



Celebrating the 110th anniversary of the AOGU

Anniversary Grants

The aim:

We know our Old Girls are involved in remarkable activities and endeavours across the World and we want to be able to support them to achieve their big dreams – through connecting them with people with helpful skills and experience; through promoting their vision and achievements; and through financial support, where possible.

What is the Grant for?

The AOGU Anniversary Grant program was established in August 2018 to commemorate the 110th year of the Abbotsleigh Old Girls' Union (AOGU) and celebrating 110 years of building connections. These Grants can be awarded to Old Girls embarking on an activity that aims to achieve at the highest levels, is designed to benefit the community, or have a positive social impact. This may include undertaking extraordinary postgraduate academic studies; contributing to national or international service work; significant creative and performing arts projects; or representation through national or international excellence in sport.

The Grant(s) will be awarded to an Old Girl who has demonstrated herself to be a contributory member of the community engendering a positive influence by her involvement through qualities such as integrity, respect, courage, compassion and perseverance. These criteria reflect the Abbotsleigh values. They are wide and all encompassing. Each application will be judged on merit within this framework.

Frequency:

AOGU Grants will be awarded annually near the end of each calendar year, subject to review. The application period and award dates will be decided and advertised to fit the AOGU and School schedule for that year.

Funding:

In 2018 (its 110th year) the AOGU will offer Grants to the maximum value of \$5,000 in total. The full amount can be awarded to one candidate, or if there are several worthy applicants, the amount can be split. Each Grant would be no less than \$1,000. However, if none of the applicants meet the selection criteria, no Grant is required to be offered.

The financing of the Grant program will be reviewed and re-assessed bi-annually, with the funding pool and individual award levels confirmed.

Applicants and eligibility:

Any Old Girl who is a registered member of the AOGU and who makes a formal application via the agreed process.

Promotion and application:

A notice inviting Old Girls to apply for the AOGU Anniversary Grant will be published in *Around Abbotsleigh* and *The Loom*, generally between May-August. This may be supported by social media messaging and/or direct contact.

When the applications are advertised, all key dates will be advised for that year. On request, an application form will be sent to the prospective grant recipient via email, with instructions for completion and return. An application form will also be loaded on the Abbotsleigh website (AOGU section) if acceptable to the Union and School.

Contact point(s) for enquiries will also be noted, such as the aogu@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au email and potentially the Panel Chair.

If grant management software is available, this may be used to receive and administrate the grant process.

Selection of a Candidate or Candidates:

Assessment Panel:

An assessment Panel of up to five (5) Old Girls will be formed annually. The AOGU Committee will discuss and confirm the structure of the Panel during a regular Committee meeting prior to applications being advertised each year. Of these, at least three (3) Panel members will conduct any reviews of applications and interviews. Suggested Panel members include the Honorary President and/or the immediate Past President; the AOGU Relations Manager and members of the AOGU Committee (this could include an Honorary Member or a member of the General Committee). A Chair of the Panel will be agreed, who will coordinate the activities of the Panel and liaise with the Old Girls' Relations Manager on administrative aspects.

The Panel will read all the applications received. Any conflict of interest noted will require an alternate Panel member to step in. Depending on the number and quality of applications, a shortlist of applicants to be interviewed will be agreed. Interviews may be via phone, skype or in person.

Criteria:

The Panel will use judgement and set criteria to make recommendations on recipients. Categories to be considered, but not limited to, are:

- Academic merit
- Social or artistic merit
- Leadership potential
- Innovation and uniqueness
- Inspiration to others
- Individual empowerment
- Sporting achievement
- Sustainability and environmental benefit
- Positive social impact.

Applications must meet the following criteria:

- ◇ The application must be for a specific amount (from \$1,000-\$5,000).
- ◇ The application must state a specific purpose and clear and measurable goal(s).
- ◇ The application will contain a proposal as to how the Grant will be used, and estimated timeframes and deliverables/plans. A pro-forma may be created to assist.
- ◇ The application will state what other funding has been obtained and the total amount of funding required for the endeavour.
- ◇ Applicants must be willing to report back to the Committee on outcomes of their endeavour and share their story with the wider Old Girl and/or School communities.

The Panel may choose to create a matrix of criteria by which applicants will be ranked. Note:

- ◇ Age – there is no restriction on the age of the applicant, only the merits of the request.
- ◇ Geography – Grants can be used locally, across Australia or Internationally.

For those applicants shortlisted, references will be requested to validate the application. Referee(s) will be required to provide supporting information or personal recommendation as required. This may be done electronically or over the phone, where appropriate.

Awarding the Grant:

- ◇ Shortlisted applicants will make themselves available for an interview on a given day(s). This may be conducted remotely where the applicant is not available for a face-to-face interview.
- ◇ Once the decision on Grant recipient(s) is reached, the AOGU Committee will be notified, either at a regular meeting or via email. The announcement will be embargoed until all applicants have been communicated with. It is at the discretion of the Panel as to whether feedback is provided on the decision.
- ◇ The Grant recipients will be announced via media and then through regular publications. The recipients must be willing to have their award promoted within the Old Girl community, for example via media, publications, or attending events.
- ◇ Where no applications are received or none are deemed to be of merit or fitting the aims and criteria of the Grant program, no Grant will be awarded in that year.

Grant recipients must commit to reporting outcomes to the AOGU Committee on an agreed basis. Where appropriate, these updates may be shared with AOGU members through meeting minutes and the media. Grant recipients may also be invited to present to a Committee meeting and potentially at an AOGU function or event.

Review:

Following each round of grants, a report will be provided by the Panel to the Committee with recommendations on any adjustments required on the process or the criteria. This will enable the Grant program to remain relevant and valid.