



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST –

COMMUNITY CONTENT - FUNDED

Ballarat Heritage Festival 2026

Overview

The City of Ballarat invites expressions of interest from community groups, local organisations, artists, and creatives to develop and deliver engaging content for the 2026 Ballarat Heritage Festival.

The 2026 festival theme, Hidden Histories, invites audiences to uncover lesser-known stories, people, and places that have shaped Ballarat's identity. This is an opportunity to share stories not often told — through exhibitions, talks, tours, performances, or other creative formats that bring heritage to life in new and unexpected ways.

Funding Support

Funding is available to assist with the development and delivery of new:

- Tours (walking, guided, or site-based)
- Talks or presentations
- Exhibitions or displays
- Creative performances (music, theatre, movement, spoken word, etc.)
- And other creative formats

Applicants can apply for funding of \$2,500 or \$5,000 (excl. GST).

Depending on the submission, funds may be used to directly support delivery costs such as venue hire, equipment, materials, or artist fees.

To be eligible for funding, proposed activities must:

- Be free to attend or heavily subsidised to ensure accessibility.
- Align with the 2026 festival theme, Hidden Histories.
- Present a story or perspective that has not been featured in the festival previously.
- Have a clear connection to the city's history and community.
- Be exclusive to the Ballarat Heritage Festival. Concepts, tours, performances, or exhibitions developed specifically for the festival must not be continued, replicated, or presented commercially after the event without prior written agreement from the City of Ballarat.

The City of Ballarat may also assist with venue sourcing and coordination support where appropriate.

Support and Promotion

Successful funded applicants will receive support to assist with the development and delivery of their activity. This may include:

- Inclusion in both the printed festival program and the digital program on the Ballarat Heritage Festival website (via ATDW listings*)
- Coordination support throughout planning and delivery.
- Assistance with venue sourcing, scheduling, and general logistics.
- Guidance and check-ins at key project milestones.

(*) ATDW listings are the responsibility of the content partner.

Funded activities will also be supported through **festival-wide promotion**, which may include:

- Inclusion in relevant festival marketing channels where appropriate.
- Promotion through overarching festival messaging, storytelling, and campaign themes.
- Visibility through the festival's digital platforms and audience engagement activities.

Please note: promotional activity will vary depending on the nature of the funded content and its alignment with festival scheduling, capacity and marketing timelines.

Next Steps

- Submit your application via the online [application form](#) by **04 January 2026**
- Submissions will be reviewed by the City of Ballarat Events Team (see below)
- Selected participants will be contacted to confirm their exhibition space. Presentation times will be allocated closer to the festival.
- The Community Engagement Coordinator will provide ongoing support leading up to and during the festival to ensure a coordinated and engaging Community Hub experience.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used by the City of Ballarat to assess all funding submissions. They help determine which projects best align with the festivals' objectives, offer strong public value, and can be delivered safely and effectively within the available resources.

Alignment with Festival Theme – Hidden Histories.

- Strength and clarity of connection to the 2026 festival theme.
- Demonstrates a genuinely *new* or *under-explored* story, perspective, or interpretation.

Originality and Exclusivity

- Presents content not previously delivered at the Ballarat Heritage Festival.
- Proposal commits to the activity being exclusive to the 2026 festival (not continue commercially afterwards)

Community and Audience Impact

- Potential to engage audiences in meaningful, inclusive, or unexpected ways.
- Contribution to broader community participation, learning or cultural enrichment.

Feasibility and Delivery Capacity

- Evidence the project can be safely and effectively delivered within timeframes and resources.
- Clear budgeting, logistics and planning
- Realistic use of requested funding.

Contribution to Festival Objectives

- Adds depth, diversity, or new perspectives to the festival program.
- Supports economic, identity, or community pride outcomes.

Value for Investment

- Proposed budget is realistic, fair, and aligned with the activity's impact and scope.

Click [here](#) to start your application

For further enquiries regarding this process, you are invited to contact:

City of Ballarat–Events Unit

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E: events@ballarat.vic.gov.au

