

**ITEM 10. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SPONSORSHIP - STARTCON 2017**

**FILE NO: X010493**

**SUMMARY**

An application for sponsorship under the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program has been received from StartCon Pty Ltd to support the 2017 StartCon Conference to be held on 1-2 December 2017 at Royal Randwick Racecourse.

StartCon is Australia's largest startup conference. Run across two days, the conference features world-class international speakers giving keynote presentations, startup pitches, workshops and an exhibition. This two-day event aims to grow Sydney's startup scene by providing the local entrepreneurial community with networking opportunities, actionable insights and practical take-aways from entrepreneurial experts. It also provides access to high calibre international speakers who can bring their international knowledge and learnings around scaling global businesses to the local ecosystem.

StartCon will bring together more than 3,500 attendees (startups, entrepreneurs, investors, media and innovation teams from the corporate sector) alongside 150 small-to-medium businesses exhibiting and 60 international and domestic speakers. The application has been evaluated and support of \$20,000 cash and street banner waiver up to the value of \$3,600 is recommended for sponsorship.

StartCon has been coordinated by event professional Cheryl Mack since 2015. The event was previously known as SydStart and was coordinated by Peter Cooper, Cooper & CO for five years prior. The City was a sponsor of SydStart through our Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program in 2015.

Sponsorship of StartCon aligns with the City's Economic Development Strategy and the Tech Startups Action Plan adopted by Council in June 2016. The action plan identifies how the City can support entrepreneurs, with a focus on innovative, new businesses based on technology and designed for fast growth — tech startups. The implementation of the Tech Startups Action Plan has already seen the City support CeBIT business technology exhibition and conference; Springboard Enterprises Australia Accelerator; the Global Coworking Unconference Conference Australia; Startup Week Sydney; Piivot Startup Week events and Code Club Australia Camp. The City is also working with the NSW Government on developing a visiting international entrepreneur program which is identified as a key project in the Action Plan.

The City wants to work with industry and government partners to strengthen the ecosystem which enables entrepreneurs to start and grow successful global businesses. It aims to contribute to building a strong entrepreneurial culture and community and creating skilled and connected entrepreneurs.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve:
  - (i) a cash sponsorship of \$20,000 (excluding GST); and
  - (ii) value in-kind sponsorship for banner pole hire of up to \$3,600 (excluding GST)for a Silver Sponsorship Package of StartCon 2017; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and enter into a sponsorship agreement with StartCon Pty Ltd in respect of the City's sponsorship of StartCon 2017 described in (A) above.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

**BACKGROUND**

1. StartCon, formerly known as SydStart, is Australia's largest startup conference. The first conference was held in 2011 and has grown in size every year. It provides startups and entrepreneurs with the opportunity to connect, share ideas, and learn from world-class technology founders and innovators – an important step towards building Australia's startup ecosystem.
2. The City was a sponsor of SydStart in 2015 as part of a Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship that was unanimously endorsed by Council in August 2015.
3. The focus of the conference is on providing education, information and networking opportunities, particularly for tech startups that have the potential to reach a global market.
4. StartCon aims to educate, connect and inspire Sydney's entrepreneurs and raise broader community awareness of the sector. Investor introductions are also a key benefit of StartCon to the entrepreneurial community.
5. StartCon includes presentations by successful entrepreneurs, investors and representatives of business accelerators. The focus is on practical, first hand lessons from company founders who have scaled businesses of global significance.
6. Previous speakers have included successful local entrepreneurs including Mike Cannon-Brookes, CEO Atlassian and Jane Lu, founder of ShowPo. Both were tech startups founded and based in Sydney and are now global companies.
7. Other international speakers include Andrew Chen, Head of Growth at Uber, Elena Verna, Senior Vice President of Growth at Survey Monkey and Sean Ellis, Founder of Growth Hackers.
8. The conference includes an exhibition space to enable startups and small-to-medium businesses to profile their offering to potential consumers, collaborators, employees and investors.
9. StartCon also provides an opportunity for startups to compete and 'pitch' to potential investors and consumers and their peers. Over 90 startups pitch their businesses to seasoned experts and a live audience of more than 300. Six finalists advance to pitch on the main stage, where a winner is chosen and \$150,000 in prizes awarded. In partnership with the Startup World Cup, the pitch competition receives local and international media coverage.
10. StartCon attracts a unique community of Sydney's entrepreneurs in a format which has subsequently influenced the format and content of other mainstream events. For example, CeBIT now includes a tech startup exhibition space and conference.
11. Around 3,500 attendees are expected to attend in 2017, with the majority being Australian and Sydney-based.
12. In previous years, StartCon has been held at Australian Technology Park in Redfern, University of Technology Sydney, the Hilton Hotel Sydney, the former Darling Harbour convention centre and Sydney Town Hall. The event has scaled to now attract around 3,500 attendees. The event organisers have secured Royal Randwick Racecourse for 2017 as it was the only venue available to accommodate such large numbers.

