within Australia. The Commission was established in December 2012 as part of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 passed by the federal parliament, and is responsible for registering charities and non-profit organisations, ensuring their compliance with Australian law, and for keeping a public register of registered organisations.

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/>

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