

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS GRANT ROUND 19

L&C | 63/18/1-01 | #7915424

RECOMMENDATION:**That Council:**

- 1. Approves \$63,500 (ex GST) from the 2026/2027 Community Partnerships Grant Stream to be awarded to the following applicants:**
 - a) Cairns Irish Association for Saint Patrick's Day Family Festival to the value of \$12,000 (ex GST).**
 - b) Cairns Thai Community Association FNQ Inc. for Songkran Festival 2027 up to the value of \$18,000 (ex GST).**
 - c) Cairns Water Polo Inc for Water Polo Queensland Senior Country Championships to the value of \$10,000 (ex GST).**
 - d) Holloways Beach Community Hall Inc. for the Holloways Christmas Celebrations to the value of \$8,500 (ex GST).**
 - e) Nga Matawaka Inc for Waitangi Day Celebration to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).**
 - f) QCWA Branch Freshwater for Freshwater Christmas in the Park to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).**
 - g) Yorkeys Knob Residents Association Inc for the Twilight Festival to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).**

INTERESTED PARTIES:

See Attachment 1.

Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In total, 11 applications were received for Community Partnerships Grant Round 19, with \$174,472 (ex GST) requested. Council Officers recommend funding 7 applications to a total value of \$63,500 (ex GST).

BACKGROUND:

The intent of the Community Partnerships Grant is to assist community groups and organisations with the delivery of events, projects and activities that enhance the lives of local communities, celebrate important community occasions, and provide opportunities to develop social cohesion and connection in the Cairns region.

The Community Partnerships Grant provides assistance through cash and the provision of Council venues and resources. The maximum amount per application is \$25,000 (ex GST).

The following applications for Community Partnerships Grant Round 19 have been received:

Applicant	Event	Event Date	Amount Requested (ex GST)	Amount Recommended (ex GST)
A Sense of Hope	Emergency Food Bank	2-30 December 2026	\$1,000	\$0
Cairns Irish Association	Saint Patrick's Day Family Festival	13 March 2027	\$24,800	\$12,000
Cairns Municipal Band Incorporated Association	Edelweiss Community Connection Through Culture and Dance	1 January – 31 December 2027	\$8,172	\$0
Cairns Thai Community Association FNQ Inc.	Songkran Festival 2027	10 April 2027	\$25,000	\$18,000
Cairns Water Polo Inc	Water Polo Queensland Senior Country Championships	12-14 February 2027	\$15,000	\$10,000
Holloways Beach Community Hall Inc.	Holloways Christmas Celebrations	4 December 2026	\$20,000	\$8,500
Nga Matawaka Inc	Waitangi Day Celebration	6 February 2026	\$15,000	\$5,000
QCWA Branch Freshwater	Freshwater Christmas in the Park	11 December 2026	\$7,500	\$5,000
Spinal Life Australia Ltd	Cairns Disability Sport & Recreation (DSR) Hub	29 January – 18 December 2027	\$25,000	\$0
Which-Way Cultural & Community Care WWCCC	Which-Way Street Lab	19 December 2026	\$25,000	\$0
Yorkeys Knob Residents Association Inc	Twilight Festival	5 December 2026	\$8,000	\$5,000
Total			\$174,472	\$63,500

COMMENT:

Cairns Irish Association for Saint Patrick's Day Family Festival to the value of \$12,000 (ex GST).

Event Date: 13 March 2027

Cairns Irish Association has successfully delivered St Partick's Day festivities to the Cairns community since 2021, with the event providing an opportunity to preserve, celebrate and showcase Irish culture and traditions. Over this period, the event has demonstrated consistent growth in community participation and engagement, reflecting its increasing popularity and value as a cultural celebration within the Cairns region.

It is anticipated that approximately 900 people will attend the free community event at Watson's Oval, Manunda. Attendees will enjoy a diverse program of Irish dancing and music performances, authentic Irish cuisine, and a range of traditional cultural activities. These include St Brigid's Cross making, St Patrick storytelling, Gaelic language lessons and children's activities, providing opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about and experience Irish heritage.

