

Community Grants Policy

Date adopted: 28 May 2018

Responsible Service Areas: Integrated Planning / Leisure / Community Services

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a broad framework, which will guide the provision of consistent community grants administration and assessment processes across Council.

Background / Context

Maroondah City Council is committed to working in partnership with the community to encourage, develop, support and sustain a wide range of local quality recreational, cultural, social & community support and business group initiatives that make a positive contribution to the Maroondah community and strengthen the development of strong local communities.

Each financial year, Council provides financial assistance to individuals, community groups and not for profit organisations to support the provision of programs and services which respond to identified community need, contribute to the building of stronger communities and are in accordance with Council’s strategic outcomes and key directions as outlined in *Maroondah 2040: Our future together*.

Scope

This Policy provides a framework for the following grant programs and schemes administered by Council:

- The Community Grants Funding Program (incorporating the Community Development Grants Scheme and the Small Equipment Grants Scheme)
- The Arts and Cultural Grants Funding Program
- The Community Assistance Fund Program

Any Council grant programs and schemes outside this list are not explicitly guided by this Policy.

Objectives

Key objectives of this Policy are:

- To ensure that the administration and assessment of Council grant programs and schemes are transparent, equitable, inclusive and understood by the community;

Policy Control Schedule

Policy Title: Community Grants Policy		Policy No: IP 005	Policy type: Council
Policy creation date: 2008	Current version approved: 28 May 2018	Current version number: 3.0	Policy review date: June 2022
Parent policy: Nil	Child policy/policies: Nil	Policy responsibility: Manager Integrated Planning	eCLIP record number: TBC

- To articulate Council's definition of a grant and outline the various grants programs offered; and
- To identify acquittal and evaluation requirements to ensure Council and funding recipients remain appropriately accountable.

Policy Framework

This policy will be supported by a detailed set of processes for each grants program that are consistent with Council's broader aspirations for its community. Maroondah 2040: Our future together, *the Council Plan 2017-2021* and other Council strategic documents have guided the development of this policy to ensure that Council invests in projects that support Council's strategic direction and the aspirations of the Maroondah community.

The framework includes:

1. Advice to the community of the opening and closing dates
2. Documented guidelines with clearly defined criteria
3. Availability of an application form
4. Assessment forms and assessment process
5. Formal agreement form
6. Acquittal form
7. Internal accountability checks
8. Documented record of any communication between applicants and Council
9. Adherence to acknowledgement and publicity guidelines

The key processes associated with the Community Grants Funding Program and the Arts and Cultural Grants Program involve submission of required forms via the online SmartyGrants website. The Community Assistance Fund processes involve the submission of applicable forms via mail, email or hand-delivered to a Customer Service Centre.

The minimum requirements for each process are listed below:

1. Guidelines and Criteria

- Description of grant scheme or funding program;
- Eligibility;
- Ineligibility;
- Outline of assessment criteria;
- Conditions of funding;
- Insurances and industry obligations;
- Acknowledgement of Council;
- Timeline; and
- Step by step guide to the application process

2. Application Form

- Applicant Details
- Project Details
- Evidence of Public Liability
- ABN and/or ACN number
- Auspice details and permission (if applicable)
- Assessment Criteria
- Budget Breakdown
- Verification by applicant

3. Assessment Process

- Clearly defined assessment process;
- Applications assessed against criteria; and
- Funding recommendations approved by Council Management and / or Council endorsement.

4. Agreement Process

Documentation detailing as a minimum:

- Funded body, amount funded, funding period, GST requirements, Current Public Liability Insurance, conditions of the grant, acknowledgement of Council and reporting requirements.
- Agreement verified by funded body

5. Accountability requirements

Applicants successful in receiving a Council Grant will be required to:

- Request in writing any changes wanted to agreed project/funding terms
- Submit an acquittal form by the requested due date including copies of receipts or an expenditure and income statement.
- Return unexpended funds to Council or obtain written approval for variation to agreed funding.

