

Guidelines



Harvest Festival 2026 –Expression of Interest

Important dates

Harvest Festival Expression of Interest opens on Monday 25 August 9am and closes on Monday 22 September 2025 at 2pm.

Any questions relating to the Expression of Interest should be directed to the Events Officer at events@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au

Who Can Apply?

Harvest Festival Expression of Interest is available to eligible sole traders, businesses, companies or organisations that propose an event or event concept that satisfies the requirements.

The Festival committee is also looking to fund a range of unique events to run in the evening that provide the community and visitors with a diverse Festival calendar.

Applying for funding is optional and if you don't wish to pursue this, please answer no in the relevant question within the application.

Event Innovation funding is available to those who would like assistance funding their event. *Maximum funding per application: \$5,000 exclusive of GST if applicable.*

Please Note: Applicants will be required to provide a full event management plan, budget, marketing plan and or project plan prior to final funding determination.

Types of Events that will be considered:

Unfunded events should align with the Harvest Festival theme and contribute meaningfully to the overall program. These may include daytime activities such as workshops, demonstrations, or community-led activations that reflect the spirit of harvest, sustainability, and local culture.

Funded events, however, must be held in the evening and should offer engaging, high-impact experiences that enhance the festival's appeal and encourage extended visitation.

We are seeking bold, innovative, and creative ideas that stay true to the Harvest Festival's values of celebrating local produce, culture, and community. Events will be assessed by the committee based on their ability to:

- Add value to the overall Harvest Festival program
- Involve and engage the local community
- Attract visitors to the region
- Reflect the harvest theme either through location, concept, or content

Please Note: By submitting an application it does not mean your expression of interest or funding application will automatically be approved. Funding will only be available to approved applicants/events after an extensive criteria assessment.

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Events need to;

- Facilitate a vibrant and innovative events culture within the Central Coast.
- Encourage the development of tourism in the Central Coast and increase economic development opportunities.
- Encourage the involvement of local residents in events and Festivals that can facilitate positive interaction, cultural activity and a strong community identity among the citizens of our diverse community.

Examples of events may include (but not limited to);

- Art events and workshops
- Obstacle course / Fun runs
- Live music concerts
- 'Pick your own'
- Farm tours
- Community events
- Fresh produce markets
- Cooking workshops
- Long lunches

Evening event Ideas:

- Outdoor cinema within the orchards
- Lighting Installations
- Live music within the orchards
- Degustation dinners
- Night Markets

- Long table farm dinners
- Lantern walks and tours

**Preference will be given to events that can attract attendees from outside the region.*

Eligibility

- The organisation responsible for the initiative is a legal entity such as a Sole Trader, Trust, company or incorporated association and can provide evidence of this status.
- Events are to be held within the Hinterland Central Coast.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate an extensive community involvement.
- Applicants who have previously received funding from Council under any of its programs must first meet all reporting requirements for that funding, by the agreed due date, before they can apply for new assistance. Applications for partial funding of proposals must be supported by evidence that funding has been sought/obtained from other sources.
- Applications not meeting the eligible criteria set out in this procedure will not be reported to the Committee for consideration.
- Must have \$20mil Public Liability Insurance for the period of the event.

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- Applicants must demonstrate to Council that their organisation is able to effectively manage and deliver the proposed event.

Ineligible

- Capital expenditure unless the applicant can demonstrate an exceptional need and show that the equipment applied for is vital to the event and cannot be procured from any other source. In such instances, Council will require two written quotes. Quotes must be attached to your application at the relevant section.
- Personal travel.
- Late or incomplete applications.
- Events with a religious, political or sectarian purpose, where that purpose may exclude or offend members of the broader community.
- A proposed allocation which contravenes the Local Government Act 1993 or any Procedure of Council.
- Applicants who have an outstanding debt to Council.
- Council employees.
- Individuals
- Events that are closed to the public, either as participants or spectators.
- Events held outside the Festival time frame.

- Events not held on in Central Coast Hinterland.
- Paper Based Applications.

Conditions of Funding

- Under no circumstances will additional funding be allocated to meet shortfalls.
- As a condition of funding Council and the Festival must be acknowledged in all promotional material and the Festival logo along with Council's logo must be included in all print and digital material in line with branding guidelines.
- All promotional material is to be approved by Council prior to publication.
- Any sponsors proposed to be sought for the event must be approved by Council to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest with the sponsors of Harvest Festival. This includes any locations proposed for the events.
- In addition, Central Coast Council reserves the right to receive the following:
 - Joint media release opportunities
 - Opportunity for Council delegate to speak at one occasion e.g. (opening)
 - Space at event (e.g. marquee)

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- Council is to sit on all monthly event planning meetings as requested
- Council funds may only be used as agreed with Council and may not be diverted to another project or purpose.
- Unspent funds must be returned to Council.
- Events must have \$20 million Public Liability Insurance.

Accessibility

Please ensure that you have considered accessibility requirements as part of running your event, and refer to the following guidelines and checklist to assist in doing so:
<https://cdn.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/general-information/special-events/central-coast-council-how-to-plan-accessible-events-standard.pdf>

Notification

- Eligible applications will be evaluated by an internal panel. The assessment panel may seek further information or clarification on aspects of the application or request a site visit.

- Innovation Event funding recommendations will be presented to The Festival committee for approval by mid to late November 2025.
- Applicants will be notified by end of November 2025 of the outcome of their application for funding. **There is no appeals process.**
- Successful applicants will be contacted by Council to arrange a meeting to sign a funding agreement. The funding agreement is based on a standard funding template, of which the terms and conditions of the funding are negotiable.
- Payments of Innovation Event Funding will be available from June 2026 upon completion of the funding acquittal report. In some cases, part funding may be made available for deposits. This decision will be determined on a case-by-case basis and must be requested at the time of reviewing the agreement.

Acquittal and Reporting

- A comprehensive event report is a condition of funding as it is a critical part in validating the event outcomes against the original proposal. Successful applicants will be required to undertake a suitable event research process to collect specific attendance data during the period of the event and calculate the

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economic and social impacts of the event.

A report template will be provided.

- The deadline for the provision of an event report and financial acquittal report is no later than one (1) month following the conclusion of the event.
- Recipients must provide a financial acquittal identifying where profits have been spent and must align with the original event budget.

Tax advice

The Australian Taxation Office considers funding and sponsorships as taxable income.

The tax office can help with information on tax, including GST. Call 13 2866 or visit www.ato.gov.au for further information.