

Program:	Economic Development
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Scope

The Sponsorship Policy is designed to provide the framework for determining when Mackay Regional Council (MRC) will enter into sponsorship agreements with an organisation or entity.

Objective

To support the provision of MRC sponsorship which:

- provides an identified economic, social, cultural or environmental benefit to the Mackay Region;
- aligns with Council’s Corporate Plan, Council policies and Council strategies;
- does not harm or diminish the name or reputation of MRC or bring the MRC's name into disrepute, scandal or ridicule; and
- is appropriate having regard to other priorities and available resources and supports strong fiscal management.

Policy Statement

This Policy provides the provision of financial and in-kind assistance to organisations and entities.

MRC considers that to the extent this policy engages and limits, or potentially limits, any human rights, that limitation is reasonable in that it is proportionate and justified.

This process to remain in force until otherwise determined
by Mackay Regional Council

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1.0 Principles

MRC is responsible for delivering a range of services for the residents and ratepayers of the Mackay Region. MRC also supports organisations and entities to deliver events, programs and services which provide identified economic, social, cultural or environmental benefits to the Mackay Region.

The Sponsorship Policy was established to provide a clear and accountable process for the provision of financial and in-kind support to organisations or entities and to guide the administration of MRC's sponsorship programs so that sponsorships:

- provide an economic, social, cultural or environmental benefit to the Mackay Region;
- align with the MRC Corporate Plan, Policies and Strategies;
- do not harm or diminish the name or reputation of Council or bring the MRC's name into disrepute, scandal or ridicule.
- are awarded to organisations or entities that meet the eligibility criteria set out in this policy and in any supporting guidelines for the specific sponsorship category.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with any supporting guidelines for specific sponsorship categories. This Policy does not apply to MRC's grant programs (refer to MRC's Grants Policy).

1.1 Sponsorship Category - Corporate

MRC may provide corporate sponsorship for projects, events and/or organisations/entities which provide:

- an identified economic, social, cultural or environmental benefit to the Mackay Region;
- tangible benefit to MRC from being a sponsor (enhanced corporate image/revenue potential);
- outcomes that align with the objectives of MRC Corporate Plan, Policies and Strategies.

The type of initiatives or organisations that MRC may consider for sponsorship include, but are not limited to the following:

- Not-for-profit organisations;
- Events;
- Industry and businesses events, awards and conferences;
- Trade shows.

1.2 Assessment Principles

The following principles will be applied when determining sponsorship eligibility and sponsorship amounts in accordance with this Policy.

- Sponsored activities must provide an economic, social, cultural or environmental benefit to the Mackay Region and its community.

- Sponsored activities must align with MRC's Corporate Plan, Policies and Strategies.
- Sponsored activities must not harm or diminish the name or reputation of Council and MRC or bring the MRC's name into disrepute, scandal or ridicule.
- Sponsored activities must only be awarded to organisations or entities that meet the sponsorship recipient eligibility criteria set out in this policy and in any supporting guidelines.

MRC has the right to consider additional assessment principles when considering sponsorship requests and the granting of sponsorship is at the sole discretion of Council.

1.3 Sponsorship Recipient Eligibility

Eligible organisations and entities are required to:

- Have acquitted any previous MRC grants and sponsorships satisfactorily;
- Be free of debt with MRC;
- Have a valid public liability certificate and ensure that risks are assessed and managed; and
- Meets the eligibility criteria set out in this policy and in any supporting guidelines for the specific sponsorship program.

1.4 Assessment Criteria

Sponsorship requests will be assessed against the Assessment Principles set out in this policy and any supporting guidelines for a specific sponsorship category

MRC and Council have the right to consider additional assessment principles when considering sponsorship requests and the granting of sponsorship is at the sole discretion of Council.

1.5 Assessment Process

Requests for sponsorship must be made in writing to MRC and/or in accordance with any supporting guidelines for a specific sponsorship category.

