



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Fiona Carrick MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Tourism and Trade

Reference: CMTEDD EcoDev

Hearing: 14/11/2025

In relation to: ACT Events Fund

Question received: 18/11/2025

Answer Due: 01/12/2025

Chief Minister

ACT Events Fund

Would you please explain why the objectives of this fund are heavily reliant on the events capacity to generate tourist visitation, economic activity, and a range of legacy outcomes for the city?

Community Event Funding - up to \$10,000

Event Development Funding - up to \$30,000 however the criteria is heavily weighted to economic benefits, particularly tourism.

- To maintain a program of events - what governance arrangements are in place to help volunteers in the community support the delivery and enhancement of events that can demonstrate strong potential to develop and grow, including capacity to generate community participation, tourist visitation and economic activity?
- Why is tourism an important criteria for event funding when volunteers are simply trying to run community events to give the local people a sense of belonging to their area.
- Will you increase funding for community events to \$30,000 without the need for tourism?

Thank you

Mr Andrew Barr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The ACT Event Fund is designed to support events that deliver broad benefits for the Canberra community. While tourism and economic activity remain important considerations, the objectives of the fund are equally aligned with the ACT Government's Wellbeing Framework, which recognises that events play a vital role in fostering social inclusion, cultural participation, and a sense of belonging.

The ACT Event Fund also supports the Tourism 2030 Strategy (T2030), which sets out four missions:

1. Position Canberra as a global destination.
2. Promote Canberra's strengths and identity through unique experiences.
3. Contribute to community wellbeing by supporting events that foster inclusion and cultural vibrancy.
4. Develop iconic experiences that attract visitors and enhance Canberra's reputation.

Funding Structure and Support

As outlined in the ACT Event Fund guidelines, the desired outcomes from support provided through the ACT Event Fund are:

- To facilitate a vibrant, innovative, and inclusive events culture within the ACT.
- To help develop a diverse, year-round events calendar.
- To encourage the development of tourism in the ACT and increase economic activity in the Canberra region.
- To encourage and support the involvement of the local community in events (e.g. event organisers, event participants/attendees, artists/performers, sponsors/partners, community groups, volunteers, and local businesses/suppliers).
- To facilitate community event activity within Canberra's town centres and suburbs.
- To utilise, activate and enliven community assets, precincts, and spaces.
- To provide support to viable events that are of high quality, well planned and well managed.

The ACT Event Fund offers two categories:

- **Community Event Funding** – up to \$10,000 for smaller-scale events with a strong local focus.
- **Event Development Funding** – up to \$30,000 for events with growth potential, including capacity to attract visitors.

Weighted criteria for each funding category provide transparency and accountability in decision-making, while aligning funding with strategic objectives for both community vibrancy and economic growth (See Table 1 below).

The ACT Event Fund is highly competitive with 36 per cent of all funding applications to the main round receiving funding support in 2025. Applicants should choose the category that gives them the best chance of success and allows them to present the strongest application with supporting evidence.

Volunteer-led events remain eligible for Event Development Funding if they meet the criteria. Events ACT provides practical assistance to all organisers, including free workshops, planning templates, and networking opportunities, to strengthen governance and delivery capability.

Events are not funded solely for economic reasons - they are supported because they deliver a wide range of benefits under the ACT Wellbeing Framework and T2030 Strategy.

These include social inclusion, cultural participation, precinct activation, and community pride, alongside tourism and economic activity.

Table 1: ACT Event Fund Assessment Criteria

1.1 Community Event Funding criteria

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT – WEIGHTING 70%	
▪ Opportunities for local community involvement and participation in the event (e.g. event organisers, event participants/attendees, artists/performers, sponsors/partners, community groups, volunteers). ▪ Capacity of the event to enhance city/community vibrancy, community pride and social cohesion. ▪ Ability to support the diversity and spread of events in Canberra's annual calendar. ▪ Ability to enable local businesses to benefit and leverage off the event. ▪ The anticipated number of local attendees.	
EVENT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY – WEIGHTING 30%	
▪ Key personnel delivering the event, including demonstrated event management skills/experience. ▪ Evidence of strategies to identify and mitigate risks that could affect event success (includes consideration of safety/business/reputational/financial/environmental risks where applicable). ▪ Demonstrated capability to identify and reach target audiences via marketing and promotion. ▪ Clear understanding of how grant funding will enhance the event.	

1.2 Event Development Funding criteria

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT – WEIGHTING 25%	
▪ Opportunities for local community involvement and participation in the event (e.g. event organisers, event participants/attendees, artists/performers, sponsors/partners, community groups, volunteers). ▪ Capacity of the event to enhance city/community vibrancy, community pride and social cohesion. ▪ The anticipated number of local attendees.	
ECONOMIC BENEFIT – WEIGHTING 35%	

- Ability to enable local businesses to benefit and leverage off the event.
- Ability to support the diversity and spread of events in Canberra's annual calendar.
- Ability to generate tourism activity and enhance visitor perceptions of Canberra.
- The anticipated number of interstate and/or international visitors.
- Ability to substantiate event attendance and visitor figures.

MARKETING IMPACT – WEIGHTING 20%

- Demonstrated capacity to generate event awareness and attendance with clear marketing and media strategies that include (at a minimum):
 - Identified target audiences (i.e. local and/or interstate and international).
 - Identified marketing objectives, tactics, and channels.
 - An appropriate marketing budget to reach target audiences.
 - Plans to monitor and evaluate marketing success.

EVENT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY – WEIGHTING 20%

- Key personnel delivering the event, including demonstrated event management skills/experience.
- Evidence of strategies to identify and mitigate risks that could affect event success (includes consideration of safety/business/reputational/financial/environmental risks where applicable).
- Demonstrated capacity to enhance the event's ongoing viability and growth (e.g. increasing event attendance, size or quality).
- Financial viability of the event (i.e. a suitable budget and plans to secure own-source revenue).
- Clear understanding of how grant funding will enhance the event.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation

Signature: 

Date: 1.12.25

By the Minister for Tourism and Trade, Andrew Barr MLA