

ACT Event Fund 2026

Events ACT



Events ACT: an overview

Responsible for:

- Planning, marketing and delivering a suite of community and major events for the city, which deliver economic, community and social benefits.
 - Includes Floriade/NightFest, the Enlighten Festival, Canberra Balloon Spectacular, the Canberra Nara Candle Festival, Windows to the World, along with celebrations for Australia Day, Canberra Day and New Year's Eve.
- Contributing to the development of the ACT's events sector, including management of the ACT Event Fund, planning support and advice, and promotion of local event activity.
- Providing guidance on event-related matters relevant to the ACT Government and the events sector, including new major event opportunities, event attraction and host city coordination.

The ACT Event Fund

Desired Outcomes:

- To facilitate a **vibrant, innovative, and inclusive events culture** within the ACT.
- To help develop a **diverse, year-round events calendar**.
- To encourage the **development of tourism in the ACT and increase economic activity in the Canberra region**.
- To encourage and support **the involvement of the local community in events** (e.g. event organisers, event participants/attendees, artists/performers, sponsors/partners, community groups, volunteers, and local businesses/suppliers).
- To **facilitate community event activity** within Canberra's town centres and suburbs.
- To **utilise, activate and enliven community assets**, precincts, and spaces.
- To provide support to **viable events** that are of **high quality, well planned and well managed**.



The ACT Event Fund 2026 Round

Support under the ACT Event Fund, for events to be staged in 2026, is made available through a competitive funding round that incorporates two (2) funding categories:

Community Event Funding

Event Development Funding



Funding Categories

- **Community Event Funding:** Up to \$10,000 to support the delivery and enhancement of events that can encourage local engagement and participation.
- **Event Development Funding:** Up to \$30,000 to support the delivery and enhancement of events that can demonstrate strong potential to develop and grow, including capacity to generate community participation, tourist visitation and economic activity.

Note:

- Events must be staged in the 2026 calendar year.
- Applications will only be considered for single-year funding.
- Applicants can only submit one (1) application in total across both categories.



Funding Request

Community Event Funding:

- Applicants will not be able to apply for more than **50%** of the event's total cash expense budget.
- For example, if your total cash expenses for your event in your budget (not including in-kind amounts) is \$15,000, then you would only be able to apply for up to \$7,500. The funding request cannot pay for more than 50% of your overall (cash) costs.

Event Development Funding:

- No more than **30%** of the event's total cash expense budget can be applied for.
- For example, if your total cash expenses for your event in your budget (not including in-kind amounts) is \$50,000, then you would only be able to apply for up to \$15,000 (i.e. 30% of the \$50,000). The funding request cannot pay for more than 30% of your overall (cash) costs.

Applicants to both categories are asked to provide a **fallback funding position**. If an application cannot be fully funded, the panel will refer to the fallback funding position provided.



ACT Event Fund Support can be used for

- **Marketing and Promotion:** includes initiatives associated with raising the profile/awareness of the event and driving attendance.
- **Community Participation and Audience Development:** includes initiatives that enhance community participation levels. Can include audience research, community forums and targeted campaigns.
- **Program Development:** encompasses support for further development of an event program or adding a new component to an existing program.
- **Strategic Planning:** can include engagement of short-term specialised personnel (up to 6 months) to further develop and/or market the event.
- **Hire of certain temporary infrastructure:** such as equipment that improves access, overall visitor experience or the safety of the event. Please contact Events ACT for clarification if required.

Eligibility

You must include an ABN (Australian Business Number) on the application form.

Grants can be managed by:

Recognised organisations, such as:

- Incorporated associations
- Registered businesses
- Companies limited by guarantee

Groups or unincorporated organisations, by either:

- Nominating someone to take legal and financial responsibility, or
- Partnering with an incorporated organisation to manage the grant on their behalf (auspice)

Sole traders, who are legally responsible for all parts of their business or event, including any debts or losses.

Applicants must:

be financially solvent.



have at least \$20 million public liability insurance or be able to secure an appropriate level of cover before entering into a Funding Agreement.



Events not Supported through the ACT Event Fund

- Business events (i.e. that is: trade shows, symposiums, expos, seminars, conferences, and industry meetings).
- Education events (including events organised by tertiary institutions, primary or secondary schools or kindergartens).
- Industry competitions and awards nights.
- Events primarily designed for charity or fundraising purposes that cannot demonstrate strong event sector benefit.
- Local Championship events.
- Reunions/Anniversaries/Centenaries.
- Christmas or New Year's Eve events National Day Celebrations including Australia Day.
- Fireworks displays.
- Open Gardens and Open Days.
- Events designed to promote religious or political causes.
- Events run solely for individual gain.
- Activities that form part of the regular activities of the applicant.
- Sporting, cultural, arts, education, special interest or other gatherings that take place on a regular basis such as monthly or weekly.
- Minor activities, such as product launches, that attract media interest only.
- Any event already funded by Events ACT.
- Events already funded by ACT Government agencies for the same elements.
- Activities for/by Government departments or agencies.
- Events that have failed to suitably acquit a previous ACT Government grant.

How to Apply for the ACT Event Fund

- Applications must be submitted online using SmartyGrants (an online form – link available on the Events ACT website).
- You will need to decide which category of funding you are applying for – **Community Event Funding** or **Event Development Funding**.
- **There is a separate application form set up for each funding category.**
- Only one (1) application per organisation (across both categories).
-  Answer all mandatory questions (*) – you will not be able to submit your application if these have not been completed.
- The online application due date is **11.59pm on Monday, 25 August 2025**.
-  SmartyGrants Help Desk – (03) 9320 6888 for any SmartyGrants access issues.
- Any specific questions on the application form or the funding process should be directed to Events ACT by emailing [**eventfund@act.gov.au**](mailto:eventfund@act.gov.au).

