



Leveraging Events Toolkit for Community Groups



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Introduction

East Gippsland Shire Council has developed three toolkits to help local community groups and businesses increase the benefits they gain from events, and to help event organisers increase the economic benefits from their events for the community. This guide will give you tips and hints on how to work with events.

This guide describes:

- the types of benefits community groups can gain from events
- how community groups can benefit from events
- where to find more help



Calendar of East Gippsland Events

To find upcoming East Gippsland events, visit:

www.visiteastgippsland.com.au/whats-on/events



Caption

Benefits of events for communities

Hundreds of festivals, sporting events, business events, and markets are held across East Gippsland each year, providing numerous short- and long-term benefits to our community.

Social and cultural benefits

Events provide vibrancy, and cultural experiences for locals, enhancing liveability. They generate a feeling of community pride as they celebrate a community's history, heritage, special interests, music, and sport. Events activate sport, recreational, cultural and entertainment community assets, venues, and public spaces. And, through volunteering, events enable residents to give back to their community, socialise, laugh, learn new skills, and display their talents.

Economic benefits

Events attract tens of thousands of visitors to East Gippsland each year. These visitors inject a significant amount of new money into our local economy as event attendees and external visitors spend money on fuel, food, accommodation, retail, entertainment and more. Events are also agents of local employment and encourage skill development. support self-employed people (vendors and contractors).

Tourism and marketing benefits

Events are powerful drivers of tourism, which is particularly valuable for rural destinations and small towns. Research by Tourism Australia revealed that three-quarters of event attendees would not have gone to a destination if not for an event. For 57% of first-time visitors to a region and 69% of repeat visitors, an event is the main reason for visiting.

First-time visitors who come for events get to discover our region, and many will return at other times, or tell others about their trip to East Gippsland. Such visits can lead to new residents and investment.

Events held outside of the peak tourism season help to increase visitation at a time when business is slow.

Event marketing also increases awareness of a destination, and the destination's reputation.



Benefits of events for community groups

Events provide an opportunity for community groups to:

- Fundraise.
- Raise awareness of, and public engagement with, the group's charitable cause(s) or programs.
- Raise awareness of the group and opportunities for membership.
- Be active in their community and give back.

How to collaborate and benefit from events

Taking part in events and festivals can be an effective way to raise funds and raise awareness of your organisation and/or its cause.

Fundraising

Ways your group can fundraise at an event include:

- Being the event's official charity/cause. The benefit to the event can be improved reputation for giving back to the community, and increased ticket sales (people feel good about attending events that support charities).
- Providing a service for a fee (donation) to the event organiser such as managing parking or ticket sales at the gate or helping with set up and pack down of the event.
- Selling food or beverages at the event, such as running a sausage sizzle or bar.
- Selling raffle tickets at the event.

Talk to the event organisers early

Events often have a policy to only support one charity or cause because they do not want to overwhelm attendees with numerous requests for donations. It is important for community groups to have a discussion with event organisers early about the opportunity.

Permits for fundraising

Fundraising activities are regulated by State Government. Permits and authorisation may be required. Fundraising appeals are administered by Consumer Affairs Victoria, while activities such as raffles, bingo, fundraising events, and selling lucky envelopes are administered by Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC). A liquor license is required from VGCCC to sell liquor at a fundraising event.

Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission
www.vcglr.vic.gov.au

1300 182 457

Ways to gain other benefits

Ways your group could achieve other benefits such as raising awareness of your group or increasing membership include:

Sponsoring the event by providing cash or in-kind services. See the Leveraging Events [Toolkit](#) for Businesses to learn how to maximise sponsorship.

- Booking a stall at the event to distribute information on your group or its cause, sell merchandise, engage with, or educate the public, sign up new members, and so on.
- Running an element of an event that aligns with your group's core purpose such as engaging youth in workshops, or providing an activity for children or people with a disability.
- Volunteering to grow your networks or engage your existing members through team-building.
- Buying an advertisement in the event's program or on the events website.

Running events

If you would like to run events to achieve your group's desired outcomes, find information on how to run events at www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/leisure/events



Case study: Bemm River and Benambra Neighbourhood Houses

Neighbourhood Houses bring people together to connect, learn and contribute to their local community through social, educational, recreational and support activities. These two community centres provided free lantern workshops during the East Gippsland Winter Festival which were opportunities for social connection for residents, but also enabled the organisations to introduce new people to the services they offer. The lanterns were put on public display as part of the festival, in one case, in front of the Neighbourhood House, bringing the public to the organisation.



Case study: Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers

Many community groups leverage the program of Toowoomba's Carnival of Flowers in spring in southern Queensland each year to showcase what they do.

The Orchid Society, the Native Orchid Society, the Bromeliad and Succulent Society, and the Clivia Society all hold their annual shows and plant sales as part of the program.

Museums, art and craft organisations host exhibitions and special floral-themed events, such as the QCWA Vase Extravaganza and the Toowoomba Quilters Club quilt exhibition.

