

Grant Program Metrics Guide

Learn which KPIs matter most and how to measure grant program success.

Introduction: What Gets Measured, Gets Managed

In the world of grantmaking, good intentions are not enough. To demonstrate the value of your council's grant program and make informed decisions about its future, you need to move beyond anecdotes and embrace a data-driven approach to measuring success. This guide provides a framework for identifying and tracking the KPIs that matter most, organised across three tiers: administrative efficiency, program effectiveness, and community impact.

Tier 1: Administrative Efficiency Metrics

These metrics measure the health and efficiency of your grant administration process. They help you understand if your program is being run in a way that is timely, accessible, and cost-effective.

KPI	What it Measures	How to Track It
Application Rate	Number of applications received per funding round.	Count eligible applications submitted.
Cost Per Application	Admin cost divided by number of applications.	$(\text{Total Admin Costs}) \div (\text{No. of Applications})$
Time to Decision	Average days from deadline to notifying applicants.	Track dates for each process stage.
Applicant Satisfaction	Experience of applicants with your process.	Post-decision survey of all applicants.

Tier 2: Program Effectiveness Metrics

These metrics measure how effectively your program is achieving its stated objectives. They focus on the outputs and immediate outcomes of the projects you fund.

KPI	What it Measures	How to Track It
Funding Distribution	Proportion of funding across groups, areas, or priorities.	Analyse successful application data.
Success Rate	Percentage of applications that are successful.	$(\text{Successful}) \div (\text{Total Eligible}) \times 100$
Financial Leverage	Additional funding leveraged from other sources.	Grantee acquittal reports.
Project Completion Rate	Percentage of funded projects completed on time and budget.	Grantee final reports and acquittals.

Tier 3: Community Impact Metrics

These are the most important, and often the most challenging, metrics to measure. They assess the long-term social, economic, and environmental impact of your grant program on the wider community.

KPI	What it Measures	How to Track It
Community Participation	Number of residents who participated in or benefited from funded projects.	Grantee reports (attendance, volunteer numbers).
Social Return on Investment (SROI)	Estimated social and economic value per dollar invested.	SROI analysis (see ROI Report Template).
Progress on Council Plan	Contribution of funded projects to council strategic objectives.	Map project outcomes against strategic goals.
Qualitative Case Studies	Stories of change from the perspective of community members.	Interviews, testimonials, and storytelling.

How to Implement a Measurement Framework

Start with your objectives — the KPIs you choose must flow directly from the stated goals of your grant program. Integrate data collection requirements into your application forms, grant agreements, and reporting templates from the very beginning. Keep it proportional: a simple outcomes report may be sufficient for a \$1,000 grant, while a \$50,000 grant may require a more detailed evaluation.

Support your grantees by providing simple templates, clear guidance, and workshops to help them tell their story of impact. Many small community organisations will need capacity building in monitoring and evaluation. Finally, schedule regular reviews of your KPI data to identify what's working and what's not, and use the insights to make continuous improvements to your grant program.

"A commitment to measurement is a commitment to accountability. Councils that can clearly demonstrate the impact of their grant programs are better positioned to secure ongoing funding and community support."