

Information for Grant Seekers

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About Seaton Foundation's Grantmaking Approach

Seaton Foundation supports community-focused solutions across the Northern Rivers through responsive funding and strong working relationships with local organisations. Our grantmaking approach is relational, practical and grounded in trust-based philanthropy. We recognise that community organisations are closest to the work and best placed to understand what is needed. Our role is to listen, resource and support, not to direct.

We focus on straightforward processes, honest conversations and mutual accountability, so that more of everyone's time can go to community, not paperwork. We are committed to listening to feedback from grant recipients and communities, and to continually improving our approach so that our funding is useful, respectful and responsive.

As part of our evolving approach, we have strengthened and clarified our grant pathways to ensure they are accessible and aligned with the impact we seek to achieve alongside our grant recipients.

To get a sense of the initiatives we've supported in the past, visit our website: [Past Recipients](#).

Funding Essentials

This section summarises key eligibility requirements, Seaton Foundation's Focus Areas, and our Grant Pathways to help you quickly assess your initiative's fit before reviewing the more detailed information in this pack.

Eligibility

You may be eligible to apply if:

- You are endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Item 1 by the Australian Taxation Office — meaning your organisation can receive tax-deductible donations — or are applying through an auspice organisation that holds DGR Item 1 endorsement.
- Your initiative (for example, a program, project, pilot, research or feasibility work) takes place in, or clearly benefits communities within, the Northern Rivers.
- You have a clearly described initiative with defined activities, timeframes and intended outcomes (positive changes you expect to see as a result of your work).

Scope of Funding

Seaton Foundation aims to be responsive and flexible within our Focus Areas. However, not all requests will be a good fit for funding.

We generally do not provide grants for retrospective expenses (costs already incurred before an application is submitted) and are unlikely to support initiatives that fall outside our Focus Areas or geographic scope.

If you are unsure whether your initiative aligns, we encourage you to contact us via [email](#).

Our Focus Areas

All grants must align with at least one of the Seaton Foundation's focus areas:

Health, Wellbeing & Dignity

- Physical and mental health
- Reducing isolation and loneliness
- Supporting individual dignity and access to services
- Financial hardship and disadvantage

Disaster Response

- Natural disasters (e.g. floods, bushfires)
- Other community-wide crises and emergencies

Youth & Education Equity

- Youth mental health, confidence, and opportunity

Housing & Homelessness

- Preventing and responding to homelessness and housing insecurity
- Support for housing stability and wraparound services

Animal Welfare & Wildlife Support

- Caring for injured, abandoned, and vulnerable animals
- Supporting the people and systems that care for wildlife

Environment

- Protecting and regenerating the natural environment
- Supporting community-focused sustainability initiatives
- Honouring and preserving cultural heritage and stories

Grant Pathways

We offer three main pathways: **Always Open (responsive)** grants for urgent or emerging needs; **New Approaches** grants to support innovation; and **Strategic Focus** grants targeting annual priority areas. Multi-year partnerships are also available for established grantees. Choose the pathway that best matches your initiative.

Always Open (responsive) Grants

Timing	Applications are accepted year-round.
Purpose	This pathway is designed for time-sensitive initiatives, including responses to new and emerging needs, unexpected events, crises, or disasters.
Indicative funding	Funding amounts vary depending on context and need. Examples might include a small, time-critical request (such as \$500 for urgent equipment or support) or a more complex initiative requiring a larger investment (for instance, \$15,000).
Application Process	• Submit a short Expression of Interest (EOI) form via our website • If your initiative appears aligned, we will arrange a brief conversation • Selected applicants will be invited to submit a full application • If you would feel more comfortable submitting your EOI or application via video rather than in writing, please contact us in advance and we will guide you through the process
Decision timeline	From EOI submission to notification, the process typically takes around four weeks. We will notify all applicants of the outcome and provide feedback to those not funded, recognising the time and effort involved in preparing an application.
Link to Grant Pack	Provides information to help you prepare your submission.

New Approaches Grants (grant round opens October)

Timing	Applications open for a four-week period each October.
Purpose	This pathway supports new approaches and innovative ways of working within our Focus Areas. This may include pilots, feasibility studies, or initiatives that test a different way of addressing a challenge or opportunity. We are particularly keen to hear from emerging organisations.
Funding available	Up to \$50,000 is allocated annually for New Approaches grants. Most grants are expected to be up to approximately \$10,000.
Application Process	• Submit a full application via our website during the open period • Applicants may be contacted for additional information • If you would feel more comfortable submitting your application via video rather than in writing, please contact us in advance and we will guide you through the process
Decision timeline	From application submission to notification, the process typically takes around eight weeks. We will notify all applicants of the outcome and provide feedback to those not funded, recognising the time and effort involved in preparing an application.
Link to Grant Pack	Provides information to help you prepare your submission.

Strategic Focus Grants (grant round opens April)

Timing	Applications open for a four-week period each April.
Purpose	This pathway focuses funding on selected Focus Areas identified annually. It supports initiatives that align closely with the selected priority and provide a clear, considered response to community needs in that area.
Funding available	Up to \$50,000 is allocated annually to Strategic Focus Grants. There is no fixed minimum or maximum grant size; amounts will vary depending on alignment and scope.
Application Process	• Submit a full application via our website during the open period • Applicants may be contacted for additional information • If you would feel more comfortable submitting your application via video rather than in writing, please contact us in advance and we will guide you through the process
Decision timeline	From application submission to notification, the process typically takes around eight weeks. We will notify all applicants of the outcome and provide feedback to those not funded at this time, recognising the time and effort involved in preparing an application.
Link to Grant Pack	Provides information to help you prepare your submission.

