Individual Capacity Building Grants

Program Overview

In celebration of its 10th anniversary, the Anthony Costa Foundation is proud to launch the Strength in Community Grant Program, designed to strengthen and sustain the not-for-profit sector.

This initiative, underpinned by an additional $1 million allocation, reflects the Foundation's commitment to building resilience and capability among community leaders, organisations, and the broader not for profit sector.

Developed in close consultation with current grantees through feedback sessions and individual discussions, the Grant Round framework addresses capacity building needs across three streams: individual, organisational, and sector.

By supporting targeted training, leadership development, operational infrastructure, and collaborative changemaking, the Foundation aims to empower organisations and their leaders to deliver on their mission and drive lasting impact across the community.

Individual Capacity Building Grants
The purpose of the Individual Capacity Building Grant is to focus on the professional development of leaders and emerging leaders.

Feedback from grantees has consistently highlighted the importance of investing in individual growth particularly in areas such as leadership, governance, strategic and operational planning, impact measurement, and people management.

Many not-for-profit leaders face significant time and resource constraints, making it challenging to access meaningful development opportunities. By offering targeted support through Individual Capacity Building Grants, workshop series and masterclasses the Anthony Costa Foundation aims to address these gaps and empower individuals to build the skills, confidence, and networks needed to lead their organisations effectively.

This approach not only supports personal career progression but also strengthens the overall capacity and resilience of the sector, ensuring that organisations are better equipped to deliver on their missions and respond to evolving community needs.

Purpose & Strategic Alignment

The primary goal of the Individual Capacity Building Grants is to provide tailored, one-on-one development opportunities for leaders and emerging leaders who face time and resource constraints, ensuring that all talented individuals have equitable access to professional growth.

These grants also enable organisations to pursue skills, knowledge, and certification opportunities that align with their strategic needs or compliance requirements.

Through this targeted support, the Foundation aims to see more confident and capable leaders, increased sector engagement, and organisations that are better equipped to deliver on their missions. Ultimately, the intended impact is to foster stronger, more resilient not-for-profit organisations and to drive positive, lasting change across the sector.

Target Applicant & Eligibility

The target applicant for the Individual Capacity Building Grants includes organisational leaders and emerging leaders, recognising the importance of supporting both established and up-and-coming talent.

Depending on the type of development opportunity being pursued, these grants may also be open to volunteers who play a significant role in advancing the organisation's mission. This approach ensures that a broad range of individuals who contribute to the strength and sustainability of not-for-profit organisations have access to valuable professional development opportunities.

The target applicant must meet the following **eligibility criteria**:

- Work for an organisation that has DGR1 / TCC status, is registered and up to date with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission page and whose mission/work aligns with one or more of the Foundation's Focus Areas.
- Work and/or deliver programs in Geelong/G21 region
- Identify as either a leader or emerging leader in their organisation (volunteer or paid staff)

Note: preference will be given to individuals working at current Anthony Costa Foundation multi-year grantee organisations

Below are examples of eligible activities – note this list is not exhaustive:

- Leadership development Programs
- Executive Coaching and mentoring
- Professional Certifications
- Specialist Skills training
- Conference attendance
- Peer Learning Opportunities
- Membership to relevant institution or sector body to encourage networking and engagement

Grant Size & Structure

A total funding pool of **$100,000** has been allocated for Individual Capacity Building Grants.

Applicants can apply for a one-off grant award of **up to $5,000**.

The grant is designed to **supplement**, not fully fund, the cost of the opportunity. To ensure applicants have a genuine investment in the opportunity, all applications must include at least a 25% co-contribution to the total cost of the opportunity.

This can be:

- **Monetary** e.g. Covering part of the registration, travel, or membership costs.
- **In-kind** e.g. Providing work time release, resources, or other support from you or your organisation.

Example 1: you determine it will cost you $2,000 to attend a conference including travel, accommodation/food, and registration fees. You request $1,000 because your organisation has budgeted $1,000 for you to attend a conference of your choice this year. This means 50% of the costs are being supported. This would meet the co-contribution requirement.

Example 2: you are a volunteer who coordinates volunteers at your organisation you would like to attend a one-day volunteer management training. You request $450 to cover the registration fee for the training. As you are volunteer, you are volunteering your time to attend the training and will be covering the costs to drive to the training. The value of your volunteer time to attend the training (8 hours) and mileage based on standard rates is equal to more than 25% of your request. This would mee the co-contribution requirement.

We appreciate that some applicants and organisations may not be in a position to provide a co-contribution. Applicants who cannot make a monetary or in-kind contribution must explain the reason as part of their application. This explanation should outline why a contribution is not possible and how the opportunity will still deliver value.

Grant awards must be distributed to an applicant's organisation. The organisation must be endorsed as a Tax Concession Charity (TCC), be a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) as covered by Item 1 of the table in section 30-15 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 and be registered and up to date on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission.

Grant monies can be used anytime between being awarded but must be expended by December 2028 and Final reports submitted by February 2029.

Individual Capacity Building Grants

Application Process

Applicants must be registered as an Individual User on the Anthony Costa Foundation grant portal in order to apply. Applications will only be accepted via the portal.

The application form will consist of eligibility questions, as well as two short answer questions:

- What change or impact do you want to see for **yourself** as a result of taking part in this development opportunity?
- What change or impact do you want to see for **your organisation** as a result of taking part in this development opportunity?

Applicants will be required to provide:

- Information and links to the proposed opportunity
- A letter of support from your organisation or Board (if appropriate) if they are co-funding the opportunity

A word version of the application questions is available to download from the Foundation's website.

Applications will be accepted at three points throughout the 2026 calendar year. Key dates are:

Round 1
Info Session – Thursday 17 December 2026
Open –Wednesday 14 January 2026
Close –Wednesday 25 February 2026
Decision – Early May 2026

Round 2
Info Session – Wednesday 6 May 2026
Open – Wednesday 13 May 2026
Close –Wednesday 24 June 2026
Decision – Early September 2026

Round 3
Info Session –Wednesday 26 August 2026
Open –Wednesday 2 September 2026
Close – Wednesday 14 October 2026
Decision – Late December 2026

An online information session will be conducted as part of each Round. Dates for these sessions and how to register will be available on the Foundation's website. Potential applicants are highly encouraged to attend an information session.

Assessment & Decision Making

Applications will be assessed by Foundation staff and a panel of sector leaders.

These recommendations will then be taken to the Anthony Costa Foundation Board for approval.

Unsuccessful applicants will be rolled over to the next Individual Capacity Building Grant Round if appropriate.

Assessment Criteria is as follows:

- Meets the eligibility requirements of the grant
- Clearly identified and articulated opportunity
- Clearly identified and articulated opportunity's potential impact on the applicant's professional development
- Clearly identified and articulated opportunity's potential impact on the applicant's organisation
- Letter of support from organisation or Board (if appropriate)

Reporting & Evaluation

Successful applicants will be required to complete:

- A self-assessment post completing their funding opportunity (to measure impact)
- A brief Final Report submitted via the portal

These reporting and evaluation requirements are designed to help both the applicant and the Foundation assess the effectiveness of the grant, track progress towards professional development goals, and capture insights that can inform future capacity building initiatives.

Additional Information and Questions

Potential applicants are encouraged to attend one of the information sessions. If you are unable to attend a session in person you should still register as you will be sent a link to the recorded session.

Potential applicants should also read/review all information provided on the Foundation's website.

Questions can be directed to the Foundation's email: foundation@costaam.com.au.