

Shopfront Improvement Program

Frequently Asked Questions



1. What is the Shopfront Improvement Program?

The Shopfront Improvement Program is an initiative of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council designed to help commercial property and business owners improve the appearance of their shopfronts and facades. The program offers dollar-for-dollar matching grants of up to \$5,000.

2. Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible, you must be:

- The owner or tenant (with the owner's permission) of a commercial property within the designated areas (Innisfail, Tully, Mission Beach, and Cardwell CBDs, or along the Bruce Highway or identified tourist routes).
- Planning to undertake external improvements visible from the street.
- Using licensed local tradespeople for the works.

3. What types of improvements are eligible for funding?

Eligible improvements include:

- Repainting shopfront exteriors.
- New signage or branding enhancements.
- Repair or replacement of awnings.
- Adding greenery such as planter boxes or green walls.
- Window treatments, external lighting, and accessibility improvements.
- Industrial cleaning and other works that enhance the interaction between the shopfront and the street.

4. How much funding is available?

- Standard applicants can apply for up to \$5,000, with a requirement to match Council's funding dollar-for-dollar.
- Renew Cassowary Coast Program participants should seek advice from Council's Economic Development Team.

5. Do I need a co-contribution?

Yes, standard applicants must provide a dollar-for-dollar cash contribution up to \$5,000.

Renew Cassowary Coast Program participants should seek advice from Council's Economic Development Team.

6. How to I apply for the program?

You can apply through the Council's SmartyGrants platform. You'll need to provide:

- A detailed project proposal
- Photos of the current shopfront.
- Quotes from licensed local contractors.
- A budget showing your contribution (if applicable).

7. How are the applications assessed?

Applications are reviewed by a Council panel based on:

- Alignment with program objectives (i.e., enhancing the visual appeal of the streetscape).
- The level of financial commitment and cost-effectiveness (not applicable to Renew Cassowary Coast applicants).
- Use of local tradespeople and materials

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8. What if my project involves structural changes like awnings?

If your project involves structural changes, such as new or altered awnings, we encourage you to seek Council support. Council can arrange site visits to discuss your planned improvements, provide advice on any permits or compliance requirements, and help ensure your project aligns with the necessary regulations. Contact the Economic Development Department early in the planning stage to arrange a consultation.

9. Do I need any special approvals or permits?

Depending on the scope of the work, you may need building or planning approvals. For example: Painting or general façade improvements typically don't require approval.

Structural changes (e.g. new awnings) may require a building permit. Council can assist you with understanding which approvals are needed and help with the application process.

10. What happens after I complete my shopfront improvements?

- Once the works are complete, you'll need to submit an acquittal report, including:
- Before and after photos of the shopfront.
 - A signed statement confirming the completion of works.
 - Invoices from contractors.
 - Consent for Council to use images of the improvements for promotional purposes.

11. Who can I contact for more information?

For further information or assistance, please contact the Cassowary Coast Regional Council at 1300 763 903 or email economicdevelopment@cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au.

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