GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Community Matching Fund

ROTORUA LAKES COUNCIL
Te Kaunihera o ngā Roto o Rotorua

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this fund is to bring people together to build strong communities and neighbourhoods, by providing resources for self-help projects, which link to Rotorua Lakes Council's (RLC) community outcomes. We particularly welcome projects that improve equitable outcomes and/or contribute to community safety and resilience.

Projects **must demonstrate** the ability to build social capital – fostering social connections, building positive attitudes and values that contribute to societal wellbeing by collaboration between peoples and groups in society.

2. OUTCOMES

Projects must align with one or more of the Council's Key Priorities below. These outcomes are what your project is designed to create positive impact for.

For example, safety would be aligned to a project providing education or building safety for a community group, but not if the project simply has a health and safety plan.

It's unlikely many projects will tick all these outcomes, so please don't tick them all in an effort to make your application more compelling.

- Kua Tūhonotia, Kua Pakari Hoki / Connected & Resilient
- Ngā Take Mahi Me Te Taiōhanga / Employment & Economy
- Ngā Mahi Tūruhi / Tourism
- Ngā Take Whare / Housing
- Ngā Mahi A Te Rēhia / Active
- Te Taiao / Environment – Mauri Taiao
- Haumarutanga / Safety
- Ngā Wawata O Te Tangata Whenua / Mana Whenua Aspirations
- Ngā Mahi Toi, Ahurea Hoki / Arts & Culture

See the end of this guide for a more detailed description of these outcomes.

3. FUND PRIORITIES

Projects must align to at least one of the fund's priorities below:

- Bringing people together to collaborate on neighbourhood projects.
- Empowering people to enhance and strengthen their own neighbourhood.
- Contributing to whānau working, playing and talking together.
- Renewing and revitalising of places and spaces within neighbourhoods.
- Improving the quality of life in a specific community or neighbourhood.

4. FUNDING OPTIONS

There are two options within the CMF – small grants and large grants. Groups can have only one CMF project open at a time, across both funds.

	SMALL GRANTS	LARGE GRANTS
Funds available for distribution per project	$50 to $5,000 per project	$5,001 to a maximum of $20,000 per project
Distribution	Applications accepted at any time throughout the year, until the fund has been fully allocated.	One funding round per year.
Notice of decisions	Within 2-4 weeks of application	By 1 November 2026
Contract	Acceptance of Grant letter	Contract agreement between RLC and recipient of grant
Accountability process	Complete a report form at the end of the project, including a financial report. Provide photos of the project. Report must be received within four weeks of project completion.	Complete a report at the end of the project, including a financial report. Provide photos of the project. Final report must be received within three months of project completion.

5. CRITERIA

The proposed project must:

- Be within the Rotorua District
- Have a set start and finish date
- Community-led
- Be initiated, planned and implemented by people living in the Rotorua district
- Build social capital
- Improve equitable outcomes
- Contribute to community cohesion and resilience
- Provide local public benefit and is free and open to all members of the public
- Demonstrate capacity to build a stronger community/neighbourhood

6. WHAT WE DO FUND

To be considered for funding, a project must demonstrate how it meets the criteria outlined earlier. CMF funding can be used to cover expenses directly related and proportionate to the project. Below are the four expense categories with examples of typical items (not intended to be all-inclusive).

Professional Services:

Funding may be available to meet costs for services to complete the project.

- Professional consultants (landscape architect, graphic designer, web designer etc.)
- Artists (DJ, performing artists, etc.)
- Services (fiscal sponsorship, translation, interpretation, printing, advertising, etc.)
- Insurance for project if required

Supplies and Materials:

Examples of expenses related to supplies and materials include:

- Landscape materials (soil, shrubs, plants, mulch etc.)
- Tools (shovels, rakes, etc.)
- Books, manuals etc. where appropriate for project
- Facility rental (meeting space, event venue etc.)
- Playgroup equipment (play area structures, benches, etc.)
- Marketing material, (T-shirts, flyers, brochures, educational material, adverts etc.)
    - Note: All such materials created for the project must acknowledge CMF support
- Equipment hireage (trailers, mowers, tables, etc.)
- Public transportation tickets or passes
- Food expenses (cannot exceed $500)

Construction/Capital:
Examples related to construction include:

- Demolition, grading and other activities related to site preparation
- Utilities work (water retention, sewer connection, etc.)
- Electrical work (site lighting, electrical service, transformer etc.)
- Concrete work (sidewalks, ramp, seat walls etc.)
- Irrigation (connections, control box, piping, spray sprinklers etc.)

Personnel:
Costs related to project management of the project may not exceed 10% of the total project grant (e.g. project manager, co-ordinator, community organiser).