Relationship to the Maroondah 2040 Community Vision

<i>Community Outcome:</i>	A well governed and empowered community
<i>Key Directions:</i>	<p>8.11 Foster a Council culture of collaboration and partnerships with individuals, community groups, businesses, service providers and other levels of government</p> <p>8.13 Encourage individuals, groups and organisations to proactively connect with and contribute to their local community</p> <p>8.14 Work in partnership to deliver services that recognise and are responsive to the interests and needs of the community</p> <p>8.1 Provide enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable</p> <p>8.2 Ensure responsible and sustainable management of Maroondah's resources, assets, infrastructure and natural environment</p> <p>7.8 Support all ages and population groups to be valued, connected and empowered within their local community through the provision and coordination of accessible services, programming and facilities</p> <p>7.6 Work in partnership to break cycles of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage, particularly within marginalised communities</p> <p>7.10 Promote and create opportunities for community connectedness, learning, mentoring and social interactions for people from all life-stages and cultural backgrounds</p>

Alignment with Council's mission and values

The operation and implementation of this Grants Policy supports Council's mission to be an effective and dynamic leader, working in partnership with the community, business and other spheres of government to foster quality, accessible and sustainable lifestyles for the community.

Council values that are particularly relevant to the operation and implementation of this Policy include:

Cooperation

- Involve others - Work with others in decision-making and the development of goals and plans.
- Build relationships - Develop a wide range of alliances and a comprehensive knowledge of the organisation and its services

Commitment

- Build trust - Act with openness, honesty, and integrity.

Communication

- Listen to others - Actively listen and demonstrate empathy for others' underlying concerns, interests and/or emotions.
- Demonstrate respect for all - Respect others' opinions and views.
- Act with honesty and integrity - Communicate openly and honestly and act with integrity.
- Communicate clearly and effectively - Use and demonstrate respect for communication styles and mediums that best suit the receiver, issue and situation. Ensure the information communicated is understood by the receiver.
- Keep others informed - Willingly share information and keep the community and colleagues well informed. Use information ethically - Respect confidentiality and the sensitivity of some forms of information, and protect the accuracy of data.

Continuous improvement and innovation

- Understand needs - Seek to clearly understand the requirements of those to whom we provide service.
- Evaluate performance - Continually measure and assess the performance of the activities in which we are involved, review processes and provide honest and constructive feedback.

Policy position

Eligibility

To be eligible for a grant, all organisations must be:

- an incorporated community group with not for profit status or auspiced by an eligible organisation (or individuals for Community Assistance Fund grants);
- located within or provides services to the Maroondah community; and
- maintain public liability insurance cover to the minimum level stated in the annual guidelines.

Ineligibility

The following requests will not be considered eligible.

- new building projects, capital works requests or facility maintenance projects;
- applications from individuals (except for Community Assistance Fund grants);
- multiple applications in a particular program; and
- retrospective funding.

Additional eligibility criteria may be specified for individual grant programs

Grievance processes

All applicants must be informed of the outcome of their application in writing and offered the opportunity to discuss the application process.

Applicants have the opportunity to request, in writing, a review of the decision by Council if not satisfied with the selection process. The applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing.

Conflict of interest provisions

To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process is maintained, Councillors, Council Officers and members of the public assessing grant applications are required to declare any potential conflict of interest. This may include, but is not limited to personal connections with any applicant. Anyone having a conflict of interest should not debate, be involved with any discussions, or vote on any matter relating to the specific applicant.

Accountability

Successful applicants must provide a financial acquittal of funds including receipts relating to the grant and complete a brief evaluation by the date specified in the annual guidelines for the relevant funding period. Incomplete or non-submitted acquittals and evaluations will result in an organisation being ineligible for the following year funding round.

Council reserves the right to seek reimbursement of grant funding from a funded organisation if the required evaluation or acquittal is not provided in a timely manner, or if Council is not satisfied that funds were used for the intended purpose as outlined in the original application.

Future community grants funding activities

All new Council community grant funding programs must adhere to the minimum procedures as outlined in this policy. If the funding program does not meet all requirements identified in this Policy, then the funding shall not be termed a 'grant' and will need to refer to the definitions in this policy to determine whether it is a donation or sponsorship. If considered a donation or sponsorship activity, then the other relevant Council policies should be consulted.