Multi-Year Partnerships

Multi-year partnerships provide sustained funding for initiatives aligned with our Focus Areas where there is a strong strategic fit. These partnerships are developed through ongoing engagement and are generally not open to applications. They are typically offered to organisations we have previously funded and worked with over time. If you are interested in exploring the potential for a longer-term relationship in future, you are welcome to raise this with us during your grant term.

Detailed Information

This section provides more detailed information on certain aspects of the grant process, including auspicing, decision-making, and reporting requirements.

The Application Process

Seaton Foundation uses a staged application process for certain grant pathways to ensure organisations do not invest time unnecessarily. Our intention is that applications can be prepared within a reasonable timeframe.

For **Always Open (responsive)** grants, applicants first submit a short online Expression of Interest (EOI) via our website. If the initiative appears aligned, we will arrange a brief conversation before inviting a full application.

For **New Approaches and Strategic Focus** grants, applicants submit an online application via our website during the open period and will be contacted if we need any additional information.

Video submissions are available across all grant pathways. If you would feel more comfortable submitting your application via video rather than in writing, please contact us in advance and we will guide you through the process.

Grant Packs for each of our grant pathways are available to download from our website. Links to these packs are included in the Grant Pathways section of this document. The Grant Packs include Application templates and guidance notes to support completion. We aim to ask you only for the information needed to make an informed decision and to keep application requirements proportionate to the level of funding available.

Eligibility and Auspicing

Seaton Foundation can only provide grants to organisations that are endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) Item 1 by the Australian Taxation Office. You can check your organisation's DGR status through the [Australian Business Register \(ABR\) website](#).

- If your organisation holds DGR Item 1 endorsement, you may apply directly.
- If your organisation does not hold DGR Item 1 endorsement, you may apply through an auspice organisation that does.

An auspice arrangement means a DGR-endorsed organisation agrees to receive and manage the grant funds on your behalf. The auspice organisation will enter into a Collaboration Agreement with the Seaton Foundation, receive the funds, and take responsibility for ensuring the grant is used as agreed and that reporting requirements are met. The auspice may be a Northern Rivers-based organisation or a statewide/national organisation (the initiative itself must still take place in, or clearly benefit communities within, the Northern Rivers).

Where an auspice arrangement is proposed, there should be clear alignment between the applicant and the auspice organisation, including agreement about roles and responsibilities. We encourage applicants to discuss reporting expectations and practical arrangements with their proposed auspice before submitting an application.

Please note that the Seaton Foundation does not fund auspice management or administration fees. Any costs associated with an auspice arrangement (for example, a percentage-based administration fee charged by the auspice organisation and calculated on the initiative's total cost) will need to be covered by the applicant organisation and cannot be included in the grant budget.

How Decisions Are Made

All applications are reviewed by the Seaton Foundation Board.

In considering applications, the Board reflects on how well the proposed initiative aligns with our focus areas and the purpose of the relevant grant pathway. We consider the outcomes you hope to achieve, how you intend to approach the work, and whether the proposed budget is aligned with the activities described.

We recognise that organisations vary in size, structure and resources. Our aim is to make decisions that are proportionate and fair, taking into account the context in which you are working. We value clarity of intent and a thoughtful approach more than polished language, and we recognise and respect your expertise in your work and community.

Funding decisions are made in the context of available funds and overall demand. Not all applications can be funded. If your initiative is not funded, this does not mean we do not value your work; it reflects the reality of limited funds and the number of strong applications received. You are welcome to apply again in future rounds where there is strong alignment with our focus areas and the relevant grant pathway. We encourage you to consider any feedback provided and to contact us if you are unsure whether a future application is likely to be a good fit.

We also welcome feedback on our decision-making process and how we can better support organisations in future rounds

Funding Agreements and Reporting

Organisations receiving funding will enter into a Collaboration Agreement with the Seaton Foundation. This agreement outlines the purpose of the grant, the agreed funding amount, the intended outcomes and the reporting timeframe.

Grant payments are made in accordance with the agreed terms. In some cases, funding may be provided in a single instalment; in others, it may be staged depending on the size and nature of the initiative.

Reporting requirements are proportionate to the size and complexity of the grant. We aim to keep reporting focused and practical, and to align it with the information already provided in your application. We understand that initiatives may evolve over time, and reporting should reflect progress, learning, and outcomes achieved. We do not expect perfect delivery; we are interested in what you are learning, including challenges and changes, and how this will shape your future work. If circumstances change during your initiative, please contact us early so we can discuss adjustments together.

All grants require an acquittal at the conclusion of the funding period. This includes a financial acquittal confirming how funds were spent, and a brief report reflecting on progress toward the outcomes outlined in your application.

We value the experience and expertise of organisations delivering initiatives in our community. As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we will also seek feedback on your experience of the grant process and how we can better support organisations in the future.

Key Dates

Always Open (responsive) grants

Applications are accepted year-round.

New Approaches grants (October)

Applications open for a four-week period each October; specific dates are announced via our website and social media.

Strategic Focus grants (April)

Applications open for a four-week period each April; specific dates are announced via our website and social media.

Decision notifications are typically provided within four to eight weeks of submission, depending on the pathway.

Other engagement opportunities are announced via our website and social media channels.

Contact Information.

Seaton Foundation

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