

TOOWOOMBA
CARNIVAL
of FLOWERS



GRAND CENTRAL

Floral Parade

20 SEPTEMBER 2025

Entrant Information Booklet

Now in its 76th year, the Grand Central Floral Parade continues to prosper and delight visitors and residents each spring. An integral event of the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers, the Parade is proudly sponsored by Grand Central; it features floral floats, colourful characters, entertainers, local and visiting bands and other visual elements – this vibrant street celebration is not to be missed!

This document is purposed to help you understand the Parade entry process and provide support to participate in this iconic Toowoomba event!

Please make sure you read through this information thoroughly and share with any other participants or community groups members so everyone can understand the requirements and regulations for the Grand Central Floral Parade.

Parade Route



The Theme

The Grand Central Floral Parade 2025 theme is:

FLORAL FRENZY!



A message from your Creative Advisors: Anna & Mary-Kate

How is your group going to interpret the words “Floral Frenzy?”

This has always been a FLORAL Parade so the first part of “Floral Frenzy” is a no brainer. But this year, we’re not just talking about a few petals here and there – we’re going for a full botanical takeover! Colourful blooms everywhere, transforming the city into a petal-powered paradise! It’s not just a Parade – it’s a flower uprising!

FRENZY – a wild excitement. Here’s your chance to rebel against anything formal, ordered, neat and tidy. We want to see something creatively chaotic so let your imagination RUN WILD!

Think:

- movement and choreography, streamers, bunting, flags and bubbles
- engaging entertainment - happy music, acrobats and jugglers
- bright colours and chaotic patterns
- WILD flowers

And think BIG for impact - because Parade entries are seen from a distance!

You will need LOTS AND LOTS OF FLOWERS. In fact, at least 50% of your entry needs to be flowers and plants. You can grow your own flowers if you want, or order them from a local supplier. If you’re planning to grow your own, get those seeds in the ground soon!

Floral content can also be made from paper, synthetic or made from recycled materials! But remember, **no** glass or the use of single use balloons.

Of course, we encourage you to choose local whenever possible and recycle and repurpose what you can.

Remember every single person participating in the Parade **MUST** be in costume or some sort of themed outfit. It’s easy to dress a driver or a support person in bright, floral colours – a floral shirt, a hat, a wave and a big smile make a huge difference!

We’re here to help you develop your ideas and inspire you to think outside the box. Look for the link to book your appointment with us (online or in person) and we’ll see you sometime in April!

We’re really looking forward to meeting with you, hearing how you’re going to address the theme and working together to make Toowoomba’s 76th Grand Central Floral Parade a truly outrageously frenzied floral spectacle!



What You Need to Know

WHO CAN ENTER

Everyone is invited to enter the iconic Grand Central Floral Parade!

The iconic Grand Central Floral Parade is fun and rewarding. Almost anyone can get involved including workplaces, social and community groups, local performers, artists and musical groups.

There are 2 ways you can participate:

1. The main event – 76th Grand Central Floral Parade (street parade 20th September 2025, 10am)
2. Itty Bitty Grand Central Floral Parade (available only to Educational Facilities, Disability/Inclusion Support Organisations, Not-For-Profit Organisations and Aged Care Facilities/Homes, displayed in Grand Central from 12 Sept to 6 Oct 2025)

WHAT I NEED TO DO...

Step 1: Read through this information booklet! Outlined are the entry requirements and how you can access support available from our Creative Advisors, Anna Battle and Mary-Kate Thomson, to help you achieve a high-quality entry to showcase your business or community group.

Step 2: Make an appointment with the Creative Team and attend. They will help you plan your entry and offer advice on how you can best represent your brand, mission and purpose while addressing the 2025 Floral Parade theme: “Floral Frenzy!”

Make an appointment here: [Book here](#)

Appointments can be face to face, OR via a Google Meet. If you entered last year, you may elect to have either a 30 minute or a 1 hour appointment. If your group is new to the floral Parade, you will need to make a 1-hour appointment.

These appointments are a compulsory requirement of entry into the floral Parade.

Step 3: Fill in the online entrant application form (link on our website www.tcof.com.au) before they close at 2pm on 9 May 2025..

Step 4: The Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers office will then contact you by 16 May to advise if your application has been accepted.

Step 5: Successful applicants will be provided with additional information regarding permits and regulations specific to your entry. This is dependent on what vehicles and structures etc will be included in your entry.

