



ACT
Government

ACT Event Fund 2026

Handy Hints





Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and region.

First Nations Peoples who call Canberra home have held gatherings, ceremonies and events on these lands for tens of thousands of years. The ACT Government recognises the importance of these cultural traditions and their role in shaping the rich and diverse events landscape that we enjoy today.

ACT Event Fund – Handy Hints

Before you begin filling in your online application, please read through the *Guide for Applicants* and these *Handy Hints* – they will help you with preparing your application and delivering your event.

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1. General Overview

- Events ACT has a number of resources on the [Events ACT website](#) to assist event organisers with the planning and promotion of their events. We would strongly recommend reviewing these resources.
 - [Event Organisers Support Guide](#)
 - [Event Planning Toolkit](#)
 - [Access Canberra – Event Coordination Guide](#)
- There are a number of templates referenced in this document which may not be relevant for your funding application but are well worth reviewing to assist you with your event planning processes.
- Read through the [Guide for Applicants](#) for advice on preparing your *ACT Event Fund* application.
- There are **separate application forms for each funding category in 2026**. The application form and the extent of information required as part of your application will differ depending on your chosen funding category and the level of your funding request.
- Competition for financial assistance under the *ACT Event Fund* is extremely high, with total funding requests far exceeding the available funding pool. In a typical funding round, only around 30% of applicants will be successful, so your application needs to be of high quality.
- The assessment panel will be expecting a higher level of detail and information if you are applying for Event Development Funding. Also use clear, concise language throughout your application.
- Know your event, plan your funding proposal and understand what you are trying to achieve. The funding application needs to capture the imagination of the assessment panel – i.e. an exciting event backed up by high quality support material.
- Do not assume those assessing your application know of you or your event.
- Answer all questions. Refer to the word count provided in the application form for each question.
- Spend time on your budget – make sure the income and expenditure items are sufficiently detailed and clearly explained. The budget is an area where otherwise competitive applications are often let down. (Further details below). Also consider the size of your funding request carefully.
- **Funding is generally not provided to underwrite events, but to enhance new or existing event opportunities.**

2. Budget

Your budget is your planned revenue and expenditure for the event. It is important to establish an overall event budget that encompasses all components of the event. Set the budget according to the components of the income statement; this will assist in tracking your incoming and outgoing expenses.

2.1 Preparing your budget

- Applicants are encouraged to seek funding from a variety of sources. Provide details of other partners/sponsors, including funding bodies and in-kind support from individuals or organisations.
- When entering income from any additional source – i.e. sponsorships (both in-kind and cash contributions), other successful grants etc., **PLEASE ATTACH** supporting information/evidence. Otherwise, it will be assumed these funds are not secured. If sponsorship negotiations are continuing and not yet finalised, please provide details of ongoing negotiations.
- Clarify any elements of the budget that are complex or require further explanation in your attached detailed event budget.

- For applicants seeking **Event Development Funding**:
 - No more than **30%** of the total event 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 \$60,000, then you would only be able to apply for up to \$18,000 (i.e. 30% of the \$60,000). The funding request cannot pay for more than 30% of your overall (cash) costs.
- For applicants seeking **Community Event Funding**:
 - Applicants seeking **more than \$5,000** (up to a maximum of \$10,000) 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.
- **Events ACT will not support a deficit budget.**
- **Funding request is to be ex GST.**
- **Events ACT understands the need for an event to be financially sustainable.** If showing a budget surplus, applicants will need to demonstrate the government funding need and highlight how surplus funds will help enhance your future event offerings in Canberra.

2.2 About expenditure

- Include all costs associated with your event – for example, venue hire, programming, and materials.
- Indicate which costs you would like covered by the funding request.
- Include payments made to artistic and other personnel, including for travel and accommodation.
- Quotes should be provided for significant items of expenditure.
- If you are receiving in-kind support, this must be represented by a line item in both the income and expenditure columns.

2.3 About income

- Include all the expected income, such as the funding request, other funding and sponsorships, your own contribution (which can be financial or in-kind), and any estimated earned income, such as ticket or merchandise sales.
- The estimated earned income should be realistic and earned as a result of the project. Do not include royalties or sales that may be earned after the calendar year in which the money is spent.
- **Include in-kind support**, such as free or discounted goods and services, free use of a venue or volunteer labour. In-kind support should be recorded in both the income and expenditure columns.

For example, if the cost of hiring a rehearsal space is usually \$2,000 but it is given to you for free, in your expenditure column you would write 'rehearsal space; \$2,000' and in the income column you would write 'rehearsal space – in kind; \$2,000'. Do not seek funding for expenditure items that are being provided as in-kind support.

2.4 Taxation

Funding requests must exclude GST.

If an organisation is registered for GST with the Australian Tax Office (ATO) and has an ABN, GST is payable on funding received under this program.

