

ITEM 4. FESTIVALS AND EVENTS SPONSORSHIP – BIENNALE OF SYDNEY 2015 TO 2021

FILE NO: S126970

SUMMARY

The Biennale of Sydney is a non-profit organisation that presents Australia's largest contemporary visual arts festival. Held every two years, the Biennale is a three-month exhibition, open for free to the public, with an accompanying public engagement and education program including artist talks, forums, guided tours, school programs and family days.

The exhibitions take place across museums, non-museum venues and public spaces in Sydney, including Cockatoo Island, the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Carriageworks and Artspace. The program also features artist interventions and event activations across the City of Sydney Local Government Area (LGA). Each Biennale features the work of approximately 100 artists – the 19th Biennale exhibition in 2014, for example, presented 185 artworks by 92 artists, including 21 Australian artists and 33 works specifically commissioned for the exhibition.

The City of Sydney has been a sponsor of the Biennale of Sydney since 1988. This relationship has enhanced the reputation of Sydney and the City as a cultural leader. The most recent sponsorship agreement expired on 1 July 2015, under which the following funding was provided:

Financial Year	Cash	Value-in-kind (VIK)
2012/13	\$500,000	Nil
2013/14	\$512,000	\$70,000
2014/15	\$527,360	Nil

The Biennale of Sydney has applied for new funding under the City's Festivals and Events (Artform) Sponsorship Program (out of round) to support the development and delivery of an additional three exhibitions in 2016, 2018 and 2020.

A panel of internal assessors met and considered the application and Biennale's six year business plan against the Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan and the Grants and Sponsorship Policy. The following table outlines the funding requested and panel's recommendations for the next sponsorship term:

Financial Year	Cash Requested	Cash Recommended	VIK Requested	VIK Recommended
2015/16 Event year	\$750,000	\$620,000	100,000	100,000
2016/17	\$762,000	\$620,000 + CPI	50,000	50,000
2017/18 Event year	\$774,240	2016/17 Payment + CPI	100,000	100,000
2018/19	\$789,725	2017/18 Payment + CPI	50,000	50,000
2019/20 Event year	\$805,519	2018/19 Payment + CPI	100,000	100,000
2020/21	\$821,630	2019/20 Payment + CPI	\$50,000	\$50,000

The recommended funding for 2016 represents 10 per cent of the Biennale of Sydney's proposed budget and 23 per cent of the total government funding.

The latest study produced by Access Economics (2010) for Biennale identified a return to the Australian economy of \$63.9 million and \$50.2 million to the NSW economy. It is estimated that the return on investment is approximately \$102 per visitor.

All figures in this report are exclusive of GST.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve cash sponsorship of \$620,000 (excluding GST) for 2015/16 and \$620,000 (excluding GST) with annual CPI increase year on year for 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 for the Biennale of Sydney;
- (B) Council approve value-in-kind for banner pole hire and venue hire of up to \$100,000 per annum for the 2016, 2018 and 2020 event years, and up to \$50,000 per annum in 2017, 2019 and 2021 for their new program of between-season events; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a six year sponsorship agreement with the Biennale of Sydney.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

BACKGROUND

1. Since its inception, the Biennale of Sydney has provided an international platform for innovative and challenging contemporary art, showcasing the work of nearly 1,600 artists from over 100 countries. Today it ranks as one of the leading international festivals of contemporary art in the world.
2. The Biennale's mission is to engage local and international audiences with bold and innovative contemporary works, to promote cultural exchange and to inspire audiences to experience art, themselves and their world in new and creative ways.
3. Attendances at the Biennale doubled from the 14th to the 19th exhibitions, with more than 623,000 visitations between March and June 2014. These visitors are diverse and growing, demonstrating a keen interest in experiencing contemporary visual arts in museum and non-museum venues. Nearly 50 per cent of all adult visitors are aged 34 and under, which connects the event with audiences well placed to have a long-term engagement with contemporary art.
4. As a free event, Biennale is accessible for everyone and it returns a significant economic impact. The 2010 exhibition's total economic contribution to Australia was calculated at \$63.9 million (Access Economics report, February 2011) and the economic contribution to NSW from the same exhibition was calculated at \$50.2 million.
5. As part of ensuring good governance across our major funded organisations, an independent strategic business review of the Biennale was undertaken by the three government funding bodies: the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts NSW (NSW Government) and the City of Sydney. This review produced over 90 recommendations to be implemented by 2021, relating to governance, organisational efficiency and a sustainable business model.
6. The City of Sydney's recent investment in the Biennale of Sydney was as follows:
 - (a) a multiyear sponsorship agreement for the 2010, 2012 and 2014 Biennale, concluding with cash grants of \$500,000 in 2012/13, \$512,000 in 2013/14 and \$527,360 in 2014/15, and revenue foregone to the value of \$70,000 in 2014/15 (the event year); and
 - (b) \$20,000 matched funding with the Australia Council for the Arts and NSW Government to support an independent strategic business review of the Biennale of Sydney in 2014.
7. The City's Public Art program also has a current agreement with the Biennale of Sydney for the commissioning of a legacy art work for the event years 2014, 2016 and 2018. This program aligns with the Public Art Policy and each commission is for \$300,000.
8. By 2021, the Biennale of Sydney aims to have:
 - (a) delivered another three quality and engaging Biennale exhibitions;
 - (b) maintained its reputation as Australia's leading international festival of contemporary art;
 - (c) achieved its objectives by diversifying platforms for audience engagement;