Step 6: The Creative Advisors will touch base with you again to check that you are fulfilling the Floral Parade creative requirements.

Step 7: Purchase your materials and resources and commence building your float.

Step 8: Participate in the Grand Central Floral Parade!

HOW TO ENTER

Attend your appointment with one of the Creative Advisors (Anna or Mary-Kate), then complete the application form online (via our website www.tcof.com.au).

Closing Date: Friday 9 May, 2025 at 2pm

All applications will be assessed, and successful applicants notified no later than Friday 16 May 2025.

The Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers and Grand Central Floral Parade Coordination Team’s decision will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

KEY CONTACTS

Parade Creative Advisors

Shiny Happy Art

Anna Battle & Mary-Kate Thomson | Email: carnival@shinyhappyart.com

Contact for support regarding the design and creative components of your Parade entry.

Entrant Assistance

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers Team

Toowoomba Regional Council

P 4688 6661 | E info@tcof.com.au

Key contact point for support with your application and for any queries you have about your participation in the Grand Central Floral Parade.

Event Manager

Wendy Green, Coordinator – Events Toowoomba Regional Council

P 4688 6661 | E info@tcof.com.au

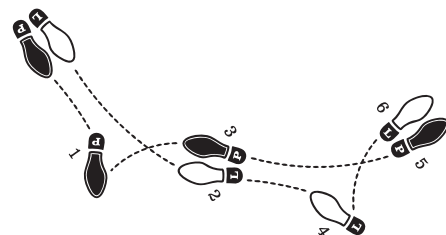
Event Coordinator

Make sure you join the Floral Parade Participants Community Facebook Group – search for Grand Central Floral Parade – Participants Community. (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/tcof.com.au>) That's where you'll get to know other participants, share ideas and resources, and keep in touch with us.

When you Enter you Must Choose a Category

ENTRY CATEGORIES

- Corporate Float: Self-propelled vehicle/trailers
- Corporate Walking Group
- Community Float: Self-propelled vehicle/trailers
- Community Walking Group
- Visiting Float: Self-propelled vehicle/trailers
- Multicultural Celebration: Self-propelled vehicle/trailers and walking groups.
- Creative Expression: puppetry, marionette, costume character, and visual delight bicycle.



CORPORATE FLOAT

A visual display on a self-propelled float or trailer towed by a decorated vehicle entered by any commercial business, decorated with a minimum of 50% floral and living matter. Corporate floats are limited to **one** (1) sign for advertising and need to rely on visual communication of their brand created in consultation with the Creative Advisor.

COMMUNITY FLOAT

A visual display on a self-propelled float or trailer towed by a decorated vehicle entered by a community-based club, association, or group, decorated with a minimum of 50% floral and living matter. Evidence of group's Charitable Status or Incorporation must be included with the application.

VISITING FLOAT

A float entry from outside the immediate Toowoomba Regional Council area. A strong element of floral theming must be added to the float.

MULTICULTURAL CELEBRATION

A visual display representing and celebrating Australia's cultural diversity. This category must include floral elements in costumes and props.

WALKING GROUP

This category is open to all walking groups and marching bands and must address the Floral Parade theme. The maximum number of walkers is 50, and all must be in fully themed costumes with floral elements. Marching and walking groups are permitted forward manoeuvres ONLY.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Encompassing puppetry, marionettes, costumed characters and/or visually delightful bicycle entries, the entry must present a fantastic floral display. Creativity in interpreting and expressing the theme is essential.

When you get the Okay to Come and Play

Once your application has been received and accepted, you will be contacted to confirm your participation in the Parade. At this time, you will also be provided with further detailed information relating to Grand Central Floral Parade day, marshalling times, locations etc.

FLORAL PARADE PARTICIPANTS MEETING

A final and MANDATORY Parade participants meeting will be held at 5.30 pm on **Wednesday 17 September 2025**.

A nominated person (who will be with your entry on Parade Day) from each entry **MUST** attend this meeting as important information will be distributed in relation to road closures, access and marshalling times and locations.

You'll also receive useful tips to help ensure that your entry looks its best on Parade Day.

GETTING YOUR ENTRY TO THE FORM UP AREA

To move your unregistered vehicle, trailer or float to the Parade form up area, you will need a day permit from Queensland Department of Main Roads and Transport.

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers will be applying for a bulk permit, and you will be required to provide Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers with your unregistered vehicle details (e.g., VIN number), insurance and drivers licence details by **Friday 25 July 2025**.

