

Age Friendly Fund Guidance

2025

The Age friendly Fund is part of the Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand programme. The fund provides grants for community-led projects that encourage older people to actively participate and contribute to their community. The fund supports councils and communities to develop age friendly plans and initiatives.

Grants range from **\$5,000 to \$15,000 excluding GST**, depending on the project's size or scope. We run one grant round per year and usually support around 12 projects.

Requests for over \$10,000 must involve a larger scale project or a regional age friendly community consultation and development of an action plan. Smaller scale community projects may apply for a contribution of \$5,000 to \$10,000 excluding GST.

When completing your application, you should identify whether you have any funding or in-kind contributions from other sources. These other sources should be clearly identified in the 'Project funding' section of the Age friendly Fund application form.

The final date for applications is **Tuesday 30 September 2025**.

How To Apply

1. Read this Age friendly Fund Guidance document carefully.
2. Complete the Application Form and Project Plan Template (both available on the [Office for Seniors website](#)).
3. Contact us to discuss your project proposal (**before** completing your application) - email agefriendlyfund@msd.govt.nz. This enables us to discuss the eligibility of your project and to provide you with feedback to help you strengthen your proposal.
4. Email your completed application together with any attachments to agefriendlyfund@msd.govt.nz. Please provide a list of all the documents that are attached to your application in your cover email.

About Age Friendly Communities

The age friendly concept is based on the World Health Organization's (WHO) [Age friendly cities framework](#) outlined in the [WHO's Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide](#).

An age friendly city or community anticipates and responds to the needs of its ageing population and promotes the inclusion and contribution of older people in all areas of community life. The Office for Seniors has created [The Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand toolkit](#) to guide age friendly work in a local context. We recommend reading these resources to help with the development of your project plan and grant application.

Who Can Apply?

You can apply for an Age friendly Fund grant if you represent a council, community organisation, or registered non-profit organisation. Your organisation must be a legal entity in New Zealand.

Businesses and individuals are **not eligible** for an Age friendly Fund grant.

If your organisation has previously received a grant, you must wait two funding rounds before applying again for funding for a **new** community project.

You must demonstrate strong community support for your project, including engagement with older people, relevant community groups, and your local council.

Applications from organisations other than a council must demonstrate they have support of their local or district council, and how the application aligns with their local age friendly plans and priorities.

The person who makes the application must be authorised to do so on behalf of their organisation.

The applicant must **not** have any outstanding financial accountability, service delivery, or performance issues for funding previously provided by the Ministry of Social Development.

What We Will Fund

We fund **new** projects designed to support towns, cities, and communities to become more age friendly. Projects must address a clear community need and aim to create a lasting positive impact on the community.

You can apply for a grant to either:

- develop a plan to become an age friendly community, or
- implement a new age friendly community project.

If you're applying to implement a new project, clearly explain how it links to an age friendly assessment or action plan. If your council does not have a specific age friendly plan, it should be clear how the project relates to relevant existing priorities.

You can find a list of projects we have funded since 2018 on the [Office for Seniors website](#).

Projects must start after 1 January 2026 and finish by 31 December 2026.

Develop A Plan To Become An Age Friendly Community

We support councils and communities to engage with stakeholders, including older people, to identify local priorities and develop plans to address them.

Projects may include:

- Developing a local age friendly needs assessment or action plan.

- Creating specific plans and/or policies that address one or more of the eight age friendly domains (see the [WHO's Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide](#) document, diagram on page 9, and subsequent chapters explaining topics in more detail).

Implement A New Age Friendly Community Project

We support councils and communities to implement new projects that help make our towns, cities, and communities age friendly.

Projects may include but are not limited to:

- Projects that encourage, promote, and support intergenerational connections between older people and people of all ages.
- Development of Kaupapa Māori or other culturally specific approaches to creating age friendly communities.
- Innovative ways to address social isolation and loneliness.
- Promoting age friendly business practices.
- Projects that aim to create local system level change (e.g., changes to local transport or recreation systems).
- Projects that support older people in rural areas to age in place, participate, and be included in their communities.