Council has not previously supported Cairns Irish Association.

Cairns Irish Association is requesting \$24,800 (ex GST) towards the delivery of the event.

Officers are supportive of this request and recommend supporting this application to the value of \$12,000 cash (ex GST).

Cairns Thai Community Association FNQ Inc. for Songkran Festival 2027 up to the value of \$18,000 (ex GST).

Event Date: 10 April 2027

Songkran is a celebration of the new year in accordance with the solar calendar in April each year. The event provides the opportunity for the Cairns community to come together to celebrate the new year and the rich culture and traditions of Thailand.

The Songkran celebration is renowned for its water festival which traditionally represents a cleansing ritual, washing away impurities and bad luck to start the New Year a fresh. It is also a festival of unity, bringing together loved ones, relatives, and elders.

Held at the Western Events Lawn, this year's Festival will follow a similar format to previous years. The celebrations will include water blessings, water fights, traditional cultural performances and market stalls selling arts, crafts, and authentic Thai food. It is expected that the event will attract more than 2,000 participants.

Since 2020/2021, Council resolved to support Cairns Thai Community Association FNQ Inc. up to the total value of \$92,014 (ex GST). This is detailed in the table below:

Funding Year	Event, Activity or Project	Amount (ex GST)
2025/2026	Songkran Festival 2026 – Thai New Year Celebration	\$20,000
2024/2025	Songkran Festival 2025 (Thai New Year)	\$22,000
2023/2024	Songkran Festival 2024 (Thai New Year)	\$18,500

2022/2023	Songkran Festival 2023	\$16,000
2021/2022	Songkran Festival 2022 (Thai New Year)	\$15,514

Cairns Thai Community Association FNQ Inc. is requesting \$25,000 (ex GST) towards the delivery of the event.

Officers are supportive of this request and recommend supporting this application to the value of \$18,000 (ex GST) consisting of \$7,300 cash (ex GST) and the provision of venue hire and associated resources up to the value of \$10,700 (ex GST).

Cairns Water Polo Inc for Water Polo Queensland Senior Country Championships to the value of \$10,000 (ex GST).

Event Date: 12-14 February 2027

The Water Polo Queensland Senior Country Championships will be held at Tobruk Memorial Pool in February 2027. The three-day event brings together athletes, coaches, referees and officials from across Queensland and is the premier water polo competition for senior competitors (age 16 to 60+ years) in regional communities.

Previously delivered by Water Polo Queensland in 2022, the Championships are expected to attract 358 attendees, including 275 visitors from outside the region. Participants and supporters are projected to stay an average of four nights, generating a total visitor spend of \$240,000 in visitor expenditure for the local economy.

Hosting the Championships in Cairns will provide local athletes with the opportunity to compete at a state level without the financial and logistical barriers associated with travel. The event will also support athletes and teams seeking selection to represent Queensland at the Australian Country Championships in May, while further strengthening pathways for participation and development within the sport.

Council has not previously supported Cairns Water Polo Inc.

Cairns Water Polo Inc is requesting \$15,000 (ex GST) towards the delivery of the event.

Officers are supportive of this request and recommend supporting this application to the value of \$10,000 cash (ex GST).

Holloways Beach Community Hall Inc. for the Holloways Christmas Celebrations to the value of \$8,500 (ex GST).

Event Date: 4 December 2026

The Holloways Christmas Celebration has been a valued annual event since 2015, providing opportunities for residents and visitors to come together and celebrate the festive season. Held at various locations throughout Holloways Beach over this period, the event became a much-anticipated community tradition before being impacted by Cyclone Jasper in 2023.

In 2026, the Holloways Beach Sports Centre will provide an accessible and inclusive venue to reinstate the Christmas Celebrations, welcoming community members to enjoy a free program of entertainment, Christmas carols and family friendly activities.