Judging and Prizes

Judging of your entry will take place while the Parade is in progress. Grand Central Floral Parade winners will be announced at the conclusion of the Parade on the final PA Staging located within Godsall Street Oval.

CATEGORY	1ST PRIZE	2ND PRIZE	3RD PRIZE
2025 Grand Champion	\$500		
Corporate Float	\$250	\$100	\$50
Corporate Walking Group	\$250	\$100	\$50
Community Float	\$250	\$100	\$50
Community Walking Group	\$250	\$100	\$50
Visiting Float	\$250	\$100	\$50
Multicultural Celebration	\$250	\$100	\$50
Creative Expression	\$250	\$100	\$50

The Judging Criteria

All entries in the categories of the Grand Central Floral Parade will be judged according to the following criteria (as applicable).

FLORAL FLOATS (SELF-PROPELLED AND TRAILER) ENTRIES

TECHNICAL EXECUTION

- ☐ Has the entry been well constructed and neatly presented?
- ☐ Are all flowerpots concealed?
- ☐ Is the front of the float well decorated?
- ☐ Are all towing devices decorated and concealed?
- ☐ Are the vehicle's wheel arches concealed?
- ☐ Is all signage neatly and professionally presented?
- ☐ Does the entry comply with the Grand Central Floral Parade Conditions of Entry?
- ☐ Is the float skirted to give the appearance of 'floating' down the Parade route?
- ☐ Are all props including trolleys, prams, bikes etc. decorated?

FLORAL CONTENT

- ☐ Does the entry meet the floral/living matter coverage (a minimum of 50%) criteria?
- ☐ Has the entry tried to utilise different materials e.g. seeds, grasses, fruits, vegetables, and other regional produce?
- ☐ Has the living matter been presented in an interesting and innovative way?

THEME & DESIGN

- ☐ Is the entry concept creative and/or innovative in design?
- ☐ Is the theme recognisable to the public?
- ☐ Does the entry address the Parade theme?
- ☐ How well has the theme been interpreted and executed?
- ☐ Are the participants and driver (if visible) appropriately costumed to reflect the theme?
- ☐ Has the entry considered good use of colour in the design?

ENTERTAINMENT VALUE

- ☐ Is the entry fun?
- ☐ Are the participants animated and showing that they are enjoying their Parade experience?
- ☐ Are the participants using choreography and acting to present a professional performance?
- ☐ Are the participants engaging with the audience to enhance their Parade experience? (no physical contact with the audience is allowed)



MARCHING AND WALKING ENTRIES

FLORAL CONTENT

- ☐ Does the entry meet the corresponding floral (a minimum of 50%) entry criteria?
- ☐ Has the entry tried to utilise different material e.g. seeds, grasses, fruits, vegetables and other regional produce?
- ☐ Has the living matter been presented in an interesting and innovative way?

ENTERTAINMENT VALUE

- ☐ Is the entry fun?
- ☐ Are the participants animated and showing that they are enjoying their Parade experience?
- ☐ Are the participants using choreography and acting to present a professional performance?
- ☐ Are the participants engaging the interest of the audience to enhance their Parade experience?

THEME & DESIGN

- ☐ Is the entry concept creative and/or innovative in design?
- ☐ Is the theme recognisable by the public?
- ☐ Does this entry relate back to the Parade theme and/or is it relevant to the organisation presenting the entry?
- ☐ How well has this theme been interpreted and executed?
- ☐ Are the participants appropriately costumed to reflect this theme?
- ☐ Does the entry utilise good use of colour in their design?

OVERALL

- ☐ Is the entry fun and entertaining?
- ☐ Is the entry engaging and interesting for the audience, to enhance their Parade experience?
- ☐ For individuals, is the costume well-presented and maintained?
- ☐ Has the entry acknowledged the floral theme?
- ☐ For costumed characters, is the character's minder dressed to complement the theme of the character and the floral theme?
- ☐ Does the entry comply with the Grand Central Floral Parade Conditions of Entry?



But wait... there's more info

TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL COUNCIL FLOATS FOR USE

Toowoomba Regional Council has a small number of floats and trailers available for allocation to prospective entrants. The allocation is at the discretion of the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers Coordination Team.

For entrants who have not driven a self-propelled float before, it is recommended that the driver hold a truck (MR, LR or HR) licence.

To register your interest in one of these floats or trailers, please complete the Grand Central Floral Parade application form.