7. WHAT WE DO NOT FUND:

- Building Consents, Resource Consents and Development Fees
- Purchase of vehicles
- Travel or accommodation outside of the Rotorua District
- Purchase of alcohol
- Any costs associated to fundraising
- Individual persons, individual businesses or government agencies
- Schools, unless there is a clearly demonstrated neighbourhood benefit that involves the extended community
- Community groups that provide a service to Rotorua district ratepayers associations and political groups.
- Applications for funds for which there is another specific funding pathway e.g. BOPRC Environmental Enhancement Fund
- Applications for the purchase of land or the improvement of privately owned facilities
- Day to day operational expenses of an existing group or organisation
- Retrospective funding for projects, or expenditure already incurred by a group
- Maintenance or deferred maintenance
- Activities or initiatives that are outside RLC boundaries
- Applicants who have failed to carry out/complete CMF projects funded in the preceding two years

8. MATCH REQUIREMENTS

At the core of the CMF is community input in the form of volunteer labour, donated materials, donated professional services, and/or donated or fund-raised cash from community members. A significant portion should come from the neighbourhood or community itself. The value of community input must at least match the funding requested.

There are several types of contributions eligible for meeting the Fund's community matching requirements:

Volunteer Labour

Individuals can contribute time to a project in many ways, including serving on a steering or planning committee, organising events, attending working bees, and attending community meetings, etc.

Note that:

- Volunteer labour is matched at a rate of $15 per hour of time donated
- For preparing a Small CMF application up to 2 hours of volunteer time may be claimed
- For preparing a Large CMF application up to 6 hours of volunteer time may be claimed
- If you claim volunteer labour contributions, you CANNOT give payments or gifts to these volunteers.

Professional Services

Donated professional services must be relevant to the project and proportionate to its needs.

- On their letterhead, donors must document the hours anticipated to achieve the work they are donating
- Services are valued at a rate of $65 per hour
- An individual or business that will be paid for any project-related work cannot additionally pledge volunteer time or donate other goods or services to the project. Applicants should decide early on whether professional services will be donated or purchased with the CMF grant.

Donated Materials or Supplies

All donated materials and supplies (food, tools etc.) are valued at their retail prices. Borrowed equipment can also be considered as part of the match, valued at the standard rental fee.

Cash

Cash donations can come from fundraising events, individuals, foundations, businesses, and/or community groups.

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

- Before submitting any application, we recommend contacting the RLC Funding Advisor (see section 18) to discuss your application, check alignment and eligibility, and provide tips on how to write a compelling application.
- Complete an application online
- Assessment of application (See section 10)
- Notification of outcome
- If successful, you'll be required to complete an accountability form.

10. ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

For Small CMF grants, the assessment will be done by three RLC staff members, including one senior staff member. We endeavour to process and provide an outcome within 2-4 weeks, except over December-January holiday.

For Large CMF grants, an assessment committee will review, score and provide final approvals for applications.

Applications for Large grants will be reviewed against the four criteria below, to produce a total score out of 100 points.

Criteria and points	Details
Proposed idea (30 points)	You will need to explain exactly what you will do, how the project will benefit the broader community and/or neighbourhood, and why you want to do this project. You should include the step-by-step activities that make up your project.
Neighbourhood involvement / Community building (30 points)	Projects should involve as many diverse groups and individuals as possible and should reflect the demographics of your community, including young people, seniors, migrants and refugees, renters, homeowners, business organisations etc. We ask that you identify all of the volunteer opportunities in your project.
Outcomes (10 points)	We want to know what tangible and/or intangible results your project will achieve and how you will measure the project's success.
Project resources and readiness (30 Points)	Project readiness means the project has been well-planned and will be successful in generating enough matching funding within the timeframe required by the fund. We ask for a detailed project budget and documentation of matching community input, including a fundraising plan if applicable.

11. ADMINISTERING OF FUNDS

Once a project has been allocated funding, an Acceptance of Grant letter (for Small CMF) or Contract Agreement (for Large CMF) and a purchase order number, will be sent to the organisation. Upon the return of the signed letter or agreement and an invoice, the project is underway. Groups that are not legal entities may appoint a fiscal sponsor/umbrella organisation.

12. ACCOUNTABILITY

Funds may only be spent as approved in your application. An Accountability Form will be provided for you to complete at the end of the project, where we'll ask you how your project performed against the success measures you set out. This report must also include a financial report, and photographs should be provided wherever possible. Any change to the approved application must be negotiated with RLC prior to funds being spent.

13. RECOGNITION OF ROTORUA LAKES COUNCIL'S CONTRIBUTION

It is important to acknowledge the contribution that RLC and the Rotorua community has made to the project's success. Recipients are expected to acknowledge this contribution in any media releases and marketing material.

14. GOODS AND SERVICES TAX. (GST)

- Applicants who are not GST registered need to provide budget figures that include GST.
- Applicants who are GST registered need to provide budget figures that exclude GST.