- (d) facilitated deeper interaction between each Artistic Director and the Australian cultural sector; and
 - (e) implemented financial, operational and governance strategies.
9. The Biennale of Sydney proposes to introduce the following new strategies to support the growth of the event and secure its position on the national and international biennale circuit:
- (a) engaging with the international dialogue that is shaping curatorial and artistic practice globally, placing it at the forefront of these conversations;
 - (b) presenting lead-in events with artists, thinkers and other practitioners brought to Australia as part of each exhibition, and establishing a series of public programs developed by Biennale staff between editions;
 - (c) establishing longer-term contracts with each edition's Artistic Director allowing the Biennale to expand its programs and deepen the Artistic Director's engagement with Australian artists;
 - (d) developing its key role in the sector by offering emerging and mid-career Australian artists networking opportunities by connecting them with a range of local and international artists, curators, collectors, critics, media and the greater arts community; and
 - (e) creating a major and ongoing public archive of the history of the Biennale since its inception in 1973, and making this resource accessible to the public, both online and integrated into the Biennale's educational and research tools and programs.
10. A panel of three assessors considered the Biennale's application against the City's Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines and Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan strategies. This application was considered out of round due to the timelines of the independent strategic business review, which was not complete in time for the bi-annual grant round. As current funding contracts concluded on 30 June 2015, confirmation of City funding is critical to the development of the 2016 Biennale.
11. The application was assessed as meeting the grants criteria to a high standard and with significant alignment to the Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan.
12. The panel acknowledged the need to increase the level of sponsorship (over and above the standard CPI increases of previous agreements) to enable the recommendations identified in the business review to be implemented, and for Biennale to achieve its growth and development goals. The level of funding was considered against the funding available in the City's grants budget.
13. The increase in funding from 2015/16 is \$92,640. This increase includes an annual CPI increase (at 2 per cent) of approximately \$10,500 and the balance to support the following:
- (a) new programs including year-round engagement with artists, curators, and communities;
 - (b) the presentation of additional programs and marketing to reach new and diverse audiences both in season and between seasons; and

- (c) the development of new media and technologies to expand marketing presence and audience experience including virtual tours, live scheduled artists talks and video streaming of behind the scene insights.
14. The increase in value-in-kind (VIK) is to provide additional venue hire to support the proposed growth in programming of additional lead-up and between season events.
15. It is recommended the City support the Biennale of Sydney to produce the 2016, 2018 and 2020 Biennale events, with additional programs between seasons, with funding for six years as follows:

Financial Year	Cash	VIK
2015/16 Event year	\$620,000	\$100,000
2016/17	\$620,000 + CPI	\$50,000
2017/18 Event year	2016/17 Payment +CPI	\$100,000
2018/19	2017/18 Payment +CPI	\$50,000
2019/20 Event year	2018/19 Payment +CPI	\$100,000
2020/21	2019/20 Payment +CPI	\$50,000

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

16. *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 – the Biennale of Sydney enjoys a strong global presence in the cultural and creative landscape of the city.
- (b) Direction 5 - A Lively and Engaging City Centre – the Biennale is enormously successful at attracting audiences of 623,000 visitors to Sydney. The main focus of the Biennale is around the City's CBD and Walsh Bay area.
- (c) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City – the Biennale of Sydney is the biggest visual arts event in Australia. It opens up the heart of the city to everybody and provides an excellent opportunity for our community to engage with high-quality arts and cultural activity, irrespective of background.

Social / Cultural / Community

17. The Biennale of Sydney is the biggest contemporary visual arts event in Australia. It provides an excellent opportunity for our community to engage with high-quality arts and cultural activity and, as a free program, it is accessible, irrespective of socio economic background.

Economic

18. In 2010, Biennale delivered financial outcomes to the Australian economy of \$63.9 million, with the economic contribution to NSW from the same exhibition calculated at \$50.2 million (Access Economics report, February 2011).

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

19. Funding of \$620,000 plus \$100,000 VIK is available in the 2015/16 Festivals and Events Program (Artform) budget.
20. Funding of \$620,000 (plus annual CPI increases) will be forecast in the 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 Festivals and Events Program (Artform) budgets.
21. Allocations of up to \$100,000 VIK for the 2017/18 and 2019/20 financial years and \$50,000 VIK for the 2016/17, 2018/19 and 2020/21 financial years will be included in the relevant budget forecasts.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

22. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

23. The scale and logistical complexity of the Biennale means that it is necessary to secure budgets with sufficient lead time for preparations for the 2016 event. It is therefore desirable that Biennale of Sydney is advised of Council's decision as soon as possible.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

24. While no direct public consultation has been undertaken on this recommendation, the very positive public response and enthusiasm for the Biennale, as demonstrated through attendance, letters and comments made to the City and in the media, clearly indicate that the event has general community endorsement.
25. On 25 March 2013, Council unanimously endorsed the Creative City Cultural Policy Discussion Paper for public exhibition and consultation. The City solicited more than 2,000 submissions during the public exhibition and consultation period (March – May 2013) via a range of methods including public and cultural sector forums, social media campaigns and outdoor advertising.
26. Throughout the consultation, the community noted that major festivals and events are key strengths and part of Sydney's identity. Strong support in favour of festivals and events was a common theme in the consultation feedback.
27. Biennale of Sydney was the subject of a recent independent strategic business review by the Australia Council, NSW Government and City of Sydney, which involved extensive market research and industry consultation.

ANN HOBAN

Director City Life

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