

**ITEM 2. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SPONSORSHIP – AUDIOCRAFT – AUDIOCRAFT ANNUAL CONFERENCE****FILE NO: S117676****SUMMARY**

On 25 August 2014, Council endorsed the Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024 (the Policy and Action Plan). Following significant consultation with the community and creative sector, the development of the City's first Cultural Policy and Action Plan aligns with *Sustainable Sydney 2030's* Direction Seven, *A Cultural and Creative City*.

The Policy sets out the vision and foundation principles for supporting Sydney's cultural life and the Action Plan contains six strategic priorities accompanied by relevant actions through which the Policy is to be delivered. The actions include new initiatives (augmented by previously announced commitments) to create a comprehensive picture of the City's cultural priorities over the next 10 years.

The Policy and Action Plan identifies the need for training, skills development and information sharing opportunities for creative workers. This is reflected through Strategic Priority Three: Sector Sustainability – Surviving and Thriving and Strategic Priority Five: Knowledge Sharing.

To deliver upon this commitment, the Policy includes Action 3.5, calling on the City to “establish formal relationships with representative sector organisations to build greater awareness of the current challenges and opportunities experienced by individual creative sectors.” In addition, Action 3.6 commits the City to “invest in research for those parts of Sydney's cultural life under-represented by advocacy groups, or otherwise voiceless in cultural strategy debates.”

To this effect, Audiocraft is an Australian not-for-profit organisation that brings together digital audio content creators from the public, community and independent radio and podcast sectors. It is focused on supporting the development of local content through the provision of opportunities for skills development and increased digital capabilities, and is positioning as an advocacy group for this burgeoning sector.

Audiocraft has applied for a Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship to present their second annual conference. The conference will provide a core opportunity for capacity building and industry development within the growing field of podcasting and independent digital broadcasting. Through the conference, Audiocraft will conduct consultation with their sector regarding the challenges and opportunities faced by audio content creators.

The proposed Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship will help support the development of Australian content and facilitate Sydney's position as a hub for the Australian audio industry.

As a sponsor of the Audiocraft conference the City will negotiate sponsor benefits including logo acknowledgement on all marketing materials and signage associated with the event and the conference's website as well as invitations to attend.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve cash sponsorship of \$10,000 (excluding GST) to Audiocraft to undertake the preparation and presentation of their annual conference;
- (B) Council approve value-in-kind sponsorship of \$1,100 for venue hire to Audiocraft to undertake the preparation and presentation of their annual conference; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with Audiocraft Inc.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil.

**BACKGROUND**

1. On 25 August 2014, Council unanimously adopted the Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024 (the Policy and Plan).
2. The Strategic Priorities within the Policy and Plan include 'New Avenues for Creative Participation', 'Sector Sustainability' and 'Sharing Knowledge'. These priorities commit the City to facilitating opportunities for individual creative expression, supporting sustainable careers for local artists and creative workers, and opportunities for learning related to new technologies.
3. The Policy and Plan includes Action 3.5 which commits the City to "Establish formal relationships with peak bodies and representative sector organisations to build greater awareness of the current challenges and opportunities experienced by individual creative sectors."
4. The Policy and Plan includes Action 3.6 to "Invest in specific research or needs analysis for those parts of Sydney's cultural life under-represented by advocacy groups, or otherwise voiceless in cultural strategy debates." Audiocraft was founded in 2015 and is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation focused on audio content creators from the public, community and independent broadcast and podcast sectors. It has a particular focus on podcasting and the creation of audio content.
5. Audiocraft represents a relatively new sector within the creative industries, currently lacking in formal peak bodies and under-represented in existing cultural strategy debates. Notably, directives around podcasting are not incorporated within the City's existing policy framework.
6. In addition to its annual conference, Audiocraft runs an ongoing series of sector focussed listening events, manages a short audio feature competition in partnership with Radio National, curates the Australian Audio Guide, and has emerged as a leading organisation within the audio industry. Audiocraft's board of directors include prominent members of Sydney's cultural sector including Evan Kaldor (Founder and CEO of Kinderling and previous General Manager at FBi Radio), Christina Alvarez (Australian Film TV and Radio School, Metroscreen) and Eliza Sarlos (Underbelly Arts, FBi Radio and MusicNSW).
7. Audiocraft's annual conference is an opportunity for content creators to develop their skills and expertise, network with potential collaborators and employers, and exchange ideas about the future of Australian audio content. The demand for an audio-sector skills development forum is evident from their inaugural conference, held in March 2016. The conference took place at 107 Projects in Redfern, attracting an attendance of 100 people from across Australia with a waitlist of 30 industry creatives. It included international keynote speakers, and received sponsorship from the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, Radio National, FBi Radio, and a number of industry organisations.
8. Given the strong interest from the sector to learn and develop their skills, Audiocraft is increasing the opportunity for participation in their second annual conference. Due to take place in June 2017, the conference will increase its ticketed capacity to 200 people and include speakers from across Australia and an international keynote speaker from New York. It is proposed the event will be held in Glebe Town Hall. Confirmed partners include the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia and Radio National.

9. Support for Audiocraft's second annual conference will ultimately build capacity within the creative sector, cement the organisation as a leader within the audio industry, and help Audiocraft to nurture vital relationships with sponsors and partners to allow the annual conference to be self-sustaining ongoing.
10. At the conclusion of the conference, Audiocraft will be required to acquit their funding and provide the City with findings on the current challenges and opportunities experienced by this creative sector.
11. Support for Audiocraft's second annual conference offers the City an opportunity to support the growth of an emerging cultural sector and gain valuable feedback on the existing status of that sector. It also facilitates Audiocraft's organisational development as a representative body providing resources to those producing Australian audio content.
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 7 - A Cultural and Creative City – the proposed sponsorship fulfils the City's objectives of supporting the development of the creative industries, providing cultural leadership, and strengthening partnerships.

### Organisational Impact

14. Creative City staff will work with Audiocraft as relationship managers to help them meet their strategic goals and outcomes as part of this sponsorship.

### Social / Cultural / Community

15. The conference strongly aligns with the City's Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024 through the provision of new opportunities for creative participation, the sustainability of the cultural sector, and sharing of knowledge.

## BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

16. There are sufficient funds available within the current year's Grants and Sponsorship budget held within the City Life Division operating budget for 2016/17.

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION

17. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

18. In order to ensure sufficient time to deliver the conference, Audiocraft will require confirmation of funding by January 2017.

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

19. Public endorsement of the Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan indicates widespread support for the provision of support for cultural events that facilitate creative participation, increase sector sustainability, and enhance the sharing of knowledge.

**ANN HOBAN**

Director City Life

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