PREFERRED SUPPLIERS

To support all Grand Central Floral Parade entrants, several Toowoomba and regionally based suppliers offer discounts on materials used in the construction of Parade entries. These businesses are embracing the community spirit of the Parade.

Each successful entrant will receive a list of participating businesses in the months leading up to the Parade. The discounts are at the discretion of individual businesses.

PAPER FLOWERS

While we encourage the inclusion of real flowers and plant material in Parade entries, paper flowers (and flowers made from other materials) can provide a cost-effective way to fill in the gaps. A paper flower making video (along with the other helpful videos, including the use of polystyrene to make props), can be accessed via The Grand Central Floral Parade – Participants Community Facebook group.

POTTED FLOWERS

Toowoomba Regional Council is not able to provide not-for-profit organisations with any potted colour in 2025 due to changes within operational areas that support this initiative. Please discuss alternative 'floral' interpretations with the Creative Advisors. You may elect to grow your own flowers or contact Pohlmanns (a preferred supplier) to order your potted colour. Orders must be in by mid-May if you have specific flower or colour requirements.

PROMOTING & MARKETING YOUR ENTRY

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers encourages everyone to promote and market their entry in the Grand Central Floral Parade through social media such as Facebook or Instagram, or in printed material.

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers and the Grand Central Floral Parade are trademarked, and all entrants must ensure they use the correct wording when referencing the event. Please ensure the following terms/events are quoted as follows:

- "Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers"
- Grand Central Floral Parade
- @GrandCentralFloralParade
- #GrandCentralFloralParade
- #TCOF
- @toowoomba carnival of flowers (Facebook)
- @toowoombacarnivalflowers (Instagram).

For more information on the correct terminology or promoting your entry, please contact the Carnival Team on 4688 6661 or email your enquiry to info@tcof.com.au.

WHEN THE PARADE IS OVER... IT'S NOT OVER!

PARADE FLORAL MARKET

Should you have fresh floral on your float that you would like to sell to the public, this can be done when the Grand Central Floral Parade finishes at Queens Park, on the Godsall Street Oval until around 12 noon.

ITTY-BITTY PARADE

Itty-Bitty Parade allows those that can't participate in the main event to showcase their creativity, community spirit and love of Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers...in miniature! These delightful and well-loved mini float designs are open to Educational Facilities, Disability/Inclusion Support Organisations, Not-For-Profit Organisations and Aged Care Facilities/Homes. The Itty-Bitty entrants will be proudly displayed in Grand Central Shopping Centre from Friday 12 September to Monday 6 October. To enter the Itty-Bitty Grand Central Floral Parade and for further information, please visit the Grand Central website.

Designing and Building your Float

Help is always on hand to assist you to develop your ideas into practical application. Creative Advisor appointments are compulsory to attend prior to applying. Follow up is available with the Creative Advisors via email (carnival@shinyhappyart.com) from now until Parade Day (Saturday 20 September 2025).

If you don't have the capacity to build a float but would like to be involved, there is an option to collaborate with community groups. Please discuss this option with the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers Coordination Team.

Step 1. Devise a concept

Utilise a mind map to develop visual communication of your brand/organisation. Consider a concept that will translate well with the use of floral elements, addresses the theme and reflects your organisation.

Remember, you are entering a floral parade!

Step 2. Develop your design

Creative Advisor appointments times are listed in the online calendar [here](#).

During your appointment your entry will be discussed, and ideas developed (sometimes into a sketch) by the Creative Advisor. Providing a sketch of what you are proposing is part of the criteria needed for entry into the Grand Central Floral Parade. The sketch, along with notes on how you propose to construct your float, will help us (and you) to visualise what your float will look like.

Please keep in mind the 4m maximum height restriction.

Step 3. Choose your Float base:

Potential Float Bases:

Truck • Trailer • Van • Golf Buggy • Tractor • Earthmoving Vehicle
Horse and Cart • Quad Bike • Car • Bus • Scooter

There are Council float bases available; however, these are limited in number and will be allocated once applications have been received and reviewed.

Self-Propelled Floats

You can convert older vehicles (e.g. car, bus, ute) into self-propelled floats by cutting the vehicle down to the chassis and then securing MDF Board over the chassis to create the floor of your float. Before you consider cutting down a vehicle, please check that it has a chassis as some newer vehicles do not. Please utilise accredited or experienced engineering personnel for this.

Towed Floats

If you are creating a towed float (i.e. utilising a trailer) it is important that the tow vehicle is also decorated to complement the float and includes floral elements. At a minimum, the tow vehicle must include a fresh floral bonnet display.