Privacy

Maroondah City Council is committed to the privacy principles as prescribed by the Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014 and the Health Records Act 2001. Relevant information is collected to ensure that applications can be assessed and a determination made on it. Personal and identifying information will not be disclosed except as required by law. Any access to information provided, amendments that may be required, or any privacy related enquiries may be directed to Council's Privacy Officer & Health Records Officer on 9298 4211 or via email - privacy@maroondah.vic.gov.au

Insurance

Applicants must demonstrate that all relevant insurances are in place and that Public Liability Insurance is held to the minimum cover outlined in the annual guidelines for the funding program. A copy of the Certificate of Currency covering the funding period must be included with an application. If successful, an applicant should, wherever possible, ensure that Council is named as an interested party on the public liability policy for the funded organisation.

Acknowledgement of Council

Where ever possible acknowledgment of Council funding should be given in any public relations opportunities undertaken by the funded applicant, relating to the request. Copies of any examples must be included in the funding evaluation report. A copy of Council's corporate logo can be provided for promotional purposes, however, grant recipients wishing to use Council's logo must first discuss their requirements with Council's Communications & Engagement service area. Use of Council's corporate logo will only be approved under these circumstances.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following service areas and designated officers will provide leadership in the delivery of community grant programs administered by Council.

Community Grants Funding Program

- Lead service area – Integrated Planning
- Management oversight – Manager Integrated Planning
- Officer oversight – Team Leader Council and Community Planning, and Community Development Officer
- Teams involved in assessment process

- Community Development Grants Scheme (subject to grants received) – Council and Community Planning, Arts and Cultural Development, Sports and Recreation, Children’s Services, Youth Services, Aged and Disability Services
- Small Equipment Grants Scheme – Council and Community Planning

Arts and Cultural Grants Program

Lead service area – Community Services

Management oversight – Manager Community Services

Officer oversight – Team Leader Arts and Cultural Development, and Arts and Cultural Development Officer

Team involved in assessment process - Arts and Cultural Development

Community Assistance Fund

Lead service area – Leisure

Management oversight – Manager Leisure

Officer oversight – Leisure Services Administration Officer

Teams involved in assessment process – Sports and Recreation, Golf and Leisure

Related legislation

Local Government Act 1989

Related policies, strategies, procedures and guidelines

- Maroondah 2040: Our future together, Maroondah City Council (2014)
- Council Plan 2017-2021, Maroondah City Council (2017)
- Maroondah Health and Wellbeing Plan, Maroondah City Council (2017)
- Sponsorship Policy, Maroondah City Council (2008)
- Maroondah City Council Arts and Cultural Grants Program – 2018/19 Guidelines
- Maroondah City Council Community Assistance Fund Guidelines 2018/19
- Maroondah City Council Community Grants Funding Program – 2018/19 Guidelines

Definitions

Auspice organisation

The role of an auspice organisation is to receive, manage and acquit the grant funding for another organisation/group. The grant applicant will need to provide evidence that an auspice organisation has agreed to undertake these tasks. An auspice organisation must be incorporated and with not-for-profit status.

Donation

Donations are considered gifts given in cash or in-kind without return consideration.

Grant

A sum of money or in-kind contribution given to organisations or individuals for a specific purpose directed at achieving goals and objectives consistent with Council’s strategic direction. The recipient is selected on merit against a set of criteria and funding is subject to entering a formal agreement with Council that outlines accountability requirements. *Adapted from www.treasury.act.gov.au*

Sponsorship

Council’s *Sponsorship Policy* defines sponsorship as a formal, reciprocal arrangement between individuals, groups or companies and Council, which is documented. It can cover both cash and in-kind considerations. The arrangement is

clearly understood by both parties, with clear outcomes and timelines, and articulates the rights and responsibilities on both sides. These outcomes are deliverable and measurable and align with the goals and aspirations of Council.

Specific authority levels exist for Council employees at the initiation, negotiation and sign-off stages of the sponsorship process. Each sponsorship arrangement, when concluded, requires formal feedback and evaluation of the sponsorship arrangement by Council.

Policy implementation

Policy implementation practices for each grant funding program is detailed in the section below:

The Community Grants Funding Program

Purpose

The Community Grants Scheme offers assistance to incorporated, not-for-profit community groups to develop programs, projects and events that enhance community wellbeing, increase participation in social and leisure activities and contribute toward meetings outcomes included in Council's long term Maroondah 2040 Community Vision. Funding is offered on an annual basis.