With an anticipated attendance of 1500 people, the Christmas Celebrations will support community connection and wellbeing by bringing residents together, fostering new relationships, reducing social isolation and rebuilding a valued local tradition. The celebration will also contribute to strengthening community spirit and resilience while providing an opportunity for families and neighbours to reconnect in a welcoming and festive environment.

Since 2020/2021, Council resolved to support Holloways Beach Community Hall Inc. to the total value of \$4,500 (ex GST). This is detailed in the table below:

Funding Year	Event, Activity or Project	Amount (ex GST)
2024/2025	Holloways Beach Christmas Fair 2024	\$4,500

Holloways Beach Community Hall Inc. is requesting \$20,000 (ex GST) towards the delivery of the event.

Officers are supportive of this request and recommend supporting this application to the value of \$8,500 cash (ex GST).

**Nga Matawaka Inc for Waitangi Day Celebration to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).
Event Date: 6 February 2027**

Waitangi Day Celebration commemorates the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 and provides an opportunity for the community to come together to celebrate and promote Māori and Pacific Island culture and traditions.

Previously supported in 2020 and 2021, the event is being re-established in 2027 and will be held on Windarra Street, Woree. The celebration will showcase Māori and Pacific Island cultures through Kapa Haka performances, multicultural entertainment and interactive cultural workshops.

The free community event will operate from 10.30am to 3.00pm and is expected to attract approximately 370 attendees. In addition to a diverse cultural program, the event will feature community stalls, food vendors and family friendly activities. The celebration will foster community connection, promote cultural understanding and support social inclusion by bringing together people from a wide range of backgrounds in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Since 2020/2021, Council resolved to support Nga Matawaka Inc to the total value of \$35,000 (ex GST). This is detailed in the table below:

Funding Year	Event, Activity or Project	Amount (ex GST)
2024/2025	FNQ New Zealand Cultural Festival - Matariki	\$20,000
2020/2021	Waitangi Day Cairns 2021	\$15,000

Nga Matawaka Inc is requesting \$15,000 (ex GST) towards the delivery of the event.

Officers are supportive of this request and recommend supporting this application to the value of \$5,000 cash (ex GST).

QCWA Branch Freshwater for Freshwater Christmas in the Park to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).

Event Date: 11 December 2026

QCWA Branch Freshwater's Christmas in the Park will return in December 2026, providing an opportunity for families, friends and community members to come together and celebrate the festive season.

The event will be held at Richmond Park and is expected to attract up to 1,250 attendees. Community members will enjoy a festive Carols in the park atmosphere under the park's festoon lighting, with entertainment including musical performances by regional schools, Christmas carols and an appearance from Santa.

The free community event will also feature a range of family-friendly activities, a selection of local food trucks providing classic favourites and festive treats, and a small Christmas market showcasing locally made gifts, decorations, and seasonal products.

Since 2020/2021, Council resolved to support QCWA Branch Freshwater to the total value of \$31,000 (ex GST). This is detailed in the table below:

Funding Year	Event, Activity or Project	Amount (ex GST)
2025/2026	Freshwater Festival (Freshwater Festival Street Fiesta)	\$12,000
2025/2026	Freshwater Christmas in the Park	\$7,000
2024/2025	Freshwater Festivals	\$12,000

QCWA Branch Freshwater is requesting \$7,500 (ex GST) towards the delivery of the event.

Officers are supportive of this request and recommend supporting this application to the value of \$5,000 cash (ex GST).

Yorkeys Knob Resident Association Inc for the Twilight Festival to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).

Event Date: 5 December 2026

Yorkeys Knob Residents Association will bring the community together to celebrate the festive season with the Twilight Festival (Twilight Christmas Market). Now in its fifth year, the annual event supports local artisans and entertainers and encourages community connectedness.