If your application is successful:

- If you're registered for GST: Events ACT will add 10% to your funding amount after receiving a valid Tax Invoice.
 - If you're not registered for GST: You'll receive the funding amount as is, with no GST added.
- We recommend you speak with your tax agent or the ATO about any tax implications.

Fallback position

In the event that an application cannot be funded to the full amount, applicants are encouraged to specify a reduced dollar amount as a fallback position. **It is important to identify a dollar amount as a suitable fallback. Please identify any change in funding use or project scope should your funding be reduced to the fallback option. If a fallback position is not viable for your funding request, this should also be specified.**

Please note that it is generally the intention of the assessment panel to fund successful applicants to the full amount requested. However, in certain instances, a fallback position may be considered where full funding support is not possible.

As such, the capacity for applicants to present an option where partial funding support would still deliver value to the event can be important.

2.6 Example budget template

Please use the budget template as guide for drafting your budget if needed. We understand Income/Expenditure lines will differ depending on the event being delivered. The [Event Budget Template - with user guide](#) event resource (*right click and Open Hyperlink*) can be found at: [Event Planning and Resources](#).

3. Operational Plan Considerations

3.1 Example Project Plan

Create a visual working document which allows you to track your progress, ensuring all vital components of the event are met on time. It is important to develop a project plan early in the event planning stage and to incorporate each of the tasks required to meet every component of your event.

While this document is not mandatory for your application form, it can be a key tool in keeping your event planning on track.

The [Macro Planning Timeline Template](#) from the [Event Planning and Resources](#) page on our website may be of assistance.

3.2 Insurance

The ACT Government requires all successful applicants to provide evidence of appropriate Public Liability Insurance coverage. Applicants are strongly advised to seek their own advice regarding Public Liability Insurance in all circumstances.

4. Marketing Plan

Key considerations when preparing your marketing plan (no matter what the size of the event), are outlined below.

Delete the sample answers (in italics) and any sections or areas not applicable to your event.

Event Name:

Event Date/s:

Event Times:

Event Venue/s:

Event Details:

Provide a brief description of the event including the purpose of the event and what it involves.

4.1 Key Event Marketing Goals

Outline the key goals of the event marketing plan. Include specific goals and be as specific as possible with actual targets. **Examples below:**

- *Attract at least 1,000 people to the event from outside the ACT.*
 - *Achieve at least 50% return visitation (i.e. visitors from previous event/s).*
 - *Encourage people to stay overnight.*
- *Increase attendance at our event by 20% on previous year (from 2,000 to 2,400).*
 - *Increase participation in our sport/art/cause/charity throughout the year by at least 20%.*
- *Generate greater community and business awareness leading to at least 2 new sponsors.*
- *Increase ticket sales by 500 (from last year) by increasing the number of new event attendees.*
 - *Generate greater awareness of our sport/art/venue.*
 - *Broaden the type of people attending our event, with a particular focus on people who are not currently engaged with our activity/specific age groups etc.*
 - *Promote the assets of Canberra to people outside the area.*

4.2 Key Target Audiences

Describe the people you want to attract to your event. Identify your primary target audiences (i.e. the main group of people you want to attract) and your secondary target audience (the second most important group of people you want to attract).

Describe your audiences in as much detail as you can – e.g. age, gender, where they are from, what they like, type of jobs, income brackets, what they read/listen to/watch/engage with etc.

Examples:

Primary target audience:

- *People who currently compete in our sport/activity/special interest area. The majority are aged from 18 – 55 years, 60% men, 40% women, from Canberra and the region (within a 3 hour radius of the ACT), most have a passion for water sport, and many are in trades with their own business.*

Secondary target audience:

- *People who have not previously competed in our event (or possibly other events) but are currently active water sport enthusiasts. They include people from Sydney and regional NSW locations, own a boat and currently water ski recreationally.*

There are a number of marketing templates on the [Event Planning and Resources](#) page which we recommend reviewing and adapting to your needs.

- [Marketing Action Plan Template](#)
 - Marketing Objectives and KPIs
 - Target Audience (Ideal Attendees)
 - Content Marketing
 - Marketing Budget
 - Action Plan
- [Creating Content for Events](#)
- [Helpful Websites for Events](#)
- [Website and Social Media Marketing Checklist for Events](#)
- [Advertising Prospectus](#)

The Advertising Prospectus information is only intended as an option for organisations wishing to elevate their event promotion via additional paid channels.

5. Risks and Limitations

Risks can arise anywhere in the management of events.

Event organisers should also consider the various limitations on events and attempt to pre-empt and mitigate risks as effectively as possible.

The following information may be relevant to your event and can be used as a guide when submitting your application:

5.1 Risk around administration

Business continuity, record keeping, budget management, contractual obligations and legal implications, event approval, licence, permit timeframes and requirements, stakeholder consultation.

5.2 Marketing and public relations risks

Incident management, negative media coverage, protocol and/ or political sensitivities.

5.3 Operational risks

Health (staff and spectators), emergency management, safety and security, crowd management, parking and transport, catering (food and beverage) and inclement weather on event day.