Projects We Do Not Fund

We will **not** fund:

- Projects already underway, completed, or enhancements to existing programmes.
- Existing community programmes or services.
- Projects lacking clear benefits for older people and their participation in the community.
- Projects that duplicate or receive funding from existing community or government services that are already available in your community.
- Projects that are the statutory responsibilities of councils or Health New Zealand.

We also do not fund:

- Capital works, infrastructure upgrades, or construction costs
- Ongoing operational or maintenance costs of existing programmes or facilities
- Salaries or wages for existing staff
- Professional development activities
- Commercial ventures for personal gain or fundraising activities
- Purchasing or leasing assets such as vehicles or equipment
- Projects solely focused on concept, design, or planning stages
- One-off events, trips, meetings, or excursions
- International travel
- Retrospective funding for costs incurred before grant approval.

Evaluation Of Applications

An independent internal evaluation panel will assess projects using the following criteria. Please make sure your application meets these criteria before you submit it.

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Focus and Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the identified need in the community, and how does your initiative or community project address it? What is the geographic area and number of people covered by the project? Has the application demonstrated the potential for a lasting impact on communities resulting from the project initiative? What is new or different about the approach you are trying and why do you think this approach will work? What is the potential to adapt this project to work in other communities? 	30%
Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a clear plan to assess the impact and success of the project, i.e., how will you evaluate the effects and outcomes? How will the project be sustained over time? 	10%
Engagement/Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how older people will be involved, how diversity of opinion is ensured, and whether specific groups will be targeted. Describe how the project will work cooperatively with groups that have a stake in addressing the issue, including community organisations, associations, and council. Identify all partners in the project and describe their role and contribution. 	25%
Project Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a clear description of the work that will be undertaken including what will be done, how, by who, and when. Have you shown that your proposed project is timely and likely to succeed? Have you shown that your organisation has sufficient capacity to support the project? What will happen when the project funding ends? 	25%
Financial Feasibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget is realistic in terms of proposed activities, planned results, and demonstrates efficient use of resources. Any financial or in-kind support provided by other partners has been identified. 	10%

Due Diligence

Successful applications will be subject to due diligence, including:

1. Verification of legal entity status
2. Identification of any outstanding approvals, remedial actions, or other areas of concern (for those organisations already contracted to MSD)
3. Past performance (where relevant)
4. Reference checks may be requested where projects are undertaken by providers not known to MSD.

Notice Of Decision

All applicants will be notified in writing of the evaluation panel's decision. If a grant is awarded, successful applicants will receive notice of the grant terms and conditions by early December 2025. Grants over \$10,000 are usually awarded in two payments:

- First payment (up to a maximum of \$10,000): Paid in December 2025 on approval of the project and once required paperwork has been received.
- Second payment: Paid by 30 June 2026 after the Office for Seniors has received the required interim progress report and financial summary due in May 2026.

We may award all or partial funding based on the panel's assessment and available funds.

Grants will be publicly announced in early 2026.

We may showcase projects that receive grants on the Office for Seniors' website and through other Office for Seniors' communication channels to promote projects that respond to population ageing.

Grant Responsibilities

Approved applicants will be responsible for:

- Undertaking the identified actions in the Project Plan
- Providing administrative support for workshops and community consultation
- Proper fiscal management, including acceptable accounting records
- Providing updates, such as an interim report by 31 May 2026 and a final report by 31 December 2026 to the Office for Seniors
- Publishing the project's final report
- Circulating the report and/or communicating the findings to the community.

The final report must include a summary of the activities undertaken, outline whether each objective has been met, and include a statement on income and expenditure. A report template will be supplied by the Office for Seniors.

Information gathered from all reports will be used to evaluate the Age friendly Fund grants programme, to satisfy the Office for Seniors reporting requirements, and for promotional purposes by the Office for Seniors.

Changes to Funded Activities

Once grants are awarded, changes to project activities must be approved by the Office for Seniors.

Extensions

All funded activities should be completed by 31 December 2026. If you need an extension, you must request it in writing from the Office for Seniors.

Personal Information

Any personal information provided will be managed according to the Privacy Act 2020. You can request your personal information from the Office for Seniors.