



Designing Our Community Grants

Through working with Community last year we developed a set of guiding Principles about how we can work differently as a Community.



Focus on wellbeing- We operate with a dynamic charter that keeps our focus on wellbeing and strengths to build on. We create opportunities to have community voice heard on multiple levels.



Culturally inclusive- We share messages that are culturally inclusive and create understanding. We communicate in multiple languages and find ways to identify and overcome barriers to wellbeing.



Movement and momentum- We build movement and momentum through growing trusting relationships that reach far into community and across its many sectors. We actively include all aspects of our community including business and industry



Recognition and acknowledgement- We create new connections and breakdown divisions through recognizing shared history and relationships. We acknowledge the past to move forward truthfully. We hold open and honest dialogue about the past and the effect on the present with the aim of creating a different narrative to move forward.

Get clear on
what it is
and isn't

Key readings
on different
types of
participatory
grants >

We kept peeling it back - asking

"What is it really?"

When we were getting ready to begin designing our grants we read participatory granting case studies from around the world and then came together as a team to talk about what felt most and least important to each of us, the level of support we were ready to offer grant partners, and to nut out the nitty gritty details like, "Would we fund an idea around X?" "Who can apply?" "How much?" "Who decides?"

This getting clear helped us reach a consensus around key issues like the dollar amount of the grants and the difference between grants, donations, and sponsorship. None of it is absolutely set in stone, but this gives us a starting point where we're all on the same page.

**Pick & mix,
then
contextualise**

**Read the
[Case studies
that inspired
our design >](#)**

Don't get pulled into the big stuff, it gets grandiose and starts to feel too hard, remember who you're doing this for and be confident that you know your community best.

Some of the case studies we read were ambitious and exciting but they weren't all suitable for our resources, the size of our community or what we were trying to achieve. We found it really important to not just transplant someone else's method for community granting into our place but to treat the case studies as a pick and mix, taking the best from each and then bringing it down and contextualising it for our community.

Language matters, test early and often

Check Out
[The postcard used to spread the word around community >](#)

A great thing about including people during the design process is that they're involved, when your grants launch some people feel like they're part of it already.

The words we use are impactful and open to interpretation, so it's important to test any communication resources intended for community with your community. Some things that made sense to us really didn't land people in our community.

An example of this was how we included the Our Town Ceduna/Far West principles. We use them all the time in our work and understand them deeply, so at first we just had them as headings, but people really wanted to know what we meant by them so in our final design we include a more detailed description of what they mean and look like in action. By fleshing them out we gave people a better opportunity to understand and connect them to their ideas.

**Make it
accessible
and flexible**

**Look at
[Our Canvas](#)
[to support](#)
[community](#)
[to outline](#)
[their idea >](#)**

It was important to us that we keep our grants as accessible to the broadest range of community we could. We did this in a few ways...

We developed a clear and simple question-answer format for people to use to share their idea with us - but included an invitation to bring this along to a chat with two of our team members. There's no expectation that people have their idea nailed or have been able to give answers to all the questions. Instead it's a tool for us to tease out their idea and see where it might need more thought and where we can help or support.

We'll accept applications on a rolling basis because we know communities (and great ideas!) don't run on financial or calendar years but instead are often sparked by a conversation or hearing something that joins the dots or elicits a spark of inspiration.

Our grants are advertised as being up to \$5,000 but can also be less for smaller pieces of work. However we also have flexibility to meet and decide as a team if a bigger opportunity were to emerge.