



## 2026 STEPPING STONES GRANT GUIDELINES

### Background

Tomorrow Today is Benalla's independent community foundation. We connect people, resources and ideas, to create a bright future for our great rural community. Grant funding for community projects is available as a result of generous donations to our Community Fund from local people and businesses.

Applications from **local organisations and groups** are invited for projects that enable residents to help build a stronger, more resilient and prosperous **Benalla and district community**.

### Size of grants

Stepping Stones Grants can range from \$100 to \$2,000

### Opening and Closing Dates of Application

Applications are open throughout the year

### Focus Areas

Our priorities for the 2026 funding round are outlined below.

<p>1. <b>Building a stronger, more connected community through projects that meet these objectives:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Addressing social disadvantage</li><li>• Promoting inclusion and increasing involvement in community</li><li>• Embracing community diversity</li></ul>
<p>2. <b>Improving social and educational outcomes for Benalla's children and young people through projects that fit one or more of these objectives:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring all children start school ready to learn</li><li>• Improving literacy and numeracy</li><li>• Increasing student wellbeing</li><li>• Improving student knowledge of careers and career pathways</li><li>• Building student aspiration</li></ul>
<p>3. <b>Applications for great community-building projects that do not meet the priorities above will also be considered for funding.</b></p>

## Eligibility

### IMPORTANT!

**BEFORE submitting an application, it is essential that you contact us at Tomorrow Today, on (03) 5762 1211 to discuss your proposal to ensure it fits within our eligibility and funding guidelines.**

1. Proposals must be for a recognised '**Charitable purpose**' (\*see definition below) to meet our legal requirements.
2. **Sport is not considered a charitable activity.** Applications from sporting organisations need to clearly demonstrate a benefit to the wider community. Examples of wider benefit are: programs that address disadvantage; and the advancement of education through programs run in connection with schools that are open to all students
3. The proposal **cannot be a fundraising activity.** Tomorrow Today does not subsidise fundraising activities.
4. The proposal **cannot be a government project.** Tomorrow Today does not fund projects that are the domain of government. However, if a government entity such as a school is undertaking a community activity (e.g. vegetable garden, or a community project) that is additional to their core purpose, then the activity may be considered for funding.
5. Funding will not be considered for individuals, retrospective projects (i.e. those that have already occurred) or operational funding (i.e. ongoing expenses or recurrent costs).

\* **Charitable purposes** - the *Charities Act 2013* (Cth) lists twelve charitable purposes. The purposes most likely to align with our grants are:

- advancing social or public welfare
- advancing education
- advancing health
- advancing culture
- promoting reconciliation, mutual respect and tolerance between groups of individuals that are in Australia
- advancing the natural environment
- other purposes 'beneficial to the general public'

### Period of funding

From approval you will have 6 months to complete your project. If the grant project is not completed within 6 months, unless otherwise approved, Tomorrow Today may seek a return of the granted funds.

### How to Apply

Application forms can be requested from the Tomorrow Today office.

Send your application either by **e-mail, post or hand deliver** to Jen Jackson, Executive Officer, Tomorrow Today.

All applications will be acknowledged by email.

Successful applicants will be notified within 5 weeks of application