The Maroondah City Council Community Grants Funding Program offers two annual grant schemes:

- **The Community Development Grants Scheme** - This scheme offers assistance to incorporated, not-for-profit community groups to develop programs, projects and events that enhance community wellbeing and increase participation in social and leisure activities.
- **The Small Equipment Grants Scheme** - This scheme is for requests of \$500 or less to cover small equipment purchases, printing costs or administration costs to incorporated/not-for-profit community support groups.

Objectives

Council's Community Grants Funding Program seeks:

- To encourage increased participation in a wide range of quality activities and services within the municipality.
- To build and strengthen local networks within the Maroondah community.
- To encourage partnerships with Council to facilitate the effective use of community resources and encourage sustainability of services and programs.

Eligibility

- Must be an incorporated community group with not for profit status or auspiced by an eligible organisation
- Located within or servicing the Maroondah Community
- Maintain Public Liability Insurance Cover to the minimum level stated in the annual guidelines

Ineligibility

The following requests will not be considered eligible.

- New building projects, capital works requests, or facility maintenance projects.
- Funding to individuals.
- Projects which do not demonstrate wider community benefit or increase access and inclusion.
- Multiple applications.
- Applications from an organisation with an outstanding grant acquittal with one of the following: Community Development Grants Scheme; Small Equipment Grants Scheme; and Arts and Cultural Grants Program.

Assessment Criteria

All applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. **COMMUNITY BUILDING** - Projects which increase participation, encourage volunteering, provide leadership opportunities and increase learning and skill development. eg: Will the project or activity help to build a stronger and better community in the City of Maroondah?
2. **COMMUNITY BENEFIT** - New initiatives or the expansion of an existing service that will address a clearly identified community need and contribute to improved wellbeing.

3. **COMMUNITY SUPPORT** - Funding for community groups that provide help, advice or support to a specific population group who share a common experience.

Projects do not have to address all the listed criteria. Successful submissions will be required to meet at least one of the three criteria

Timelines

- **Application Period** - Applications will open early April and close at the end of the mid May. Applications are only to be submitted to Council via the online Smarty Grants system, which can be accessed during the application process via Council's website. Successful applicants will be notified in July with funding available in mid-late August.
- **Funding Period** –mid August to 31 May following year
- **Evaluation and Acquittal** – 31 May following year (end of funding period)

Terms of Funding

- The Community Grants Funding Program (incorporating the Community Development Grants Scheme and the Small Equipment Grants Scheme) has one annual funding round.
 - Organisations are only permitted to submit one application for each funding round to either the Community Development Grants Scheme, or the Small Equipment Grants Scheme.
 - All mandatory questions within the application must be fully completed and include all requested attachments.
 - Grants will be distributed on receipt of the submitted online Grant Funding Agreement and invoice and following the Community Grants Presentation event held in August at the commencement of the funding period.
 - All funds must be expended or assigned to an item of expenditure by 31 May (end of funding period), in accordance with the funding agreement.
 - It is a condition of funding that applicants be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act or be auspiced by an incorporated not-for-profit organisation. Schools and Churches may be exempt from this.
 - Applications will not be assessed if previous grants have not been acquitted by the due date.
 - Successful applicants will be required to submit a grant acquittal by 31 May (end of funding period).
 - Auspiced applicants must provide a letter from the auspicing organisation confirming their commitment to the project and willingness to manage funds on behalf of the applicant.
 - Programs will not be funded retrospectively (i.e. they cannot have already occurred).
 - The project budget must detail all expenditure and income items.
 - If an organisation is auspiced, funds will be paid to the auspicing organisation.
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- All grants will be subject to the Goods & Services Tax (GST). All organisations must submit one of the following to receive payment:
 - Organisations with an Australian Business Number (ABN) registered for GST - A tax invoice, inclusive of GST stating the organisation's ABN.
 - Organisations with an Australian Business Number (ABN) not registered for GST - An invoice stating the organisation's ABN.
 - Organisations without an Australian Business Number (ABN) - An invoice for the Grant amount and a completed Statement by Supplier form.