Decorated Vehicles

Vehicles such as trucks, vans and utes can be the basis for your float entry. When designing your float, consider that the front of the vehicle will be very prominent and will need to be decorated. Also consider the skirting of your vehicle as this will create the illusion of a 'float' and will help to disguise often unsightly elements of the vehicle.

Step 4. Put together a list of materials you require.

Listed below are some of the materials used to make floats.

POTENTIAL FLOAT MATERIALS

Rio Mesh • Crepe Paper • Corrugated Iron • Wood • Lattice • Balloons • Netting • Streamers • Wheels
Fabric • Pipe • Wire • Fringing • Floral Sheeting • Pallets • Cardboard • Paint Paper • Fur • Foam
Chicken Wire • Flags • Rope • Astro-Turf • MDF Panels • Concrete

Your float must be decorated with 50% or more floral matter!

SAMPLE SHOPPING LIST:

- Mesh sheets
- Paint brushes
- Rollers
- Paint Tray
- Weather Sealer
- Gyprock joint compound - creates weatherproof layer
- Acrylic paint
- Sponges
- MDF project panels - 1200x600x3-12mm
- Brown Paper
- Chicken mesh - wide details - 1800x12x50
- Chicken mesh - fine detail 1800x13x50
- Wire
- Screws - self tapping.
- Liquid nails
- Expand foam
- PVA glue
- Nails
- Artificial turf
- Masking tape
- Galvanized wire

PLEASE NOTE: NO balloons (single use plastic/latex), glass, ceramics or any materials that can break into sharp or dangerous pieces are allowed on entries.

Step 5. Ensure that your float meets the floral criteria.

The required minimum 50% or more floral and greenery / living matter on your float can comprise of cut flowers, floral arrangements, potted flowers, seeds, fresh fruit, paper flowers and vegetables.

Step 6. Getting Quotes

Get a quote on the specific materials you require. If you are a community group applying for funding, you will need to submit this with your application from to meet the funding criteria.

Step 7. Float Assembly

- Assemble your float team and get started!
- Assign tasks to team members.
- Create a schedule to work on the float - weekly/daily/which days.
- Use a licensed builder for any construction work.
- Ensure platforms/stages are sturdy and secure.
- Use a licensed electrical for all lights/sound systems.





FLORAL PARADE

DO'S AND DON'TS

GRAND CENTRAL FLORAL PARADE

TIPS & TRICKS

Front Banner



DON'T

- use loose canvas signs or vertical side poles (unless the sign is framed) - otherwise the sign will flop in the middle & your message will be illegible.



DO...

- use dowels as horizontal handles & weights.
- use corflute or sturdy canvas material.
- consider unusual shapes for your signage.
- put your sign on a frame.
- add chunky wheels to the frame.
- if you have music you could conceal a speaker behind the sign.
- decorate your frame with flowers.
- include smiling florally themed ambassadors to carry your signage!
- signage with walkers = 3m max. width.



GRAND CENTRAL

FLORAL PARADE

TIPS & TRICKS

Big Ticket Items

DON'T

- sweat the details
- you'll be seen
from a distance.

DO...

- think BIG & BRIGHT!
- SCALE it UP!
A big ticket item eg a character or logo instantly identifies your brand & can be reused /redecorated from year to year. It's worth investing in something spectacular!
- utilise the height you have available (keep in mind that your float must not exceed 4m in height).



GRAND CENTRAL FLORAL PARADE

TIPS & TRICKS

Parade Momentum

DON'T

- let the GAP BETWEEN YOUR ENTRY & the previous entry exceed 20 METRES!
- include any BACKWARD manoeuvres.
- DEFINITELY DO NOT STOP!

DO...

- maintain a consistent GAP BETWEEN YOUR ENTRY and the previous entry. It should be no more than 20 METRES!
- KEEP MOVING (even if there is an unexpected delay - keep the energy level high). We don't want the audience to think the parade has ended mid way through, so keep up the pace!



GRAND CENTRAL

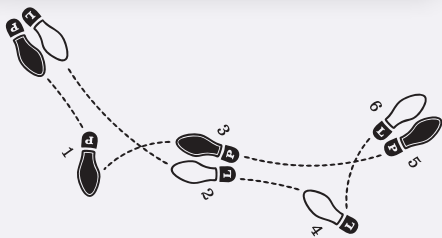
FLORAL PARADE

TIPS & TRICKS

Decorating Vehicles

DON'T

- neglect to decorate your tow vehicle as first impressions count!
- don't use a tow vehicle that is larger than the float you are towing or your float will be overshadowed/lost.