Dozens of community groups of all kinds join the Carnival's parade that 60,000 people watch. Cultural groups march in traditional costumes, marching bands and dance schools provide entertainment, men's sheds, and train enthusiasts, all find a way to showcase their group to the community.



How to support local events



Many community groups recognise that it is not always about the money; there are times when community groups support an event to increase the benefits the event can provide the community.

Community groups and service clubs play vital roles in the success of many East Gippsland events. They provide valuable skills, experience, and human resources, and can provide exciting experiences within an event.

While some events held in East Gippsland may only be in town for a day or two and are not organised by event organisers who are local, they can still provide opportunities for community groups to gain benefits. These may be at the event itself or in areas nearby that will get passing traffic.

Roles in events

Some events put out expressions of interest to organisations to become involved in their event, but do not hesitate to be proactive and reach out to an event organiser about how your group or club could fill any skills gaps that may exist.

Ask event organisers if it would be valuable to them if your group:

- ran an experience for attendees as part of the event or to complement the event.
- ran an element of the event such as parking management. Conduct a skills audit of your group's members and let the event organisers know what skills you could share with them.

Service and community groups can play a variety of roles in planning and delivering events. While each event has unique needs, below are some of the roles that community groups could fill that would be helpful to event organisers.

Some roles require a qualification, specific skills, or reference (e.g., police) checks (e.g., Working with Children). These are noted with an asterisk below.

Pre-event

- Administrative roles – e.g., mail outs, data entry, finance management
- Set up and construction
- Assistance promoting the event

During the event

- Construction and putting up fences and marquees
- Traffic management*
- Car parking management
- Entry gate management
- Ticket sales
- Money handling
- Crowd and event marshals
- Shuttle bus services
- Food and beverage sales
- Food handling
- Responsible serving of alcohol*
- Stage management
- Registering participants
- Entertainment
- Children's activities*
- Supervising areas
- Master of Ceremonies
- Information booths
- Market research of attendees
- Waste management and educating attendees on recyclables
- Laundry services (or collection and delivery)

Post-event

- Evaluation/data analysis
- Dismantling the site
- Clean up

When you have decided to get involved with an event, it is important to ensure that you receive clear information from the event organiser about expectations and requirements. For all roles, the group and the event organiser should be clear about:

- Number of people required
- Dates and times required
- Role descriptions: duties and responsibilities
- Experience, qualifications, skills, and personal attributes required
- Specific requirements such as heavy lifting, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
- Decision making authority and reporting requirements
- Performance standards required
- Rewards, incentives, and recognition provided
- Event policies and procedures
- Insurance coverage
- Training procedures and inductions
- Timelines and processes used for event planning
- Feedback and evaluation mechanisms (during and after event)



Marketing

Help to promote the event the more who attend, the bigger the benefit the event can have for your community. Examples include:

- via your social media
- at your meetings
- in your newsletters
- on your website
- distribute posters and flyers

Case study: Deni Ute Muster

Each year early in its planning cycle, Deni Ute Muster in Deniliquin in southern NSW sends out a call to its database of local community groups for Expressions of Interest (EOI) in managing an aspect of the event, such as car parking, camping, clean up, traffic, and toilets.

The community groups respond with their interest in managing a certain element, and once their EOI is accepted by the event director, they are responsible for gathering their team and the required resources to manage this aspect of the event. In return they are paid a donation for the hours they contribute.

Many local community groups only need to do this one fundraising activity each year to raise all the funds they need - a much more efficient way to raise funds than having volunteers selling raffle tickets every Sunday of the year!



Tips for working with events

Tip 1: Talk with the event organisers

Ask the event organiser what they would like help with, and who else and what else is involved with the event. It is important to understand the event prior to getting involved. Ensure you coordinate your activities and involvement with others involved with the event rather than duplicating or leaving a gap. Knowing the event and its target markets can make all the difference in achieving a successful outcome.

Tip 2: Talk with other community groups

Talk to other community groups and service clubs both locally and in your state and national networks about their experiences with events and ideas.

Tip 3: Identify your resources

Realistically assess the resources you have available within your group so you can participate accordingly, such as human resources, skills, and equipment. Consider combining resources with other groups where resources are limited.

Tip 4: Join event committees

Events are often seeking the skills and experience that members of community groups can bring. Consider encouraging your group's members to get involved with events on their organising committees or sub-committees.

Tip 5: Identify opportunities

Consider what activities will work within the theme of the event. For example, if the event involves cars, trucks, and bikes, can your group offer an experience related to this theme as part of its program?

Tip 6: Keep it fun and enjoyable.

While events are often challenging work, event organisers value the spirit of fun and enjoyment that service clubs and community groups can bring to events.

Tip 7: Consider timing

Consider the timing of the event – When will attendees be arriving and leaving? When will they have spare time? Make sure you roster people on your activities accordingly and make your offer to attendees at the appropriate time.