Held on Sims Esplanade, the Twilight Festival is a market-style event offering a range of activities including performances from the local school choir, dance groups and musicians. Market stalls provide a space for local artisans to sell their wares with food and refreshments provided by local vendors.

With an anticipated attendance of 4,000 people, this family and pet-friendly event will bring community together to enjoy an accessible and affordable evening of entertainment.

Since 2020/2021, Council resolved to support Yorkeys Knob Residents Association Inc

to the total value of \$18,000 (ex GST). This is detailed in the table below:

Funding Year	Event, Activity or Project	Amount (ex GST)
2025/2026	Twilight Christmas Market	\$5,000
2024/2025	Yorkeys Knob Twilight Christmas Market	\$6,000
2023/2024	Yorkeys Knob Twilight Christmas Markets 2023	\$4,000
2022/2023	Yorkeys Knob Twilight Christmas Markets 2022	\$3,000

Yorkeys Knob Residents Association Inc is requesting \$8,000 (ex GST) towards the delivery of the event.

Officers are supportive of this request and recommend supporting this application to the value of \$5,000 cash (ex GST).

Applications not recommended for funding.

Following a thorough assessment process undertaken by Council Officers, the following applications are not recommended for funding:

Applicant	Event	Event date	Amount requested (ex GST)
A Sense of Hope	Emergency Food Bank	2-30 December 2026	\$1,000
Cairns Municipal Band Incorporated Association	Edelweiss Community Connections Through Culture and Dance	1 January – 31 December 2027	\$8,172
Spinal Life Australia Ltd	Cairns Disability Sport & Recreation (DSR) Hub	29 January – 18 December 2027	\$25,000
Which-Way Cultural & Community Care WWCCC	Which-Way Street Lab	19 December 2026	\$25,000

OPTIONS:

Option 1: (Recommended)

That Council:

1. Approves \$63,500 (ex GST) funding from the 2026/2027 Community Partnerships Grant stream to the following applicants:
 - a) Cairns Irish Association for Saint Patrick's Day Family Festival to the value of \$12,000 (ex GST).
 - b) Cairns Thai Community Association FNQ Inc. for Songkran Festival 2027 up to the value of \$18,000 (ex GST).

- c) Cairns Water Polo Inc for Water Polo Queensland Senior Country Championships to the value of \$10,000 (ex GST).
- d) Holloways Beach Community Hall Inc. for the Holloways Christmas Celebrations to the value of \$8,500 (ex GST).
- e) Nga Matawaka Inc for Waitangi Day Celebration to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).
- f) QCWA Branch Freshwater for Freshwater Christmas in the Park to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).
- g) Yorkeys Knob Residents Association Inc for the Twilight Festival to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST).

Option 2:

That Council does not endorse the recommendations and adopts an alternative funding allocation.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

The recommendations contained within this report will be funded in Council's 2026/2027 proposed operating budget within the Community Partnerships Grant funding allocation.

Budget considerations:

2026/2027 Budget:

- The Community Partnerships Grant has an approved allocation of \$723,500 for the 2026/2027 financial year.
- \$463,087 (ex GST) of funds have already been allocated.
- Recommended in this report for Grant Round 19 is \$63,500 (ex GST).
- Should the recommendations within this report be supported, the remaining balance available for distribution will be \$196,913 (ex GST).

2026/2027	
2026/2027 Budget	\$723,500
Currently allocated	\$463,087
Recommended in this report	\$63,500
Total Remaining 2026/2027 Budget	\$196,913

Community and Cultural Heritage:

The events and activities recommended in this report celebrate community life, foster community pride, and enhance the profile of Cairns. Through funding community-led initiatives, Council provides:

- Support to community organisations to build social cohesion and resilience by connecting people with each other and with groups, institutions and services in the community, creating a sense of belonging.
- Activation and promotion of local organisations, businesses, and industries.
- Local volunteering opportunities through the facilitations of programs and events.
- Capacity building for local clubs, organisations, and volunteer networks.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

The applications recommended in this report align with Council's Corporate Plan 2025 – 2030:

- Focus One – Robust Economy
Strategy: Optimise visitation and tourism opportunities
- Focus Three – Design for Liveability
Strategy: Promote a vibrant community that supports wellbeing, safety and resilience
- Focus Four – Community & Culture
Strategy: Support diverse sport, cultural and community groups

Statutory:

The Community Grant Policy and associated schedules are compliant with the specific community grant requirements of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.