5.4 Reputational risks

To the event, to the ACT Government, to Canberra, to event stakeholders, sponsors, partners, performers and staff.

You may also find the [Risk Management Plan Template](#) useful for your event planning needs.

6. Data Collection and Attendance Data

Event organisers seeking funding are required to provide validation of event attendance, and for **Event Development Funding** in particular, the interstate/international visitor activity generated by the event.

Although a full evaluation of this information can only be calculated post-event, it is important to consider how the information might be collected well in advance. If you are required to estimate data for your application, ensure you clearly detail where you have sourced your figures from.

6.1 Event Attendance

Determine how many people attended your event. This includes the following breakdown in the application form:

- Participants, Competitors, Contractors and Performers
- Spectators and Audience
- Officials and Volunteers

If the event is ticketed, this should be straightforward. For non-ticketed events, use an entrance point where attendance can be counted through either a manual count or an automatic door counter. If this is not possible, spot checks can be used to estimate attendance.

(Spot Checks – use a formulated approach. Divide the area occupied by a crowd into event sections, determine an average number of people in each section, and multiply by the number of sections occupied. Photos or video footage may assist with collecting this information).

6.2 Proportion of visitors (where applicable)

You will be required to determine what proportion of the event attendees are visitors to the ACT. If your event is ticketed, it is likely that you will be able to collect postcodes through your ticketing agent, or else you may wish to ask attendees for postcodes upon entry to your event.

If the event requires registration or submission of an entry form, you can gather this and other information as required through these forms. If you are not able to obtain the required information through any of the aforementioned methods, a survey of event patrons would be necessary (refer to *Surveying event patrons* section below).

6.3 Visitor type

Those applying for **Event Development Funding** will be required to show details on the proportion of interstate/international visitors, overnight visitors, and where possible the origin of these visitors (i.e. where they came from). The time of day or the length of the event may determine whether visitors will require accommodation to attend your event.

Please refer to the section above on data collection methods.

6.4 Visitor average length of stay

Event Development Funding applicants (where applicable) will be required to provide details on how long overnight visitors stay in Canberra. Consider how many days your event runs for, and if applicable, whether attending the event across multiple days is normal. Specifically, the average nights booked at accommodation providers may provide an adequate assumption.

It may not be feasible to source this information directly from the providers or visitor information centres given the number of visitors, the size of your event or the resources available to your team.

In this case, surveying your event attendees is always the most trustworthy option.

6.5 Surveying event patrons

Some or all of the above information may be obtained through the registration or ticket sales processes. Otherwise, surveying attendees is generally required. There are many ways to survey event patrons; however, the type of event you are holding, along with its location and duration will help determine the most appropriate means to do this.

When determining the best method of surveying, consider the following:

The larger the sample size of participants in your survey the better, although 10% is recommended as a minimum.

An option is an intercept survey, where patrons at the event are asked questions by interviewers. Interviewers then record responses. Intercept surveys need to be both representative of total event attendees, and administered randomly to ensure the whole event population has the same chance of being surveyed.

If your event has the capacity to conduct a more in-depth survey, it is advised that consideration be given to including other questions surrounding topics such as demographics, marketing techniques, visitor expenditure, sponsor recognition, event satisfaction, and community benefits/impacts in order to evaluate your current event and to inform your decision-making and planning for future events.

There are a number of questions designed to capture this information in the [Attendee Survey](#) template which is located on the Events ACT website.

While a face-to-face survey method is often undertaken, post-event online surveys can also be used if you have a large email database, or by having the survey available on a website that patrons can visit at the event or after the event.

Here are some points to consider:

- It is best for online surveys to be completed during the event or soon after the event for accuracy of information.
- If a survey is sent by electronic direct mail to patrons, you can expect that only a small proportion of your database will respond. Assume a rate of 15% or less.
- Offering an incentive or prize to participate in the survey will increase the response rate, as long as the prize is relevant to the audience.
- [SurveyMonkey](#) or [Google forms](#) are good examples of free online survey tools.
- You may be able to enlist the assistance of volunteers to support with surveying through tertiary institutions such as TAFE or universities that offer tourism and event courses.

There are a number of resources (under the 'Post Event Process' tab on the Events ACT website), available for your adaption and use.

- [Post Event Review Checklist](#)
- [Post Event Report Template](#)
- [Debrief Meeting Agenda Template](#)
- [Post Event Review Action Plan Template](#)
- [Attendee Survey](#)
- [Stakeholder Survey](#)

The more you know about your event patrons, the more targeted activities to grow the event can be. The Event Development team at Events ACT would be very happy to help you with any research questions, so please reach out if needed.

7. Contacting Events ACT

If you require any additional information, please contact Events ACT.

Events ACT

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

Level 3

220 London Circuit

Canberra ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6205 4324

Email: eventfund@act.gov.au

Website: <https://events.canberra.com.au/>



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Events ACT – July 2025