



PO Box 145. Hillarys WA 6025
19 Henderson Drive, Kallaroo WA 6025
ABN No. 20 353 736 273

20 February 2020

To whom it may concern;

Community Sports Infrastructure Grant 2018

We appreciate the opportunity to comment to the Select Committee in regards to our unsuccessful application for a grant under the above scheme

Background

NSCC&RA is a small tennis and social club run by volunteers and is a "not for profit" organisation

We have no income other than members fees and grants

The club has significant on-going maintenance costs for the grounds and facilities

We have a vibrant and growing membership however our facilities are dated and inadequate especially in terms of accessibility/disabled functions

We saw the CSIG as a fantastic opportunity to support the capital investment we desperately need for the future

What we want to achieve

We want to upgrade the facilities to allow people with disabilities to safely participate in activities at the club. We also need changing room facilities for women members to encourage participation. The club is at the centre of the community with a number of community groups using the facilities. Due to the demand we wish to provide a function area that can accommodate more community groups. To achieve these aims we structured our grant application to include the following key aspects;

- Provide accessible/disabled toilets, shower & change rooms
- Provide accessible ramps to allow access from the carpark onto the tennis courts and the clubhouse facility
- Provide female changing facilities
- Create a function area for use by community groups

Our submission

We are pleased that our submission scored 83 on the Sports Australia assessment which is in the top 7% of all the submissions. The submission was put together entirely by the volunteers on the committee, together with a number of professional bodies, who gave their advice and services for no fee and in good faith including:

- Architects
- Quantity Surveyors
- Town Planners

Workshops were held with the member and local community groups to assess needs and shape the application accordingly. The committee set up a multi-disciplined development team which met frequently to ensure the application;

- Met the needs and desires of the community
- Was technically viable based on the constraints of the site and existing infrastructure



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- Was financially achievable based on the limitations of the grant and the club's ability to co-contribute, and
- Fully addressed the CSIG assessment criteria specified in the grant guidelines

The submission included letters of support from the following:

- Federal MP – Ian Goodenough
- State MP – Peter Katsambanis
- Local Mayor – Albert Jacobs
- Tennis West
- Clubs WA and
- A variety of Community groups

We believe that the various contributors to the application would have spent well in excess of 100 hours putting our submission together

Our views on the process

We were disappointed when advised that our grant application was unsuccessful as we were confident that our submission was in accordance with Sports Australia program guidelines, and was well aligned with the published merit criteria. With the recent release of the Auditor General's Report and subsequent media releases relating to the awards, we now believe the process was both flawed and erroneous.

- We have requested Sport Australia to provide feedback on our evaluation and reason for rejection of our application, however they are unable, at this point in time, to provide the requested information.
- Reports published by The ABC would indicate that we are amongst the top 50 applicants to have not received a grant, our evaluation score was given at 83 which placed us in the top 7% of applicants.
- Based on published program guidelines our assessment should have ensured we were a successful applicant.

Conclusion

For a club like ourselves which plays an important part in providing not just a sporting facility, but also a social hub for the local community this program was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Having struggled for many years we have all worked hard to ensure the survival and development of the club. Sporting activities and club membership are at record highs and the grant and associated development would have enabled us to become more inclusive with regards disabled and female participants. Our business plan highlighted that additional income generated from the facility would support our long-term objective to becoming sustainably financially independent.

Whilst we were prepared to contribute towards the development, we are unable to finance the project without the grant and it will not proceed. We are now aware from the audit office report that many of the projects that were approved for grants were ineligible, and were not reliant upon government funding in order to deliver their projects. For volunteers at clubs throughout Australia, who worked hard to submit applications that on merit should have received awards, this outcome is extremely disappointing and needs to be addressed.



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It is evident that the award of grant funding was not informed by an appropriate assessment process and sound advice, in order to restore faith in the government it is important that the senate committee investigates these issues and reports on concerns raised with the involvement of the Sports Minister's office. Unlike the Gaetjens' Report this needs to be transparent and available to the public.

The government needs to make additional funding available to ensure that grants are made to all organisations that would have been successful based on Sport Australia merit scores but were later rejected by the Sports Minister.

We are aware of a possible class action and based on the strength of our application, and Sport Australia evaluation we have been advised that we will present a very strong case for award. It is our hope that the government addresses these wrongdoings and we do not have to consider this course of action.

Yours sincerely,

Larry Hirsch
President