Accountability

Successful applicants must provide a financial acquittal of funds including receipts relating to the grant, and also complete a brief evaluation by 31 May at the conclusion of the funding period.

Guidelines

An annual set of guidelines will be developed and communicated to the public at the commencement of each funding round. These guidelines will provide up-to-date details on the assessment process, assessment criteria, timelines, conditions of funding and tips for completing applications.

Arts and Cultural Grants Program

Purpose

Maroondah Council's Arts and Cultural Grants Scheme supports a diverse and culturally rich Maroondah through community driven projects, initiatives and events that increase arts profile and participation. These initiatives may focus on a wide variety of art forms.

Objectives

Council's Arts and Cultural Grants Program seeks to:

- increase community participation in arts and cultural activities
- enhance and celebrate local identity through high quality projects with artists and community
- build and strengthen local networks within the Maroondah community and encourages partnerships and collaboration with community, business and Council
- strengthen the identity and profile of the arts in Maroondah through effective arts programming and marketing.

Eligibility

- Must be an incorporated community group with not for profit status or auspiced by an eligible organisation
- Located within or servicing the Maroondah community
- Maintain Public Liability Insurance Cover to the minimum level stated in the annual guidelines

Ineligibility

The following requests will not be considered eligible.

- special events that show or in the past have shown significant profit;
- projects that are part of the organisation's annual or regular program activities, for example, end of year performance;
- new building projects, capital works requests or facility maintenance projects;
- fundraising activities;
- multiple applications; and
- funding to individuals.

Assessment Criteria

All applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. **COMMUNITY BUILDING** - Projects which increase participation, encourage volunteering, provide leadership opportunities and increase learning and skill development. eg: Will the project or activity help to build a stronger and better community in the City of Maroondah?

2. COMMUNITY BENEFIT - New initiatives or the expansion of an existing service that will address a clearly identified community need and contribute to improved wellbeing.
3. COMMUNITY SUPPORT - Funding for community groups that provide help, advice or support to a specific population group who share a common experience.

Successful submissions will be required to meet at least one of these three criteria.

The Arts and Cultural Grant proposal must also meet 2 or more of the following criteria:

- supports a diverse and culturally rich Maroondah through community driven projects, initiatives and events that increase the profile and participation in the arts
- involves the participation of a skilled artist/s or arts worker who is suitable to the desired outcomes of the project
- supports further creative development of existing activities with new and innovative approaches and activities.

Timelines

- **Application Period** - Applications will open early April and close mid May . Applications are only to be submitted to Council via the online Smarty Grants system. Successful applicants will be notified in July with funding available in mid-late August.
- **Funding Period** – Mid August to 31 May following year
- **Evaluation and Acquittal** – 31 May following year (end of funding period)

Terms of funding

- Programs will not be funded retrospectively (i.e. they cannot have already occurred).
- The Arts and Cultural Grants Program has one annual funding round.
- Organisations are only permitted to submit one application to either the Community Grants Funding Program (Community Development Grants Scheme and the Small Equipment Grants Scheme), or the Arts and Cultural Grants Program.
- All sections of the application must be fully completed and include all requested attachments
- Grants will be distributed on receipt of the submitted online Grant Funding Agreement and following the Community Grants Presentation event held in August at the commencement of the funding period.
- All funds must be expended or assigned to an item of expenditure by 31 May (end of funding period), in accordance with the funding agreement.
- It is a condition of funding that applicants be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act or be auspiced by an incorporated not-for-profit organisation. Schools and churches may be exempt from this.
- Applications will not be assessed if previous grants have not been acquitted by the due date.
- Successful applicants will be required to complete a grant acquittal and brief evaluation by 31 May (end of funding period).
- Auspiced applicants must provide a letter from the auspicing organisation confirming their commitment to the project and willingness to manage funds on behalf of the applicant.
- Organisations/groups applying for a grant must be able to demonstrate how their project will directly benefit residents of Maroondah. The project must have a clear Maroondah focus.
- Council reserves the right to refuse funding.

Accountability

Successful applicants must provide a financial acquittal of funds including receipts relating to the grant, and also complete a brief evaluation by 31 May at the conclusion of the funding period.