Tip 8: Enhance the location

Is there something your club/organisation could do to enhance the event's location to help event continue to appeal to attendees year after year? For example, could your group help with street banners, lighting, entrance signs, or being ambassadors to visitors?

Tip 9: Tailor your offering to the audience

However you are involved in an event, ensure what you do is tailored to the event's target market. For example, if you are catering for a sports event, competitors will be looking for nutritious food that supports their performance. Ask the event organiser for suggestions and think beyond the sausage sizzle to offer something attendees will remember and talk about.

Tip 10: If providing products for sale

- Do not overcommit. It will be better to sell out than to be left with unsold goods. Where possible, buy products on consignment so you can return unsold goods.
- Provide locally made or locally grown products. Event visitors will often be motivated to purchase local products.
- Do not over-price items. While it might be tempting to maximise returns from attendees, they will leave the event and the region feeling less than impressed if they have over-paid for goods and services, and this would be impact on return visitation in the future.

Organisations that can help

The following organisations may be able to help your community group identify how it can leverage from local events. Find more information on how each type of organisation might be able to help below.

East Gippsland Shire Council

East Gippsland Shire Council's Economic Development Team:

- Attracts major external events to East Gippsland
- Shares information on best practice event management
- Supports funding applications for events
- Provides event permits
- Provides advice

For more information, contact the Economic Development team via email at events@egipps.vic.gov.au

East Gippsland Marketing Inc

East Gippsland Marketing Inc. (EGMI) communicates and collaborates with East Gippsland businesses to develop strong marketing campaigns that benefit the region.

EGMI is directed by a board of 13 founders, visionaries and business owners who represent East Gippsland municipal stakeholders, professionals and a variety of industries.

EGMI is supported by East Gippsland businesses and the East Gippsland Shire.

EGMI:

- Develops and implements an annual marketing plan and a three-year strategic plan.
- Undertakes local and external marketing activities in conjunction with Destination Gippsland's marketing activities.
- Coordinates, in collaboration with East Gippsland Shire Council, the provision of high-quality visitor services and visitor experiences.
- Builds industry networks that foster tourism and investment growth through a cooperative, professional approach.

Remember to follow East Gippsland's Love East Gippsland Facebook and Instagram accounts

For more information, contact EGMI at info@egmi.com.au or visit egmi.com.au

Events Gippsland

Part of Destination Gippsland, Events Gippsland, the Regional Tourism Board and peak tourism organisation in eastern Victoria, is developing resources to support events across Gippsland and help stakeholders leverage events.

Keep an eye out for Events Gippsland's upcoming Ambassador Program, a digital program to help businesses understand the significant role they play in events and the visitor economy.

Destination Gippsland provides training for businesses, such as webinars on effective marketing and social media tactics. Find out what is on offer at:

www.visitgippsland.com.au/destination-gippsland/industry-development/industry-training-events

Learn more at:

www.visitgippsland.com.au/destination-gippsland

Business and Tourism Associations and Chambers of Commerce

East Gippsland's local Business and Tourism Associations (BTAs) consist of businesses working together to:

- Grow economic prosperity
- Create and promote opportunities for business and tourism growth
- Provide businesses with tools and opportunities to grow, including professional development, networking and marketing opportunities, skill development programs, and employee benefit and cost-saving programs.

Reach out to your local BTA or Chamber of Commerce to discuss opportunities for leveraging local events to get more value out of them, including opportunities to collaborate with other local businesses.

These organisations can help with questions, share information, and provide introductions to businesses and community groups who could help realise your idea. As volunteer organisations, quite often BTAs do not have the capacity to help implement activities or implement them on behalf of local businesses.

You can contact the Economic Development team via email at economic.development@egipps.vic.gov.au for a full list of BTAs and Chambers in East Gippsland.

Case study: Bruthen Blues and Arts Festival

Bruthen Blues and Arts Festival is a volunteer run event which brings in several community groups to help make the event happen. A number of local community groups set up their BBQs to sell food, and the local schools, Bruthen Primary School and Tambo Upper Primary School, are also invited to see what fundraising they can do on the day of the event. There is a lot of support from community for this event and local community groups have been paid a donation in the past to help with the immense pack down after the event.

The 2022 event had to consider site changes to accommodate Covid restrictions. Bairnsdale Lions Club were paid a donation to help the event check vaccinations and QR code check in and Bruthen Lions Club ran a donut stall.



Case study: East Gippsland Field Days

East Gippsland Field Days is the largest annual event in East Gippsland with 8-10,000 visitors attracted to the event each year. The way this event is organised is a great example of the community coming together in a way where everyone benefits. Each year the event organisers collaborate with several service and community groups to make the event possible. In 2022 COVID vaccination checks were undertaken by the local Lions club and the local primary school and kinder group ran the canteen as their major fundraiser. Various local sporting clubs helped with the set-up and packing down of the event, all-round jobs to help make the event happen, car parking duties during the event as well as overseeing ticketing services.





East Gippsland Shire Council
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