

**ITEM 12. GRANTS AND SPONSORSHIP - ALLOCATION OF TWO BUSINESS  
IMPROVEMENT GRANTS 2016/17**

**FILE NO: S117676**

**SUMMARY**

The City of Sydney's Grants and Sponsorship Program supports initiatives and projects that build the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of the city. To achieve the objectives of Sustainable Sydney 2030 requires genuine partnership between government, business and the community.

The provision of grants and sponsorships is a mechanism to further the aims identified in the City's cultural, social, economic and environmental policies. Applications are assessed against these policies and against broad City objectives and plans. In this way, the City and the community act collaboratively to bring to life *Sustainable Sydney 2030* and the City of Villages it envisions.

The Business Improvement Grant Program provides targeted support to improve precinct amenity and stimulate business activity. It provides matched funding for businesses to improve their shopfronts and undertake acoustic audits for live music programming. This program is open to individual business and/or property owners in identified commercial precincts or targeted industry sectors.

This report recommends two grants under the Business Improvement Grant (Shopfront Improvements) for a total value of \$18,500 cash for the 2016/17 financial year to support two businesses located on Oxford Street and William Street, Darlinghurst.

Btmenterprises Pty Ltd, located at 207 Oxford Street Darlinghurst, is recommended for \$10,000 to support the refurbishment of the property's awning and the removal and replacement of existing windows and doors.

Deskpace Ventures Pty Ltd, located at 85 William Street Darlinghurst, is recommended for \$8,500 to support pressure cleaning and repainting of the façade, painting and refurbishment of the foyer area that is visible from the street and installation of a branded lightbox.

All grant recipients will be required to sign a contract, meet specific performance outcomes and acquit their grant.

All figures in this report exclude GST.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash grant of \$10,000 (excluding GST) under the Business Improvement Grant Program to Btmenterprises Pty Ltd for 207 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst;

- (B) Council approve a cash grant of \$8,500 (excluding GST) under the Business Improvement Grant Program to Deskspace Ventures Pty Ltd for 85 William Street, Darlinghurst; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer agreements with any organisation approved for a grant or sponsorship under terms consistent with this resolution and the Grants and Sponsorship Policy.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil.

**BACKGROUND**

1. The City of Sydney's Grants and Sponsorships Program supports residents, businesses and not-for-profit organisations to undertake initiatives and projects that build the cultural, social, cultural, environmental and economic life of the city.
2. The Business Improvement Grant Program provides targeted support to improve precinct amenity and stimulate business activity. It provides matched funding for businesses to improve their shopfronts and undertake acoustic audits for live music programming. This program is open to individual business and/or property owners in identified commercial precincts or targeted industry sectors.
3. The Business Improvement Grant program is open for application throughout the year until funds are exhausted and is open to for-profit organisations.
4. For the Business Improvement Grant, all applicants are required to evidence a cash equivalent to the funding requested from the City to be eligible for funding. Applicants are also required to demonstrate how the project will improve precinct amenity and stimulate business activity.
5. It is expected that all successful applicants will work co-operatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding. Contact details for the relevant City staff are provided to all successful grant recipients.
6. All grants and sponsorships are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits and development consents are obtained by the applicant.
7. The assessment process includes advice and recommendations from the key stakeholders on the assessment panel, depending upon the nature of each submission. The integrity of the proposed budget, project plan, contributions and partnerships are assessed, scored and ranked against defined criteria. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed, which includes conditions that must be adhered to, and acquitted against.
8. In assessing the grant applications, the assessment panels included in their considerations and recommendations:
  - (a) Sustainable Sydney 2030;
  - (b) Grants and Sponsorship Policy; and
  - (c) Economic Development Strategy.
9. Council adopted the City of Sydney Retail Action Plan on 9 December 2013. The action plan proposes a range of actions to support and strengthen retail on main streets and in villages.
10. Action 2 of the action plan, *build capacity and resilience*, specifically discusses strategies to encourage main street retailers as they are important contributors to every local community, and to respond to a continuing shift to decentralised regional shopping centres and increasing competition from online.

**Business Improvement Grant Program (Shopfront Improvement)**

11. The City received two applications that were assessed under the Business Improvement Grant Program (Shopfront Improvement). It offers matched funding of up to \$10,000 for businesses to improve their shopfronts to encourage improved, lively and attractive commercial precinct streetscapes, and increased footfall and patronage for retail outlets.

**Btmenterprises Pty Ltd – Shopfront coffee business**

12. Btmenterprises Pty Ltd, a for-profit organisation, has applied for a grant to construct a shopfront takeaway coffee business in their premises 207 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst. The premise is currently “the bookshop” and the coffee business is to add to the existing business and contribute to the local economy. The new shopfront will open to the footpath to enable take away coffee to be served to the significant footfall who pass the shop, as well as visitors to the bookshop.
13. The assessment panel determined the shopfront works would improve the streetscape and could assist the activation of this section of Oxford Street. The business has been proactive in exploring solutions to their own business challenges by diversifying income streams and clientele, and identifying an opportunity to engage local foot traffic.
14. The grant requested was \$10,000 to go towards a refurbishment of the awning and the removal and replacement of existing windows and doors. This grant is provided with the following conditions: applicant to provide a detailed budget, to submit fire safety certificate and to submit proof of ownership. It is also dependant on DA approval, if required. Funding is to be used for shopfront refurbishment costs only.
15. The application has been further assessed as contributing to the Economic Development Strategy outcomes. The assessment panel included the City’s City Business Coordinator - Industry and Place and Grants Program Coordinator.

**Deskpace Ventures Pty Ltd – Shopfront and façade improvement**

16. Deskpace Ventures Pty Ltd, a for-profit organisation, has applied for a grant to conduct shopfront improvements on their premises 85 William Street, Darlinghurst. The premise is a desk-sharing business, with over 160 people in the space, involved in a variety of businesses and start-ups. Significant refurbishment has occurred internally and the group would like to improve the shopfront to encourage business by engaging footfall and improving the streetscape on William Street, a major road and commercial strip between the City and the eastern suburbs.
17. The assessment panel determined the shopfront works would improve the streetscape and would bring the shopfront in line with a neat overall appearance compared to neighbouring tenants. Staff support the initiative and business addition to the community and surrounds.
18. The grant requested was \$8,500 for improvements to the shopfront, building façade and foyer areas that are visible from the street. The works include, but are not limited to, pressure cleaning, painting of walls and awning, removal and replacement of cracked wall tiles and installation of a branded lightbox. This grant is provided with the following conditions: applicant to provide further quotes and approval of works from the building owner. It is also dependent on DA approval, if required. Funding is to be used for shopfront refurbishment costs only.

19. The application has been further assessed as contributing to the Economic Development Strategy outcomes. The assessment panel included the City's City Business Coordinator – Capacity Building and A/Grants Program Coordinator.

### **KEY IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision**

20. 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 grant is aligned with the following SS2030 strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – Through this grant, the City will be helping to enhance the distinctive character of local villages and provide support for small and local businesses.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

21. Funding of \$18,500 cash (excluding GST) is available in the 2016/17 Business Improvement Grant (Shopfront Improvement) Grants and Sponsorships budget.

### **RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

22. 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 / TIME FRAMES**

23. The funding period for Business Improvement Grants is that all agreed activities should be completed within 12 months from the funding approval date, or the development approval date (whichever is the later).

### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

24. The Business Improvement Grant is advertised on the City's website. Information was also emailed to interested parties via the Grants and Sponsorship electronic direct mailing list.

### **ANN HOBAN**

Director City Life

Tonnia Johanson, A/Grants Coordinator