15. APPLICATION FORMS

Applications must be made using the online form on the RLC website. We can provide an example PDF form so you can prepare your application answers before starting the online form. A written form to submit can be made available on request.

16. TIMING FOR THE CMF SMALL GRANTS

Applications will be accepted year-round and we endeavour to process and provide an outcome within one month (except over December/ January holidays).

Please note that applications are reviewed in the order they are submitted, and we do not expedite reviews so please check your project timings work with these estimated review timeframes. Once funding has been allocated, the Small CMF Fund will close.

17. TIMING FOR THE CMF LARGE GRANTS

Opening Date: 1 July 2026
Closing Date: 4 September 2026
Notification of Large grant funding decision: 1 November 2026

Please note that late applications will not be considered, and that we do not provide expedited reviews if your project timings do not fit this decision timeframe.

18. ASSISTANCE

If you require assistance with any aspect of the CMF Grant application process, please contact:
Mike Cockin, Funding and Sponsorship Advisor
Phone: 07 351 8180
Email: communityfunding@rotorualc.nz

ROTORUA LAKES COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

OUR VISION FOR ROTORUA

A Better Rotorua for All

We have a vision for a better Rotorua for all. What we deliver as a Council in the next 10 years to help us achieve that will focus on **9 key outcomes**:

KUA TŪHONOTIA, KUA PAKARI HOKI / CONNECTED AND RESILIENT

Kua tūhonohono te hapori, ā,kua rite ki ngā putanga nui o te huringa āhuarangi me ngā aituā māori, mā te pakari o ngā mahi tūānuku ka eke ka ora.

Our communities are cohesive and prepared for the effects of climate change, natural hazards and we invest in safe and reliable infrastructure.

NGĀ TAKE MAHI ME TE TAIŌHANGA / EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMY

Ka whakakahangia ngā pakihi kia tupu tūturu ai. Mā te nui a ngā whaiwāhitanga haumi ka eke ka roto ora. Ka kite i te putaputa mai o ngā whiwhinga mahi e wātea ana ki te tangata.

We enable businesses to grow with confidence through increasing investment opportunities. There are employment options across a range of sectors.

NGĀ MAHI TŪRUHI / TOURISM

He wāhi pakari tēnei e hiahiatia ana e te ao te tae atu, he pokapū whakarawerawe, kua rongo nui tōna ingoa.

We are a world class destination, with a vibrant inner city and a positive reputation.

NGĀ TAKE WHARE / HOUSING

E wātea ana ki te kainoho o te tāone he whare tuawhiti e taea ai e rātau te noho haumaru, te noho marutau e pai ai tana oranga.

All residents have access to a range of housing options that ensures they can live in quality homes that are safe and healthy.

NGĀ MAHI A TE RĒHIA / ACTIVE

Kua tūhera katoa ngā rotomoana, ngā ngahere, me ngā papa wātea, ā, ko te kounga o ngā whare rēhia, ka toro atu ngā ringa ki te tangata, māna tōna oranga e whakahī, e whakahā ia te rā.

The accessibility of our lakes, forests, open space networks and the quality of our facilities create opportunities for everyone to be active throughout their lives.

TE TAIAO / ENVIRONMENT – MAURI TAIAO

He arotahinga ki te whakapaipai, ki te tiaki hoki i ngā roto moana, i ngā arawai, me ngā ngāherehere.

We are committed to protecting and improving our lakes, waterways and forest environments.

HAUMARUTANGA / SAFETY
Kua korowaihia ā tātau hapori, ngā pakihi, me ngā manuhiri ki te korowai o marutau huri āwhio i te takiwā.

Our communities, businesses and visitors feel safe across our district.

NGĀ WAWATA O TE TANGATA WHENUA / MANA WHENUA ASPIRATIONS
E kitea ana, e taunakitia ana e mātau ko wā te tangata whenua e manakotia ana. Ka noho mātau hai hoa haere ki te whakatupu rau ōhanga, ki te whakapuare kūaha pāpori hoki rā hei painga mō te katoa.

We recognise and support the aspirations of Tangata Whenua/Mana Whenua and partner to grow economic and social opportunities and benefits for everyone.

NGĀ MAHI TOI, AHUREA HOKI / ARTS AND CULTURE
Ko te ahurea tuakiri o Rotorua, he motuhake, koia hoki te papa whakapoapoa i te tangata kia tae atu ki ngā manomano pātanga. Ka oreore te takiwā, ka kōkiritia ngā kaupapa ōhanga me ngā hua ki te hapori i roto tonu i ngā taupuni me te rohe whānui

Our district's unique cultural identity is the foundation for attracting and delivering a diverse range of events, increasing vibrancy and activity and driving economic and community benefits within our facilities and for our district.