MRC/Council's assessment will adhere to the following key assessment processes:

1. Assessment against Sponsorship Recipient Eligibility;
2. Assessment against Assessment Principles; and

1.6 Approval of Sponsorship

Sponsorship requests will be assessed and approved by relevant MRC programs within program budgets, under current levels of financial delegation.

1.7 Sponsorship Agreement

The sponsorship recipient may be required to enter into a formal sponsorship agreement with MRC. Such agreements may specify conditions, such as, but not limited to:

- Approval requirements and responsibilities;
- Sponsorship payment terms and acquittal requirements;
- Provision of complimentary tickets;
- Acknowledgement of MRC's sponsorship in marketing and promotion activities;
- Reporting requirements for a project's outcomes;
- Approval requirements for variation to sponsorship terms; and
- Provision of documentation such as Certificate of Public Liability Insurance.

1.8 Timing of Sponsorship

The timing of sponsorship payment will be subject to a Sponsorship Agreement. Sponsorship may be provided on an individual or recurring basis, subject to a Sponsorship Agreement.

1.9 Conflict of Interest

To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process is maintained, Councillors and MRC Officers assessing sponsorship requests are required to declare any perceived or potential conflict of interests prior to the assessment process commencing. This may include but is not limited to personal connections with any applicant or personal involvement with any organisation. Anyone having a conflict of interest should not debate, be involved in any discussions, or vote on any matter relating to the specific application.

1.10 Grievance process

All applicants must be informed of the outcome of their application in writing and offered the opportunity to discuss the application process.

Applicants can request, in writing, a review of the decision if not satisfied with the selection process. The applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing.

1.11 Unacquitted Sponsorship

In the circumstance that an organisation or individual has not complied with acquittal timeframes and requirements in accordance with a Sponsorship Agreement, the following actions will be considered:

- Council will issue an Outcome Report to be completed and returned by the sponsorship recipient no more than four (4) weeks after the conclusion of the project.
- If the sponsorship remains unacquitted the sponsorship recipient will be made ineligible to apply for future MRC sponsorship for a period of at least three years.
- At the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, actions may be taken to recover unacquitted funds.

2.0 Definitions

To assist in interpretation the following definitions shall apply:

Acquittal the process by which a recipient demonstrates in writing to the funding body that it has expended the funds in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding agreement on completion of the activity or project.

Conflict of Interest is a conflict between:

- a) an officer's or Councillor's personal interests (including personal interests arising from their relationships or club memberships for example), and
- (b) the public interest that might lead to a decision that is contrary to the public interest.

Council shall mean the collective body of all elected representatives of Mackay Regional Council, as constituted under the *Local Government Act 2009*, responsible for governing the local government area and making decisions in the public interest.

Councillor shall mean an individual elected representative of Mackay Regional Council.

Sponsorship refers to funds provided to a recipient through a formal program for a specified purpose, directed at achieving goals and objectives consistent with Council policy, where a recipient is selected on merit against a set of criteria.

Incorporated Organisation shall mean an organisation whose status is registered with the Office of Fair Trading and operates within the scope of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981* and *Associations Incorporation Regulation 1999*.

MRC shall mean Mackay Regional Council.

Not-for-profit organisations shall mean an organisation that is not operating for the profit or gain of its members.

Recurrent nature shall mean an agreement to provide financial or in-kind assistance on more than one occasion over a specified time period to achieve a specific outcome.

3.0 Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- The related documents are amended or replaced.
- Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of Council.

Notwithstanding the above, this policy is to be reviewed at intervals of no more than four (4) years.

4.0 Reference

- *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*
- *Associations Incorporation Regulation 1999.*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Local Government Regulations 2012*
- *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*
- *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*

Version Control:

Version	Reason / Trigger	Change	Endorsed / Reviewed	Date
1	New Policy		Council	14.08.19
2	Amended		ORD-2022-339	23.11.2022
3	Review		ORD-2025-404	25.02.2025