

STRATEGIC

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

FUND

**2022
GUIDELINES**





01. INTRODUCTION

Local football clubs are at the heart of local communities. They play a critically important role in not only providing participation opportunities but deliver a range of benefits across social, health, community and economic outcomes.

Community football is the cornerstone of our game and underpins all aspects of our national sport. The AFL understands the challenges faced by football clubs across Australia, especially with a change in demographics, community expectations and the effects of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, so it's vital we continue to invest into important initiatives that help strategically strengthen, sustain and grow community football into the future.

Building on the success of the SCIF in 2021 which contributed over \$1 million to community clubs, leagues and associations, the 2022 SCIF will focus on four key pillars:

- ▶ Affordability for participants and clubs;
- ▶ Assisting volunteers;
- ▶ Growing the next generation of players, umpires & coaches; and
- ▶ Supporting clubs who have experienced COVID hardship

These guidelines outline the application process, assessment criteria and types of projects that might be funded under the SCIF. We look forward to receiving applications that help community football to thrive.

02. OBJECTIVES OF THIS FUND

The objective of the SCIF is to respond to the local needs of clubs, leagues and regions to achieve strategic objectives, providing a platform for long-term, sustained success.

Who Can Apply?

Applications can be received from clubs, leagues, umpiring groups and commissions that make up one of the affiliated Victorian Country Regions or affiliated Melbourne metropolitan leagues.

03.

WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES MAY BE FUNDED?

Positioning community football clubs, leagues and Commissions for long-term sustained success is a key objective of the program.

Applications must clearly demonstrate how the project will improve participation outcomes. Specifically, proposals should demonstrate how the project will increase or maintain participation and improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

Applications from clubs, leagues, associations or commissions that have utilized a 3rd party grant provision service will not be accepted unless the 3rd party grant provision service provide a written statement that they are providing the services free of charge as part of a community service contribution.

Examples of potential projects include (but not limited to):

For Individual Clubs

- ▶ A program that engages and encourages participation by diverse communities (multicultural, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, all abilities) in a club environment including club cultural awareness training;
- ▶ Support to establish and/or grow new female teams;
- ▶ Provide short-term financial support to distressed clubs ie where a natural disaster may have impacted on the club's ability to operate, including the adverse affects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In these instances, it should be demonstrated that a sustainable long-term future can be secured with SCIF support;
- ▶ Accounting support to improve a club's financial structures ie upgrading from manual cash handling to electronic POS processes;
- ▶ Costs associated with the establishment of new or amalgamated clubs ie. new jumpers, incorporation, start-up funding, recruitment drives, accreditation of trainers;
- ▶ A junior recruitment drive to boost participation for a club with dwindling junior numbers (excluding coach costs, catering, venue hire);

- ▶ Club development program/training to support a club establish a strategic plan (excludes the outsourcing of these costs to a 3rd party provider);
- ▶ Programs, resources and or assets that promote and enhance child safety standards.

For Commissions/Leagues

- ▶ A program that engages and encourages participation by diverse communities (multicultural, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, all abilities) in a region to participate;
- ▶ Support to establish and/or grow new female competitions;
- ▶ Establishment of a junior coordinator to support clubs in an area of social disadvantage to increase junior participation;
- ▶ Training or development programs that address a collection of club needs ie junior coach development, mental health programs, club sustainability strategies;
- ▶ Independent reviews of league/region competition structures that support informed decision making around those structures;
- ▶ An umpiring recruitment or development program for the region;
- ▶ Research into regional participation issues i.e; youth retention.

What types of activities are not eligible under this program?

- ▶ Projects that are deemed to have little positive impact on participation levels in Australian Football;
- ▶ Facility related projects. These are eligible via the AFL's Australian Football Facilities Fund which can be accessed via your relevant State Football Body;
- ▶ Player payments;
- ▶ Projects that require ongoing funding assistance;
- ▶ Projects that don't lead to sustainable outcomes - ie this should not be seen as a short term 'survival fund';
- ▶ Projects that will receive AFL related funding support through a separate existing program;
- ▶ Routine or cyclical maintenance works;
- ▶ Retrospective funding for a project that commenced or been completed.

04. HOW MUCH FUNDING COULD A PROJECT RECEIVE?

For individual club projects, grants will generally be in the range of up to \$20,000 per project.

For projects involving a Commission/ League and/or a collection of clubs, applicants may apply for an amount of up to \$50,000 per project.

In exceptional circumstances the AFL may consider requests above this amount, where the outcomes of the project justify a higher contribution

and is considered to be of exceptional strategic importance.

Ideally projects are completed within a 12 month period, however where there is a need to deliver a program over a longer period, this should be outlined and justified within the application.

Projects that are able to leverage other funding from other sources will be favourably received.

04. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

50%

What will the project achieve?

Demonstrate the extent to which the project:

- ▶ Increases (or in certain remote areas maintains) participation in football;
- ▶ Improves access/participation opportunities for diverse groups including people with disabilities, females, young people, people from multicultural and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds;
- ▶ Enhances the capacity of football clubs and/or other football stakeholders for long-term sustained success.

20%

Why is this project required?

Demonstrate the extent to which the project:

- ▶ Responds to identified needs and issues and is supported strategically by football club/league/ regional/ state body planning and/or the planning of other key stakeholders in the region.

20%

How will the project be delivered?

Demonstrate the extent to which the project:

- ▶ Clearly identifies the project scope, how it will be delivered and timelines;
- ▶ Includes the provision of quotations/cost estimates to substantiate associated costs;
- ▶ Is able to leverage other funding contributions (both financial and in-kind).

10%

Who will be involved in the project?

Demonstrate the extent to which the project:

- ▶ Collaborates with a variety of stakeholders including other clubs, leagues, Commissions, other community groups and government organisations as appropriate;
- ▶ Outlines how this collaboration will be managed.

05. HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants should review these guidelines in detail to determine their project's eligibility. In addition, it is highly recommended that prospective applicants liaise with the SCIF Advisory Board Secretariat (scif@afl.com.au) to discuss their proposal and seek advice, prior to making an application.

Applications can be made at any time via the online application form at the following link:
<https://afvic.smartygrants.com.au/SCIF>

How will my application be assessed?

A SCIF Advisory Board has been established that includes representatives from community football to assess and make recommendations for funding.

The Advisory Board (with support from its secretariat) will receive applications, consider them against the Assessment Criteria and make recommendations to the AFL for approval.

The Advisory Board will meet at the conclusion of each funding round. In exceptional circumstances, the Advisory Board may consider applications outside of these times where there is a particular urgency relating to a project. Applicants will be advised within four weeks of each Advisory Board meeting re the outcome of their application.

From time to time the Advisory Board may request the AFL to proactively seek out applications where there is a key strategic opportunity such as leveraging investment from other interested parties.

Conditions of funding

Successful applicants may be required to enter into a Funding Agreement detailing funding obligations and conditions.

This can be negotiated upon approval of funding, along with an announcement opportunity for any funding.

A senior representative must be designated by the applicant to liaise with the AFL representative on the progress of the funded project.

At the completion of the project, applicants are required to complete and return a final project acquittal to allow the final payment and assess the outcomes achieved via funded projects.



