



WHITEHORSE

Discounts for Community Space Hire

2027 Guidelines



Overview

Whitehorse City Council provides discounts on its community space hire fees as a way of supporting local community groups and not-for-profit organisations to access affordable venues to deliver events, activities or programs that support the health and wellbeing of people in Whitehorse.

These Guidelines outline information about eligibility for discounts and the application process. The community spaces where discounts can apply are listed on page 5.

Whitehorse City Council is committed to providing discount support in a way that is fair, responsible and ethical. Discounts provided to the community align with Council's Whitehorse Community Vision 2040 and are applied based on the principles below.



More information about discounts is included in the Whitehorse Community Grants and Discounts Policy 2025 - 2029 available on Council's website.

What do I need to know before I start?

Applications for discount support to hire an eligible community space are **open all year round**. When organisations are booking venues on a recurrent basis, e.g. for monthly meetings, it is preferred if all requested dates are submitted on one application.

The total value of the discounts provided to an applicant is determined based on available Council budget and community demand. Applicants are not guaranteed a discount, or guaranteed to receive the full discount requested.

Applicants that are approved to receive a discounted rate will need to comply with specific booking conditions, which may include compliance with Child Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Gender Equality and Human Right Standards, as well as completing a Culture Counts survey.

What discounts are available?

Type of Community Organisation	Maximum Discount
Eligible not-for-profit and incorporated associations	50%
Service Clubs: Rotary, Lions, Apex, etc	75%
Senior Citizens Groups	90%
Fundraising Events Up to one discounted hire per year, per organisation (see page 3 for more details)	100%

Special conditions for Fundraising Events

Where the sole purpose of an event is fundraising, eligible groups can apply for **one free venue hire per organisation, per year.**

It is recommended that organisations check that the fundraising limit has not already been reached before applying, especially if they have multiple office sites who may be applying for venues separately, or when using an auspice organisation. When a group is being auspiced by another organisation, the fundraising limits apply to the auspice organisation and not the group.

In addition to the eligibility criteria set on page 5 and discount conditions outlined on page 6, the following additional criteria applies to fundraising events:

- The fundraising event must be held at one of the venues listed on page 4
- The event must not exceed one day
- The money raised must benefit local Whitehorse initiatives/groups and cannot be sent to organisations or initiatives occurring outside the City of Whitehorse without Council approval

Where fundraising activities are undertaken in response to national or international natural disasters, the organisers should speak to the relevant Booking Officer to discuss eligibility prior to submitting an application.

Please note: Council does not consider an event where raffle tickets or merchandise is sold as part of the event to be a fundraising event. This may include a graduation night, annual dinner, a presentation night, an event recognising an individual, or an expo event. If unsure, please speak to a Booking Officer.

Which community spaces do these discounts apply to?

To book a space, visit the **Whitehorse Venues and Spaces for Hire** page on Council's website (www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/venuehire)

Community Space	Contact
Box Hill Community Arts Centre	Venue Hire Officer BHCAC@whitehorse.vic.gov.au 9895 8888
Box Hill Town Hall (excluding the Town Hall Hub)	Gurhun Cagatay Venue & Events Sales Admin Supervisor Box Hill Town Hall gurhun.cagatay@whitehorse.vic.gov.au
Blackburn North Community Hall Blackburn South Hall East Burwood Hall Eley Park Community Centre Forest Hill Hall Horticultural Centre Strabane Avenue Hall Warrawong Annexe	Community Halls Booking Officer Arts & Cultural Services community.halls@whitehorse.vic.gov.au 9262 6251
Willis Room (Civic Centre)	Alex Lyons Senior Functions Supervisor Email: alex.lyons@whitehorse.vic.gov.au
The Round	Theatre: Sarah Bradwell - Venue Sales Officer sarah.bradwell@whitehorse.vic.gov.au Function Room: Alex Lyons - Senior Functions Supervisor alex.lyons@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

Am I eligible to apply?

To be eligible to receive a community space hire discount, organisations must meet the following criteria:

- **Be a registered not-for-profit or incorporated association:**
Organisations that are not incorporated, can apply with the support of an eligible organisation that agrees to act as an auspice (i.e. an organisation that takes legal and financial responsibility for the discount).
- **Booking purpose must align with the selected discount category:** For example, an application for a Seniors Citizen Group discount must be from an organisation that operates to provide programs or services for seniors, and the booking must be used for an event or activity that benefits older adults in Whitehorse.
- **Make an active contribution to the local community:**
Organisations need to show they are genuinely connected to and involved with the Whitehorse community.
- **Must have public liability insurance:** All organisations must provide evidence of valid public liability insurance with cover of at least \$20 million. If an organisation is auspiced, the auspice organisation must provide evidence of their insurance policy. Insurance must remain current for all dates included in the booking.
- **Provide copies of financial records:** Organisations must provide a copy of their most recent Financial Statement (including a profit & loss statement and balance sheet), to demonstrate the organisation has a financial need for the discount. Bank Statements will not be accepted.
- **Evidence of Child Safety:** If your activity/event has direct or indirect connection with children, you must also provide copies of your organisation's Child Safety Policy and relevant processes.

Who is not eligible to apply for a discount?

- **Organisations with unpaid debts to Council:** If your organisation has an outstanding debt to Council and is not actively repaying it, you are not eligible to apply. Discount support funding cannot be used to repay debt to Council.
- **Organisations linked to foreign governments:** Organisations that have ties to foreign governments are not eligible to receive a discount.
- **Organisations with links to commercial entities:** Not-for-profit organisations that are directly or indirectly linked to a commercial entity are not eligible to receive a discount.
- **Political or religious activities:** Projects, programs, activities or events that are political, religious or spiritual in nature are not eligible to receive a discount.