DO...

- florally dress your happy (smiling & waving) driver and passengers - EVERYONE IN PARADE MUST BE IN COSTUME!
- choose a brightly coloured vehicle that complements your colour scheme.
- decorate your whole vehicle - or as many parts of it as possible (wheels, window frames, bonnet, roof bumper, tow area etc.).
- consider a mesh frame overlay in an unusual shape.
- include real floral arrangements on the bonnet/roof.
- consider a vehicle wrap.
- consider the safety of your driver and passengers.
- fuel up before parade :)



GRAND CENTRAL FLORAL PARADE

TIPS & TRICKS

Minimum 50% Floral Content

DON'T

- get caught up in small details & remember - this is a **FLORAL FESTIVAL!!!**



DO...

- think BIG, BRIGHT and COLOURFUL.
- grow your own potted colour or order potted colour from a local supplier (eg Pohlmanns). Get your order in early!
- dress every member in your group in as many flowers as you can - including floral hats/headbands.
- choose coloured flowers to complement your design.
- include real, paper and synthetic flowers or make flowers from foam sheets (Clark Rubber), or from recycled materials from the Reviva dump shops.
- use floral fabric and brightly coloured fabric for costumes and backdrops to complement your floral content.



GRAND CENTRAL

FLORAL PARADE

TIPS & TRICKS

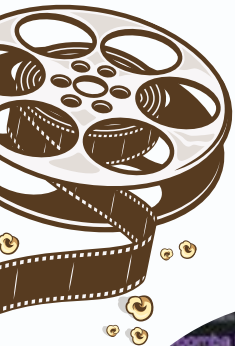
Watch Past Parades!

DON'T

- let your ideas get stale!

DID YOU KNOW?...

You can watch YouTube & Vimeo videos of past parades?... (& other parades all 'round the world!)



DO...

- relive the fun & excitement and see your entry from the perspective of the audience.
- critique what worked and what you think could be improved on with your float/entry.
- challenge yourself - be inspired by other entries (look for visual impact, materials, techniques, colour schemes, costumes, animatronics).
- appreciate the beautiful work of other groups.
- JOIN our facebook group for more useful ideas and videos - "GRAND CENTRAL FLORAL PARADE PARTICIPANTS COMMUNITY".



GRAND CENTRAL FLORAL PARADE

TIPS & TRICKS

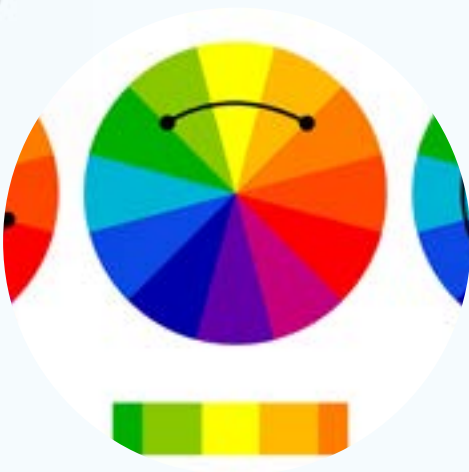
Float Tips

DON'T

- forget WHY we get involved in Carnival - We love our city and want to share our joy with visitors!

DO...

- ask for advice from Anna and Mary-Kate!
- make a maquette/scale model and plan your float.
- use a colour scheme and **PLENTY of FLOWERS.**
- choose an achievable float size & apply (if eligible) for a grant to buy flowers and materials.
- make sure your float is **SAFE.**
- include a float skirt.
- build community with your group and with fellow parade participants by joining our Facebook group.
- ensure **EVERYONE IS IN COSTUME & HAVE FUN!**





Important Dates to Remember

	DATE	TIME
Creative Advisor meetings <i>Face to Face OR Google Meet available</i>	April/May 2025	Various – check here for available time slots
Grand Central Floral Parade applications close	9 May 2025	2pm
Successful applicants notified no later than	16 May 2025	
Unregistered vehicle / trailer / float VIN details due to Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers office	18 July 2025	4pm
Float and motorised apparatus driver's licence details due to Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers office	18 July 2025	4pm
Final and mandatory Parade meeting.	17 September 2025	5.30pm

TOOWOOMBA CARNIVAL of FLOWERS