Community Assistance Fund

Purpose

To offer assistance to community groups with urgent or unforeseen costs and to assist individuals to meet costs associated with participation in community activities such as sporting competitions, self development initiatives or arts interests.

Objectives

Council's Community Assistance Fund seeks to:

- assist community groups through providing a financial contribution to help meet urgent or unforeseen costs.
- assist individuals to develop and implement initiatives that promote community pride and participation.
- assist individuals to meet costs associated with participation in community activities such as sporting competitions, arts and cultural activities and self development initiatives that benefit the community.

Eligibility

Individual Applicants

- Individual applicants must be a resident of Maroondah.
- If applicant is under 18 years, parent/guardian is to sign the application form and complete the Parent/Guardian information section on the application form.
- The program, service or activity undertaken by the individual must have a demonstrated benefit to the community.
- Applicants should provide reasonable justification for Council financial assistance to assist in meeting expenses associated with participation in community activities.
- Evidence of participation is required to support the application (e.g. letter of confirmation from an organisation, association)
- Applications from five or more participants from the same team or group applying for the same event will be considered as an organisation application.

Organisation Applicants

- Organisations must be an incorporated community group with not for profit status or auspiced by an eligible organisation.
- Organisations must operate within or provide substantial benefit to the Maroondah Community.
- Maintain Public Liability Insurance Cover (\$20 million minimum cover)
- The request is unable to be considered under Council's Community Grants Funding Program because it does not meet the application timelines and/or is of an urgent and unforeseen nature.

Ineligibility

The following requests will not be considered eligible.

- Initiatives that do not focus on or benefit the Maroondah Community
- Initiatives that are only in the self interest of the applicant
- Capital works or minor facility maintenance
- Applications received after the project or event has occurred.
- Applications from Organisations will not be assessed if previous grants have not been acquitted and an evaluation form returned by the due date.
- Applications from Individuals will not be assessed if a previous Community Assistance Fund grant evidence of participation was not returned by the due date.

Assessment Criteria

Applicants will only be permitted to apply once per financial year to the Community Assistance Fund and requests must not be retrospective.

Successful applicants will be required to nominate and meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. COMMUNITY BUILDING
 - Increase participation
 - Encourage volunteering
 - Provide leadership opportunities
 - Increase learning and skill development
 - Build a stronger and better community in the City of Maroondah

2. COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL BENEFIT
 - New initiatives that will address a clearly identified community or cultural need
 - Contribution to arts and cultural development in Maroondah
 - Expansion of an existing service to improve service outcomes and community wellbeing.

Timelines

Applications can be received throughout the year and are assessed on an ongoing basis.

Terms of funding

- Programs will not be funded retrospectively (ie. Event cannot have already occurred or purchases already made).
- Applicants can only apply once per financial year for Community Assistance Funding and there is no guarantee of funding for future applications.
- Funding is a contribution (25%) towards the total cost of the project or pursuit and is up to a maximum of \$1,000 for organisations and \$350 for individuals.
- Support may be provided in the form of an in-kind contribution for organisations.
- If applicant is under 18 years, parent/guardian is to sign the application form and complete the Parent/Guardian information section on the application form.
- All sections of the application must be fully completed and include all requested attachments.
- It is a condition of funding that organisations be incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act or be auspiced by an incorporated not for profit organisation.
- Community Assistance funding payments to organisations will be subject to the Goods & Services Tax (GST) if applicable to your organisation. Within one month of attending the event, successful Individual applicants are to provide evidence of participation at the event for example; a letter (on letterhead) from an organisation, a newsletter or web based article, or photo at the event.
- Within one month of completion of the project, successful organisation applicants must provide a brief financial acquittal of funds including receipts relating to the grant and complete an evaluation form.
- Council reserves the right to refuse funding.
- Community organisations must demonstrate that all relevant insurances are in place and that Public Liability Insurance is held to a minimum cover as outlined in the annual funding guidelines. Failure to provide this information will result in the rejection of the application.

Accountability

- Within one month of attending the event, successful individual applicants are to provide evidence of participation at the event for example; a letter (on letterhead) from an organisation, a newsletter or web based article, or photo at the event.
- Within one month of the event or purchase, successful organisation applicants must provide a brief financial acquittal of funds including receipts relating to the grant and complete a brief evaluation.