Writing your Application

Please read the *ACT Event Fund 2026 Guidelines for Applicants* and the *ACT Event Fund 2026 Handy Hints* documents. These will help you shape your application. Both documents can be found on the Events ACT website.

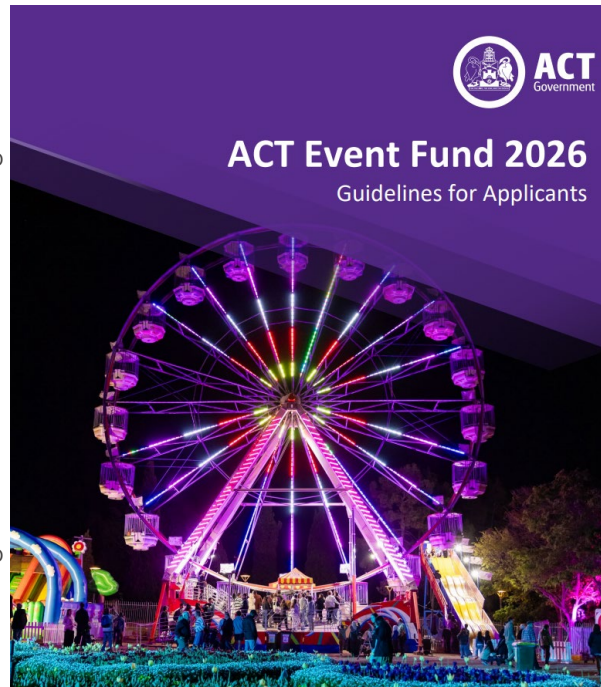
Please refer to the evaluation criteria outlined in the Guide for Applicants:

Community Event Funding criteria:

- Social and Community Benefit – Weighting 70%
- Event Management Capacity and Capability – Weighting 30%

Event Development Funding criteria:

- Social and Community Benefit – Weighting 25%
- Economic Benefit – Weighting 35%
- Marketing Impact – Weighting 20%
- Event Management Capacity and Capability – Weighting 20%



Writing your Application

The **ACT Event Fund** is very competitive, with many events applying for support. To be successful, your application needs to be **clear, well-prepared, and convincing**.

Have a clear understanding of your funding request—how the support will help you deliver your event goals—and how this aligns with the aims and objectives of the ACT Event Fund.

...ASK YOURSELF: WHY ARE YOU REQUESTING GOVERNMENT FUNDING SUPPORT?

...HOW WILL FUNDING HELP ENHANCE YOUR EVENT. Think about how it will help you grow your audience, improve the experience, or increase the benefits your event brings to the ACT.

Clearly answer the questions in the application form. Read the hints if provided.

Your application should grab the attention of the assessment panel. Make sure your event pitch is strong and backed up by clear answers to each question, along with the required evidence and supporting information.

Spend time on your budget – ensure it is clear and detailed. The event budget is an area where otherwise competitive funding applications are often let down. **Clearly outline the intended use of the grant funds** in the SmartyGrants form (table) and separately attach your full detailed event budget to the application.



The Assessment Process

- Funding provided through the ACT Event Fund is limited, and as such, all applications will be assessed on relative merit.
- An independent panel consisting of representatives from relevant ACT Government and external agencies/units will assess the applications.
- The panel assessment process is very thorough, with each application carefully reviewed and considered against the evaluation criteria.
- It should be noted that the assessment panel will also be provided with a summary of any relevant additional information, including an applicant's acquittal history (where applicable).
- The assessment panel submits a set of funding recommendations to Events ACT. Events ACT will then prepare a brief for the Chief Minister in his role as Minister for Tourism and Trade. The Minister provides final approval on successful funding recipients based on the funding recommendations of the assessment panel.





The Role of Events ACT




The Event Development Team at Events ACT is responsible for:

- Managing the overall funding process.
- Ensuring that the funding guidelines and event evaluation criteria are correctly adhered to.
- Ensuring there is consistency of assessment across the suite of applications received.
- Providing the assessment panel with necessary background information for each application.
- Recording panel feedback/comments on each funding application and ranking the applications based on final scoring from the assessment panel.
- Managing and responding to all enquiries relating to the funding round – i.e. from prospective and final applicants, the assessment panel and the general public as required.



The ACT Event Fund 2026

Some final advice and reminders....

-  Please read the 2026 Guidelines for Applicants and Handy Hints documents.
-  Submit your application on time – please **(Due 11:59pm on Monday, 25 August 2025)**
- Answer all mandatory questions.
- Consider writing questions and answers in a Word document prior to submitting online.
- Ask someone separate to the project to read the submission if possible.
- Do not assume that the assessment panel or Events ACT have prior knowledge of you, your event team, your organisation or your event. Put your best foot forward in your funding application by including all relevant information.
- Make sure you receive a confirmation email (sent from SmartyGrants) when you submit your application.
-  Please contact us if you have any questions along the way – we are here to help:
- Event Development Team - Email eventfund@act.gov.au.



Other Useful Tools & Resources



[Access Canberra Event Coordination Guide](#)



[2025 Event Organisers Support Guide](#)

Event Planning Toolkit Resources

The following resources have largely been prepared by the team at [reVENTS Academy](#). These templates, guidelines and checklists can help you develop a great foundation from which to further build on your event delivery processes and event experience.

These are generic templates to provide you with a starting point for your event management and delivery. Please change them as needed to meet your event's specific requirements.

Event Organisation Structure

Planning, Operations and Risk

Advertising and Marketing

Volunteers

Post Event Process

[Event Planning Toolkit Resources](#)

Thank you

Any questions? Please email
eventfund@act.gov.au

