



Nowra CBD Access Improvement Financial Assistance Program Guidelines

1. PURPOSE

To encourage building owners and business operators within the program area to improve the physical access to their place of business through the provision of financial assistance for labour and materials.

2. STATEMENT

Improving access will encourage people with disability, older people and parents with prams to be able to contribute the CBD's economy and be included in the CBD's social and cultural environment. These guidelines recognise the program area as highly utilised for pedestrian movement and allows building owners and business operators to apply to receive financial assistance for labour and materials to improve physical access to their business.

3. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Building owners and business operators of a property within the program area who wish to undertake works to improve accessibility in terms of entry, moving around and enabling a dignified and equitable customer experience are eligible to apply for financial assistance. Eligible applicants are required to submit all relevant documentation and information with a completed application form. Government-owned properties are excluded from applying for financial assistance.



Figure 1 – Program Area

An assessment panel will evaluate applications against the ranked assessment criterion as outlined in these guidelines. Applications will be assessed by merit with Category 1 improvements being considered more favourable than Category 2 improvements. In the event that funds are not fully expended, applications from outside the program area will be considered.

4. ELIGIBLE WORKS

All applications for financial assistance must be for physical works to improve access to premises within the program area, as shown at Figure 1. The Program only applies to treatments from the public domain (Council footpath, or arcade) to the premises and only to commercial premises.

Building owners and business operators are able to apply for the following eligible works:

Category 1

- Construction/restoration of ramps and handrails at entry points
- Works to level entry points to premises where they enable easy access for people using wheelchairs or mobility aids
- Widening of doorways
- Installation of equipment for the vision impaired eg. tactile flooring
- Provide or upgrade accessible bathroom facilities

Category 2

- Installation of automatic doors
- Provision of removable ramps to enable access by people in wheelchairs.
- Construction of ramps and handrails within the building
- Modification of counter heights to enable access by people in wheelchairs
- Or any other works which would improve access

Only works which are able to be completed within the time-frame set by the assessment criteria (Part 6 of these guidelines) will be considered. Where works require planning approval (i.e. Development Consent or Complying Development Certificates), the relevant approval must be obtained prior to making an application for financial assistance.

5. INELGIBLE WORKS

The following works are considered to be outside of the scope of the program and will be not considered for financial assistance:

- Works that are not primarily for the improvement of accessibility.
- Internal alterations and additions to a building where the building does not provide accessible entry points.
- Any works that do not result in compliance with the Building Code of Australia, the Access to Premises Standards or the Disability Discrimination Act.

The following will also result in an application being ineligible:

- Where the use of the building has not received the appropriate planning approval;
- Where the building has overdue rates payable to Council;
- For the purchase of a building, site or movable item (with the exception of removable ramps);
- Relocation of a building; and
- Work that has already been completed.

6. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

To facilitate a consistent approach in reviewing and prioritising applications for financial assistance for this program, the following assessment criterion have been established:

- a. Is the project consistent with the relevant planning controls, BCA and Access to Premises Standards?
- b. Will the project contribute to a greater overall accessibility of the CBD?
- c. Can the project be completed by the end of the Financial Year? In some circumstances, Council reserves the right to consider an increase to the allocated time frame.

Notes:

1. Please note that your application does not have to meet all of the assessment criteria (with the exception of a); however, applications are being assessed on their merit against each of the criteria.
2. If an applicant has applied for previous financial assistance or grant money, but were unsuccessful, the applicant will be eligible to apply for financial assistance under these guidelines.

Council reserves the right to approve or refuse an application for financial assistance as it considers appropriate.

In the instance, that the number of applications receive exceeds the amount available under the current budget, Council reserves the right to determine the allocation of funds per allocation which may result in a less than the guide of 50% of the total cost of works to a maximum of \$3,000.