

**ITEM 23. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SPONSORSHIP - NEWCO BUSINESS  
INNOVATION FESTIVAL - USUAL SUSPECTS CREATIVE PTY LTD**

**FILE NO: S112458.012**

**SUMMARY**

The global NewCo business innovation festival will take place in Sydney from 8 to 9 March 2017. The initiative provides an opportunity for purpose-driven businesses focused on positive social impact and innovation to open their doors to delegates and share their stories about generating positive change.

NewCo was established in 2012 and operates in 18 cities around the world. Since 2012, over 25,000 delegates have participated in the event, through the offices of over 2,500 organisations across diverse industries – including Atlassian, Google, Facebook, Uber, Ideo, Tesla and Paypal. Festivals have been held in cities as diverse as Istanbul, Mexico City, New York, Austin, San Francisco, Barcelona and Shanghai.

In each host city, NewCo partners with a local organisation that owns and operates a unique, local, culturally-reflective NewCo festival. NewCo's affiliate partner in Australia is Usual Suspects Creative, an independent communications and events agency.

The forthcoming Sydney festival will be the first in Australia and the South East Asia region. It aims to have 50 'HostCos' presenting throughout the city, attracting 600 delegates who will each create their own schedule of business sessions. The social enterprise and Indigenous businesses sectors will be a key focus. Host companies planning to participate include Atlassian, Fishburners, WeWork, The Black Dog Institute, Dexus Property Group, OzHarvest, Lendlease, National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), Vogue and Startmate and Uber.

The festival aims to showcase and celebrate its host city, as delegates experience the city while they travel between host companies during the day-long event. It aims to enhance the reputation of Sydney as an innovative city, and to highlight the breadth and depth of Sydney's social enterprise community and innovation in the Indigenous business sector.

The initiative is directly aligned with the City's Social Sustainability Policy – A City for All which promotes an agenda of inclusive economic growth and the role of businesses in delivering positive social impact in the local area. It is also aligned with the goals of the City's Economic Development Strategy, Eora Journey Economic Development Plan and Tech Startups Action Plan.

The City proposes to sponsor the event to the value of \$12,000 (excluding GST), by providing a cash sponsorship to the Usual Suspects Creative, Newco's affiliate partner, through the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program. This program fosters the exchange of ideas and knowledge, supports the showcasing of local expertise and encourage dialogue on local and global issues. Sponsorship benefits to the City of Sydney will include digital and physical festival branding as well as networking and knowledge exchange opportunities with local businesses through delegate passes.

The City also proposes to participate as a 'HostCo', taking the opportunity to showcase its strategic work in supporting socially responsible business, economic development in the Indigenous business sector and resilience-building activities across the Sydney Metropolitan Area through the Social Sustainability Policy, Eora Journey Economic Development Plan and our lead role in Sydney's participation in the Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities initiative.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash sponsorship of \$12,000 (excluding GST) to Usual Suspects Creative Pty Ltd for the Sydney NewCo event in March 2017; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with Usual Suspects Creative Pty Ltd.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil.

