

ITEM 2. SPONSORSHIP – NSW BUSINESS CHAMBER BUSINESS AWARDS 2014 TO 2016**FILE NO: S116257****SUMMARY**

The City of Sydney has been a founder and lead sponsor for the City of Sydney Business Awards which recognised the valuable contribution of the small business sector and encourage excellence. Following the 2012 award program, the company managing the awards did not secure sufficient future sponsorship and no longer runs the awards.

The City undertook a review to identify a new program that could continue to support and promote our small business sector. This included discussion with the NSW Government Business Commissioner and various Chambers of Commerce, and evaluation of established business awards programs such as the Telstra Business Awards, Australian Small Business Champion Awards and NSW Business Chamber Business Awards.

The review concluded that sponsorship of the “Excellence in Small Business” award category of the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards program would best meet the City’s aims and secure additional opportunities by being part of a state-wide program.

The NSW Business Chamber is the state’s leading and largest business organisation, representing and supporting over 14,000 companies across NSW with members ranging from small businesses to large corporations.

The NSW Business Chamber’s annual awards program operates at local, regional and state levels, with an emphasis on acknowledging the outstanding achievements of its members and recognising success in the areas of business leadership, business ethics, sustainability, innovation, export and small business excellence, among others.

Sponsorship of the “Excellence in Small Business” category will enable the City to continue support for the small business sector, generate positive exposure for them and increase networking opportunities for small to medium sized businesses.

It is anticipated that businesses will directly benefit from participation in the program by receiving broad marketing exposure and receiving the opportunity of recognition at a state level. Participants will access networking opportunities, information sessions and support from the City’s Business Precincts team.

Opportunities for participants’ exposure and promotion are listed at Attachment A with details of sponsorship inclusions. All businesses on the database of the previous Awards program will be contacted and encouraged to participate.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council sponsor the “Excellence in Small Business” category of the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards from 2014 to 2016 at a cost of \$40,000 (plus GST) per year; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a sponsorship agreement with the NSW Business Chamber.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: NSW Business Chamber Business Awards 2014-16 Sponsorship Proposal Category Sponsor.

BACKGROUND

1. The City of Sydney supports its business sector in many ways. The City of Sydney Business Awards commenced in 2004 to promote and reward the wide range of outstanding businesses operating in the City's local government area (LGA) providing high level exposure and unique networking opportunities for all participants.
2. Since the Awards' establishment, it has been produced by external event management companies. The City provided significant funding for the event, with the remainder sourced from sponsorship opportunities and ticket sales. Council most recently accepted a tender in March 2011 for a contractor to run the City of Sydney Business Awards Program.
3. Following the 2012 award program, the company managing the awards could not secure sufficient future sponsorship and no longer runs the awards.
4. The City undertook an investigation of options for a replacement awards program that would further the City's efforts to assist its business sector on an ongoing basis. The investigation included discussions with the NSW Government Business Commissioner and various Chambers of Commerce, and evaluation of established business awards programs such as the Telstra Business Awards, the Australian Small Business Champion Awards and the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards.
5. The review determined that sponsorship of the "Excellence in Small Business" award category of the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards program would best meet the City's requirements over the next three years.

NSW Business Chamber Awards

6. The City of Sydney is a member of the NSW Business Chamber and the City's Economic Development and Business Precincts teams have forged a close working relationship with the Chamber.
7. Within the Chamber's Business Awards program, the City of Sydney falls under the 'South East Sydney' regional grouping, which includes all areas within the City's LGA, together with the Eastern Suburbs, Inner West and areas south as far as the Sutherland Shire.
8. This region currently covers many of the chambers and business partnerships within the City's LGA (Sydney Business Chamber, Glebe Chamber of Commerce, Newtown Business Precinct Partnership and South Sydney Business Chamber).
9. If this sponsorship opportunity is approved by Council, a program will be undertaken to broaden the LGA base participation by working with our other chambers and business partnerships. Specifically, the City's Business and Safety team will encourage Chambers and Business Partnerships to become members of the NSW Business Chamber and in turn encourage individual businesses to enter the program. Contact will likely be made by phone, email and the team making as many personal visits to Chambers, partnerships and businesses as possible.

10. The process of entering the Chamber's awards is as follows:
 - (a) winners from local, individually-run chambers of commerce business awards automatically progress as finalists to the NSW Business Chamber Regional Business Awards (businesses from within the City's LGA would be entered into the South Sydney regional grouping);
 - (b) winners from the regional business awards are automatically entered into the NSW Business Chamber State Awards.
11. The South East Sydney Awards ceremony will take place on 25 July 2014, with dates for 2015 and 2016 to be advised. The opportunity then exists for businesses to proceed onto the State Awards, which will be held on 28 November 2014, with dates for 2015 and 2016 to be advised.
12. The City's Marketing and Business Precincts team attended the Regional and State Business Awards ceremonies in 2013 and, based on that attendance and understanding of the program, recommend the City's involvement and sponsorship of the Awards.
13. All businesses on the database of previous City of Sydney awards programs will be contacted and the City will undertake a program of promotion to encourage and support participation.

Sponsorship Inclusions and Benefits

14. This proposed sponsorship provides the opportunity to generate positive exposure and increase networking opportunities for small to medium sized businesses across the City of Sydney Local Government Area (LGA).
15. By participating in the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards, the City will be provided with an opportunity to involve in the program businesses throughout the LGA who may have previously considered entering into these awards and The City of Sydney Business Awards.
16. In addition, it is anticipated that businesses will directly benefit from participation in the program by:
 - (a) providing marketing and media exposure. Participating businesses are regularly profiled in the media and this will exist on a larger (state-wide) scale than had previously been available through the City's own awards program communications. There is a robust marketing and communications plan (detailed in Attachment A to this report) developed by the NSW Business Chamber to support the awards, in addition to, and fully complementing the City's own communications plan, which will focus specifically on celebrating and profiling our LGA participants;
 - (b) providing winners with the opportunity to gain success and recognition at a state level with the support and encouragement of the City through the City's Business Precincts team;
 - (c) providing networking opportunities and access to information workshops to gain business insights and assist with the submission process; and

- (d) allowing the many hundreds of businesses that took part in the City's previous Business Awards program to consider entering. All businesses on the database from the past program will be contacted by the City.

17. Full sponsorship inclusions are detailed at Attachment A.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

18. *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 opportunity is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 1 - A Globally Competitive and Innovative City – supporting its small and large, old and new businesses at all levels through leveraging in the form of sponsorships, partnerships and support programs;
 - (b) Direction 5 - A Lively and Engaging City Centre – providing support and paying tribute to businesses in our Local Government Area, which are the lifeblood of our city; and
 - (c) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – providing exposure for business at all levels through marketing and media leveraging.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

19. Funding for the sponsorship fee of \$40,000 per year will be provided from the City Engagement/Marketing/Business Awards budget for 2013/14 and, thereafter, the draft operating budgets for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

20. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

21. Key dates are as follows:

Commencement of sponsorship	March 2014
Inclusion in campaign	March 2014 - December 2016
The South East Sydney Awards ceremony	July 2014
NSW Chamber State Awards	28 November 2014

SYD CASSIDY

Director City Engagement

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