13. The event will attract a large number of tech startups from the City's local government area and more than 700 international delegates many of whom are expected to stay in hotels within Central Sydney.
14. All networking events will be held locally in the City's local government area.
15. The two day program includes:
  - (a) 3,500 attendees (including more than 700 international) representing 40% startups and entrepreneurs; 25% professionals, programmers, designers, growth marketers and innovation teams from corporates; 25% small-to-medium businesses; and 10% investors and media;
  - (b) more than 500 unique startups from the following industries: 28% information, media and telecommunications; 17% professional scientific and technical; 23% arts and recreation services; 10% retail trade; 15% finance and insurance; 5% education and training; and 2% other; and
  - (c) 25 keynote speakers across both days, 35 workshops across both days, 170 participants in a two day long Hackathon challenge, 20 Fintech experts on the dedicated Fintech stage, more than 150 companies exhibiting, and 90 startups participating in the Pitch Competition, plus 15 awards given to leading tech startup companies.
16. The outcomes will be evaluated against the following performance criteria:
  - (a) expand the network of the majority of businesses that exhibit at StartCon:
    - (i) minimum 90% of exhibitors that select 'expand my network' as an outcome of their exhibition on the post-event survey, and
    - (ii) minimum 50% of startups select 'has interest from investor or partner' as an outcome of their visit on the post event survey;
  - (b) bring an international tech community to Sydney:
    - (i) minimum of 18% of attendees from overseas (as per post-event survey/registration details), and
    - (ii) more than 10 speakers from outside of Australia (as per the program): and
  - (c) showcase Australian startups to the rest of the world:
    - (i) more than 75 of all startups that exhibit to international investors and tech leaders in "Startup Alley" to be Australian based, and
    - (ii) send an Australian company to the Startup World Cup in San Francisco for \$1,000,000 in prizes (winner of StartCon Pitch is sent all expenses paid to San Francisco).
17. StartCon has proposed a sponsor benefits package comprising:
  - (a) the City's logo and website prominently featured as Silver Sponsor on the StartCon 2017 website main page;

- (b) the City's logo featured on all promotional flyers/tickets distributed across Australia;
- (c) the City's logo displayed on rotation on digital signage throughout the venue;
- (d) the City's logo displayed digitally on the main stage area during the conference;
- (e) the City's logo, link and description featured in the conference app;
- (f) the City's logo and tagline featured in conference booklet;
- (g) a City-branded promotional flyer/item to be included in attendee bag;
- (h) a 3m x 2m premium booth in the expo for two days;
- (i) five all-access conference passes; and
- (j) special discount on additional tickets or to share with network.

## **KEY IMPLICATIONS**

### **Strategic Alignment**

18. The StartCon conference will:
- (a) support the development of a strong entrepreneurial culture and community that will help attract and retain talent and ensure Sydney's competitiveness on the global stage;
  - (b) support the creation of skilled and connected entrepreneurs within the local Sydney startup ecosystem;
  - (c) help create and develop strong relationships and connections with tech startup communities from Australia and abroad; and
  - (d) provide an opportunity for the spotlight to be on Sydney as Australia's tech startup capital. The conference will allow participation by a wide audience and a large number of attendees will be international entrepreneurs (+700) which will add to the profile of Sydney's startup ecosystem.

### **Organisational Impact**

19. The delivery of the sponsorship will require a contract manager and relationship manager.

### **Economic**

20. Supporting entrepreneurs and startup businesses ensures the City maintains a vibrant, diverse and creative economy.

## **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

21. This support has been identified in the Knowledge Exchange grants and sponsorship budget for the financial year 2017-18.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

22. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 - as the grant is to a for-profit recipient, 28 days' public notice of the proposed grant has been given.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

23. The conference is scheduled for 1-2 December 2017 at Royal Randwick Racecourse.

**ANN HOBAN**

Director City Life

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