**BACKGROUND**

1. The global NewCo business innovation festival will take place in Sydney from 8 to 9 March 2017. The initiative provides an opportunity for purpose-driven businesses focused on positive social impact and innovation to open their doors to delegates and share their stories about generating positive change.
2. NewCo's affiliate partner in Australia is Usual Suspects Creative, an independent communications and events agency.
3. Sponsorship of Usual Suspects Creative Pty Ltd for the NewCo event meets the objectives of the City's Social Sustainability Policy, Economic Development Strategy, Eora Journey Economic Development Plan and the Tech Startups Action Plan.
4. On 25 July 2016, Council adopted the Social Sustainability Policy which contains an inclusive economic growth agenda that recognises the importance of economic development approaches that support greater societal wellbeing. This policy recognises that cities that are committed to social justice and inclusion as a shared vision and shared responsibility do better. Inclusive growth that delivers public benefit along with private profit is a key aspect of the policy.
5. On 9 December 2013, Council adopted the Economic Development Strategy, a 10-year strategy that aims to strengthen the city economy and support business. It focuses on further improving the solid foundations for success that exist within the city economy, as well as creating opportunities for individuals, businesses and the community. The strategy states the City will develop and deliver programs, seminars and forums to enhance the skills of business owners, increase their awareness of business opportunities and trends, and discuss strategic issues.
6. On 21 November 2016, Council adopted the Eora Journey Economic Development Plan, setting an agenda for the City to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and businesses over the next 10 years to achieve prosperity. The Plan aims to showcase success stories and further promote Sydney as a hub for successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses as well as increasing opportunities for business owners to connect to other businesses, share knowledge and build strong networks.
7. A focus of the Tech Startups Action Plan is on building Sydney's entrepreneurial culture and community and creating skilled and connected entrepreneurs. It stresses the importance of having information or advice delivered via events, particularly from those who have navigated through the growth stage of a startup. Action 2.3 of the plan identifies that the City will implement the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program or develop new projects that enable expertise to be shared and skills developed within the startup ecosystem. It also proposes to enable entrepreneurs and others to make meaningful connections that lead to strategic partnerships across industry sectors.
8. The application for support has been assessed under the City's Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program, one of the 15 programs under the Grants and Sponsorship Policy adopted by Council on 15 September 2014.

9. The program supports the exchange of ideas and knowledge, showcasing of local expertise and encourages dialogue on local and global issues. Under the program, eligible projects can be supported to a maximum of \$40,000 cash and applications can be received ad-hoc throughout the year.
10. Under the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program, eligible organisations include not-for-profits, for-profit organisations and social enterprises. The sponsorship recipient, Usual Suspects Creative Pty Ltd, is a for-profit Australian company, making them eligible for funding through this program.
11. The application has been assessed as contributing to the following program outcomes:
  - (a) share best practice approaches by organisations and individuals;
  - (b) create strong networks where participants share resources and acquire new knowledge and skills;
  - (c) improve capacity in organisations and individuals to develop and maintain sustainable business ventures;
  - (d) increase the reputation of Sydney as an innovative and creative city; and
  - (e) highlight the breadth and depth of Sydney's social enterprise community.
12. The benefits to the City of Sydney of sponsorship of the event include:
  - (a) festival branding (digital and physical signage);
  - (b) five VIP festival passes;
  - (c) 10 general admission festival passes;
  - (d) a sponsored post in the NewCo daily;
  - (e) a custom brand activation (networking opportunity); and
  - (f) two content / social posts.
13. The request for sponsorship has been evaluated against the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program and support is recommended. All sponsorship recipients are required to sign a contract, meet specific performance outcomes, and acquit their sponsorship.

**KEY IMPLICATIONS**

**Strategic alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030**

14. Sustainable Sydney 2030 is a vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This sponsorship is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 1 - A Globally Competitive and Innovative City – supporting the business community to start and to grow innovative businesses will potentially create more employment, boost Sydney's economy, strengthen global connections and make the city a more desirable place to live, work and visit.
  - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – innovative businesses can grow into global businesses resulting in economic and employment benefits locally.
  - (c) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City – supporting entrepreneurs supports the expression of innovation and creativity which, in turn, contributes to a cosmopolitan, vibrant and active city.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

15. Funding of \$12,000 cash (excluding GST) is available in the 2016/17 Social Sustainability Unit budget.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

16. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993. Section 356(3)(a) to (d) is satisfied for the purpose of providing grant funding to for-profit organisations.

**CRITICAL DATES/ TIMEFRAMES**

17. The event takes place from 8 to 9 March 2017, with a launch event on the evening of 8 March followed by a full-day festival program of business and associated activities on 9 March.

**KIM WOODBURY**

Chief Operating Officer

Kate Deacon, Executive Manager, Research, Strategy and Corporate Planning  
Lindsay Asquith, Social Strategy Advisor