What is not covered by a discount?

- **Other expenses:** Discount support is for venue hire costs only. Staff costs and equipment hire are not covered.
- **Retail events:** Discount support is not available to retail events.
- **Past activities:** Discount support cannot be applied retrospectively and is not available for activities and events that have occurred in the past.

How do I apply for a discount?

1. **Book a community space:** Submit an online booking request for your preferred space and dates (see page 4 for booking contacts). Once your booking is submitted, you will be provided with a Booking Reference Number. You will need this number to include in your discount application.
2. **Read the Guidelines and check eligibility:** Make sure your organisation and event/activity meets the requirements.
3. **Gather required supporting documents:** Make sure you have digital copies of these documents before you start your application:
 - Proof of current Incorporation and an ABN number (if applicable) and not-for-profit status.
 - Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency (\$20m cover).
 - A recent Financial Statement for your organisation (see page 5)
 - Copies of your organisation's Child Safety Policy and relevant processes, if relevant (see page for more details).
4. **Complete your Application:** Applications are submitted online via the [Whitehorse SmartyGrants online portal](http://www.whitehorse.smartygrants.com.au) (www.whitehorse.smartygrants.com.au). You can also get to the portal via the Community Grants Program page on Council's website.
 - Select the Community Space Hire Discounts Application form
 - Click Start a Submission
 - Log In or Register for SmartyGrants when prompted
 - Fill out your application form(See page 8 for more details about registering for SmartyGrants)
5. **Confirm submission:** SmartyGrants sends an automated confirmation email once your application has been submitted.

How do I register for SmartyGrants?

Organisations must have a free SmartyGrants user account to be able to submit a Community Space Hire Discount application.

Access SmartyGrants through the **Whitehorse SmartyGrants portal** (www.whitehorse.smartygrants.com.au). Select the Community Space Hire Discounts Application form, then click Start a Submission.

Existing Users: Start a new application and use your existing account log in details when prompted.

New Users: Start a new application and register for SmartyGrants when prompted. Use a general organisation email address so multiple members/staff can access the application details if required.

All notification emails and updates regarding your application will be sent to the email address provided in the application form.

Save and return to your application

You can save your progress at any stage, and return later to finish and submit. Simply go back to the Whitehorse SmartyGrants portal and click the 'Log In' link that appears at the top of the page, below the image.

Once you submit your application, you will receive an automated email from SmartyGrants as confirmation. Keep this email and the reference number to quote if you need to ask Council about your application.

How is my application assessed?

All applications are assessed through a rigorous process to ensure fairness, transparency and good governance:

- Each application is assessed by the relevant Bookings Officer (or nominated representative) based on the information provided in the application form.
- All Council Officers involved in assessing applications are required to declare any conflicts of interest to ensure a fair and unbiased process.

The assessment process includes the following stages:

Stage 1 - Eligibility Review: Applications are reviewed to confirm they meet the mandatory eligibility requirements (organisation status, confirmation of insurance, financial documentation provided, alignment with discount category and Child Safety documentation, if applicable). Applications that do not meet the essential criteria will not progress to the next stage.

Stage 2 - Financial Assessment: Officers use the financial statements provided to assess whether there is genuine financial need for a discount. This is determined by checking if organisations have either:

- Less than two years of operating expenses; or
- Less than \$10,000 available in cash reserves

Stage 3 - Discount Calculation: Officers calculate the discount amount for each application based on the category of discount support applied for and the number of hours booked.

Stage 4 - Notification: Applicants will be notified by email of the outcome of their Discount Application. Council will only provide the Discount stated in the email.

Conditions of receiving a discount

- The discount amount is exclusive of GST. All invoices for the remaining balance of community space hire fees will include GST.
- Any other costs (i.e. staff, equipment hire) remain the responsibility of the organisation.
- Organisations must adhere to the Conditions of Hire relevant to the space they have booked.
- Organisations receiving a discount must acknowledge Council's support by including the Whitehorse City Council logo on promotional materials for the relevant event/activity, or with verbal acknowledgement at the event or activity.
- All recipients of a Community Space Hire Discount must complete an annual Culture Counts survey.

Further considerations

Any changes to booking times after discount support has been assessed may require you to re-submit your application.

Council supports applications that demonstrate consideration of gender equality and environmental sustainability. Applicants are encouraged to:

- Consider the safety and inclusion of people of all genders, and how to ensure everyone can participate equally in community events and activities
- Increase community awareness and understanding of environmental sustainability, to ensure our natural environment is healthy and sustainable for future generations
- Consider ways to use water and energy efficiently, reuse or recycle materials, reducing waste litter and eliminate the use of single-use plastics. For more information visit: www.vic.gov.au/single-use-plastics



Acknowledgement of Country

Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Contacting Council

Postal Address: Whitehorse City Council
Locked Bag 2
Nunawading 3131

ABN: 39 549 568 822

Telephone: 9262 6333 (including language support)

NRS: 133 677 then quote 9262 6333
(Service for deaf or hearing impaired people)

Service Centre: Whitehorse Civic Centre
379-399 Whitehorse Road,
Nunawading 3131

Website: www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/contact-us

Social Media: Connect with Whitehorse City Council



Subscribe: www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/subscribe
(Stay up to date with Council news on topics you are interested in)