Policy:

Council's Community Grant Policy has been applied in the assessment of these applications.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Interested Parties



Andrew Moore
Executive Manager Community Life



Destry Puia
Director Lifestyle and Community

ATTACHMENT 1: INTERESTED PARTIES

Name of Organisation: A Sense of Hope

Committee Position	Name
CEO	Lee Peak
Chair	Tracey Peak
Deputy Chair	Susan Martin
Board Member	Mick Lark
Board Member	Rebecca van der geer
Board Member	Ester van der geer
Board Member	Paula Gebadi
Board Member	John Martin

Name of Organisation: Cairns Irish Association

Committee Position	Name
President	Tom Burke
Vice President	Conor Kavanagh/Dave Brown
Treasurer	Brigid Hackett
Secretary	Roisin Murphy
Assistant Secretary	Louise Nugent
Public Relations Officer	Kiera Kenna
Assistant Public Relations Officer	Brendan Moore

Name of Organisation: Cairns Municipal Band Incorporated Association

Committee Position	Name
President	Gary Turner
Vice President	Andrea Leumann and Fred Humphries
Treasurer	Noel Rumble
Secretary	Chris Wright
Committee Member	Nobby Neilson
Committee Member	Andrew Stevens
Committee Member	John Sexton
Committee Member	Pattie Davie

Name of Organisation: Cairns Thai Community Association FNQ Inc.

Committee Position	Name
President/Acting Secretary	Prapasiri Techo
Vice President	Rampai Kumkuang
Treasurer	Jiraporn Junluang
Committee Member	Archa T Kloss
Committee Member	Marie Lombard
Committee Member	Jitsasauda Laoongeeak

Name of Organisation: Cairns Water Polo Inc

Committee Position	Name
President	Jarred Heiser
Secretary	Ryan Barton
Treasurer	Michael Porter

Name of Organisation: Holloways Beach Community Hall Inc.

Committee Position	Name
President	Greg Curtis
Secretary	Suzette Habel
Vice President	Abigail Ham

Name of Organisation: Nga Matawaka Inc

Committee Position	Name
President	Steven Whiti
Secretary	Parehuia Walker
Treasurer	Krysti Kiria
Committee Member	Joseph Ransfield
Committee Member	Cindy Ransfield
Committee Member	Lena Taramai
Committee Member	Sharon Licence
Committee Member	Jeff Lewis

Name of Organisation: QCWA Branch Freshwater

Committee Position	Name
President	Nina Annand
Secretary	Wendy Milgate
Vice President	Beryl Broadbent
Vice President	Deborah Evans
Treasurer	Sue Toms

Name of Organisation: Spinal Life Australia Ltd

Committee Position	Name
Chair	Gyl Stacey
Board Member	Gerard O'Brien
Board Member	Prof Phillip Morris
Board Member	Cathy Russo
Board Member	Carol Taylor
Board Member	Rebecca Tweedy
Board Member	Mark Fenton

Name of Organisation: Which-Way Cultural & Community Care WWCCC

Committee Position	Name
President	Rennae Brant
Treasurer	Dale Goodwin
Secretary	Katie Moss

Name of Organisation: Yorkeys Knob Residents Association Inc

Committee Position	Name
President	Michael Allan Powell
Secretary	Marja-Leena Malinen
Vice President	Daniella Vavrova
Treasurer	Valerie Partridge
Committee Member	Amanda Snow
Committee Member	Allan Cullington
Committee Member	Michelle Tallier
Committee Member	Frank Fisher