

ITEM 2. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SPONSORSHIP - SYDNEY FORUM - MID-TIER COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**FILE NO: X005020.002****SUMMARY**

The Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating (AIRAH) has approached the City seeking funding to deliver the *Sydney Forum – Mid-tier Commercial Buildings* on Tuesday 13 June 2017 at the University of Technology Aerial Function Centre.

The *Sydney Forum* event provides an opportunity for mid-tier commercial building owners, facility managers, tenants and service providers to better understand how to make commercial mid-tier buildings more energy and water efficient.

Speakers from industry and government partners will share information with mid-tier building stakeholders on the benefits and opportunities to be gained by implementing efficiency measures and resources, and provide guidance on tools and innovative finance mechanisms available.

Mid-tier commercial buildings can be considered to be those buildings that fall outside of the Property Council of Australia's defined premium and A-grade buildings. There are approximately 1,310 mid-tier commercial buildings in the City of Sydney local government area, of which 700 are commercial offices.

Mid-tier buildings are responsible for approximately 40 per cent of our local government area greenhouse gas emissions. The mid-tier sector has not been as active in undertaking efficiency retrofits as the premium/A-grade building sector. Barriers which have slowed uptake of energy efficiency improvements in this sector include lack of awareness, difficulty in accessing capital and information, lack of networking among owners and tenants and low levels of skills and expertise.

A similar event held by AIRAH in Melbourne had approximately 300 participants, with positive feedback from participants and experts in post-event surveys. The City will continue to work with AIRAH to plan, develop and promote the forum.

The request for sponsorship has been evaluated against the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program and support is recommended to the full amount requested. Recommended conditions include working with the City's Sustainability Program leader on a revised budget and project plan, confirmation of partnerships and a commitment to share information compiled in holding the event.

The sponsorship package provides the City with logo and branding acknowledgment on the forum website and all forum materials; complimentary registration for delegates; formal acknowledgment at the event; and an opportunity to present at the event and contribute to the development of forum sessions.

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 a cash sponsorship of \$11,000 (excluding GST) to the Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating in support of the Sydney Forum - Mid-tier Commercial Buildings; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with the Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

BACKGROUND

1. The Australian Institute of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heating (AIRAH) has approached the City seeking funding to deliver the *Sydney Forum – Mid-tier Commercial Buildings* on Tuesday 13 June 2017 at the University of Technology Aerial Function Centre.
2. Established in 1920, AIRAH is the national peak body for heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration service providers and specialists. The organisation represents over 10,000 professionals from these engineering services, as well as broader stakeholders within the built environment sector around Australia.
3. AIRAH proposes to focus on the mid-tier commercial building sector for the 2017 *Sydney Forum*, responding to an identified need to meet knowledge and awareness gaps in this sector about the operational, cost saving and other benefits possible through building efficiency upgrades and performance improvements, as well as finance mechanisms and resources to support efficiency projects.
4. Mid-tier buildings are generally smaller buildings (under 10,000 square metres), have a diverse ownership profile, a lower level of efficiency than premium or A-Grade buildings, and are generally older (built before 2000). Mid-tier buildings generally have no on-site dedicated team for property/facilities management.
5. Environmental performance is generally not currently integrated in the business of mid-tier owners, nor well understood. There is a low level of awareness by mid-tier decision-makers and service providers of programs, tools and resources available that could support them to access opportunities available.
6. Other barriers in the mid-tier sector include lack of access to capital, lower levels of understanding of the business case for building performance improvements, split incentives between tenants and building owners and lack of staff resourcing and time to prioritise sustainability projects.
7. The *Sydney Forum – Mid-tier Commercial Buildings* will see industry and government speakers share knowledge and expertise on how building owners, managers and service providers can implement efficiency projects to realise ongoing cost savings and operational benefits.
8. The Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program supports the exchange of ideas and knowledge, the showcasing of local expertise and encourages dialogue on local and global issues. Under the program, eligible projects can be supported to a maximum of \$40,000 cash and applications can be received ad-hoc throughout the year.
9. The application has been assessed as contributing to the following program outcomes:
 - (a) adoption and implementation of best practice approaches by organisations and individuals;
 - (b) strong networks where participants share resources and acquire new knowledge and skills;
 - (c) improved capacity in organisations and individuals to develop and maintain successful business ventures; and

- (d) increased reputation of Sydney as an innovative and creative city.
10. Recommended conditions include working with the City's Sustainability Program leader on a revised budget and project plan, confirmation of partnerships and a commitment to share information compiled in holding the event.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

11. *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 direction and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 2 provides a road map for the City to become A Leading Environmental Performer – the forum addresses an identified gap in the mid-tier building sector about opportunities, benefits and resource available in implementing efficiency upgrades and improvements.

Organisational Impact

12. City staff resourcing includes providing feedback on selected specialist speakers, supporting the promotion of the event through City channels and managing the sponsorship agreement and reporting requirements.

Risks

13. It is widely recognised that the mid-tier sector is challenging to engage around sustainability issues. The forum is supported by other government and industry partners, including Office of Environment and Heritage and the Energy Efficiency Council. These partners, as well as the City of Sydney, will help promote the forum to our respective networks.

Social / Cultural / Community

14. This event supports the local professional services and built environment sector community to access industry expertise and better understand opportunities presented by retrofitting or improving energy efficiency in commercial mid-tier buildings.

Environmental

15. The *Sydney Forum – Mid-tier Commercial Buildings* supports the City's endeavours to partner with others to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70 per cent by 2030.
16. This event will minimise the need for printed promotion by primarily using online marketing and promotion. Participants will be encouraged to use public transport to travel to the event.

Economic

17. This event provides networking and knowledge sharing for providers of building technology and engineering services.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

18. Funding support can be provided within the existing 2016/17 budget of the Environmental Performance Grant Program.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

19. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

20. The event will be held on Tuesday 13 June 2017.

ANN HOBAN

Director City Life

Kate Read, Sustainability Engagement Coordinator