

ITEM 4. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SPONSORSHIP – FRONTYARD PROJECTS INCORPORATED – ARTS ASSETS PLATFORM PROTOTYPING**FILE NO: S125465****SUMMARY**

Frontyard Projects Incorporated, a not-for-profit incorporated association, has applied for a Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship to develop an online collaborative consumption platform, titled Arts Assets.

Collaborative consumption has increased significantly in Sydney through platforms such as GoGet, Gumtree, Etsy and Friends With Things. In developing the City's *Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan*, feedback from the arts, creative industries and music sectors identified the need for a comparable platform specific to cultural activity to share resources such as equipment, supplies, skills and space. Engagement with service providers and the cultural sector found this need was not addressed by existing collaborative consumption platforms.

In 2015, following a workshop conducted in collaboration with the University of Technology Sydney, Frontyard assembled a team of tech, research, arts and cultural specialists to develop such a platform, entitled Arts Assets. Their application for a Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship responds to Actions 2.3 and 2.4 in the *Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan*, which commit the city to promoting and supporting the development of collaborative consumption platforms that encourage the exchange of appropriate hardware and tools for creative activity.

Frontyard's application for support aligns with the City's Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program, which aims to facilitate information sharing through the development of online tools and strengthen networks through which participants share resources and acquire new knowledge and skills.

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.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve cash sponsorship of \$27,400 (excluding GST) under the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program to Frontyard Projects Incorporated for the development of the Arts Assets prototype and associated gap analysis;
- (B) Council approve value-in-kind of up to \$152 for the waiver of hire fees for the City's community venues; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with Frontyard Projects Incorporated.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

BACKGROUND

1. On 25 August 2014, Council unanimously adopted the *Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan* (the Policy and Plan). Actions 2.3 and 2.4 within the Policy and Plan commit the City to promoting and supporting the development of collaborative consumption platforms that encourage the exchange of appropriate hardware and tools for creative activity, including musical instruments
2. Action 3.8 within the Policy and Plan commits the City to conduct a gap analysis to determine shortfalls in existing support platforms. Additionally, Action 3.4 commits the City to researching opportunities for partnership with educational institutions and appropriate providers to offer creative practitioners after-hours access to equipment and facilities.
3. Frontyard is an incorporated not-for-profit entity whose organisational goal is to “challenge, facilitate and nurture collaborations between people with a passion for culture and to build a more resilient and sustainable independent arts community for the future.”
4. In 2015, Frontyard conducted a workshop with the University of Technology Sydney. The workshops responded to a decrease in available funding options for individual artists and small to medium arts organisations following Federal Government changes to the Australia Council for the Arts.
5. The purpose of the workshops was to identify mechanisms through which the cultural sector could increase its resilience. A key finding was the need to facilitate access to resources, including information, equipment, space and support networks. A collaborative consumption platform designed specifically for artists, creative communities, and smaller arts and cultural organisations was proposed.
6. Frontyard has requested support from the City through the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program to develop an online platform, titled Arts Assets, informed by a period of needs assessment and prototyping.
7. The development of Arts Assets involves hosting three forums through which to assess user need, identify gaps in current resource provision, and the trialling of a prototype platform. These forums will inform a comprehensive gap analysis report identifying shortfalls in existing support platforms, and a prototype of the Arts Assets online collaborative consumption platform.
8. The project team assembled by Frontyard includes researchers with a background in arts, design and media studies, as well as systems designers, software developers and engineers, and a digital product consultant.
9. Following the prototyping period, it is intended the Arts Assets collaborative consumption platform will be expanded beyond the City of Sydney local government area. To this end, it has received \$5,000 in cash and value-in-kind from the Queensland-based cultural development organisation, Feral Arts.
10. Frontyard’s application for a Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship has been accompanied by letters of support from organisations and individuals based in the City of Sydney local government area, including the National Association for the Visual Arts, Firstdraft Gallery, Alaska Gallery, the University of Technology Sydney and a number of individual artists.

11. The Arts Assets prototype aligns with the City's Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program, as it aims to facilitate information sharing through the development of online tools and strengthen networks through which participants share resources and acquire new knowledge and skills.
12. 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

13. *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 City – Frontyard's Arts Assets project provides a platform for the development of strong partnerships, responds to changes in macroeconomic conditions brought about by decreased Federal arts funding, and improves the capacity of Sydney's creative sector to access resources and develop capacity so as to retain a globally competitive cultural sector.
 - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – Frontyard's Arts Assets platform aims to provide resources that facilitate opportunities to participate in the City's cultural life through the provision of a service which enables the community to create, learn and work.
 - (c) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City – Frontyard's Arts Assets platform aims to support artists in Sydney access resources and develop capacity so as to ensure a thriving cultural life.

Organisational Impact

14. Sponsorship of Arts Assets will require some staffing resources. Specifically, the City's Strategy Advisor - Culture will be required to liaise with Frontyard through the development of the project and to ensure that the gap analysis in this project adds value to the City's existing data gathering.

Social / Cultural / Community

15. The project strongly aligns with the City's *Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan* (the Policy and Plan) through the provision of resources for artists and creative practitioners.
16. The project aligns with the Policy and Plan in undertaking a gap analysis to determine shortfalls in existing support platforms.
17. The project aligns with the Policy and Plan in forming a partnership with Frontyard to facilitate access to equipment, facilities and other resources for creative practitioners.

18. Changes in Federal funding brought about by cuts to the Australia Council for the Arts have significantly impacted on opportunities for individual artists and the small to medium cultural sector. Sponsorship for Frontyard's Arts Assets platform provides an opportunity to increase the capacity of Sydney's creative community to remain resilient in an altered funding environment.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

19. Sufficient funds for this sponsorship available within the Research, Strategy and Corporate Planning and City Life operational budgets for 2015/16.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

20. In order to ensure sufficient time to conduct forums and develop the prototype, Frontyard will require confirmation of funding by mid-May 2016.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

21. Public endorsement of the *Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan* indicates widespread support for the provision and promotion of collaborative consumption schemes for the arts, cultural and music sectors.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

22. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

KIM WOODBURY

Chief Operating Officer

Ianto Ware, Strategy Advisor - Culture