

Item 4.

Grants - Accommodation Grants

File No: S117676

Summary

Under the City of Sydney Grants policy and guidelines, the Accommodation grant program supports community, cultural, economic and sustainability focused organisations by providing accommodation in City-owned buildings within the property portfolio at below market rent.

Recipients of accommodation grants enter occupancy agreements with the City for a term of up to 5 years and can apply for up to a 100% subsidy. Recipients are subject to an annual performance review.

This report seeks Council approval to enter into one occupancy agreement at 12A Dudley Street, Alexandria and one occupancy agreement at Glebe Town Hall with the recommended applicants from the expression of interest processes.

In addition, and further to Council's resolution of 23 March 2026 that provided support for an LGBTIQ+ Services Hub, this report seeks Council approval to enter into one occupancy agreement at the Rex Centre, at 58 Macleay Street, Potts Point to enable establishment of an LGBTIQ+ Services Hub.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the value-in-kind recommendations for the accommodation grant program as shown at Attachment A to the subject report
- (B) Council note the applicants who were not recommended for support for the accommodation grant program as shown at Attachment B to the subject report
- (C) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST
- (D) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer occupancy agreements with any organisation approved for a grant under terms consistent with this resolution and the Grants policy
- (E) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to correct minor errors to the matters set out in this report, noting that the identity of the recipient will not change, and a CEO Update will be provided.

Attachments

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| Attachment A. | Recommended for support - Accommodation grant program - August 2026 |
| Attachment B. | Not recommended for support - Accommodation grant program - August 2026 |
| Attachment C. | 23 March 2026 Council resolution - Support for an LGBTIQA+ Services Hub |

Background

1. The City's grants program provides the City with a platform to support cultural, economic, environmental and social initiatives from the communities and business, within the local area.
2. The Accommodation grants program (AGP) supports organisations that benefit our communities and align to the strategic outcomes of Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision. It provides organisations with facilities in City-owned buildings within the community property portfolio below market rent for terms of up to 5 years.
3. The accommodation grants program is open to eligible not-for-profit organisations, incorporated associations, government entities, co-operatives, corporations, partnerships, sole traders, and trustees of a trust.
4. Informed by community feedback, meetings and consultation, the City offered one space at 12A Dadley Street, Alexandria and 3 spaces on the ground floor of Glebe Town Hall for community use through the AGP, providing opportunities for local community organisations to occupy the facilities for up to 5 years with subsidies of up to 100%.
5. At the Council meeting of 23 March 2026 via a Lord Mayoral Minute, Council resolved to request the Chief Executive Officer investigate options for providing suitable premises to enable the Inner City Legal Centre to establish an LGBTIQ+ Services Hub with partner organisations and consult with the Centre about their accommodation needs to achieve this goal.

12A Dadley Street, Alexandria

6. The building at 12A Dadley Street, Alexandria is a vacant single-storey octagonal shaped building that has historically and recently been used to provide community-focused services. One space in the building was offered via an AGP expression of interest process.

Grant program opened	8 May 2026
Grant program closed	4pm 19 June 2026
Number of eligible applications received	15
Number of applications from for-profit organisations and/or sole traders	5
Number of grants recommended	1
For-profit organisations and/or sole traders recommended	Nil

Glebe Town Hall

7. The Glebe Town Hall at 160 St Johns Road, Glebe offers a variety of rooms and halls available for hire, as well as accommodation for community and creative organisations and an early childhood centre. Parts of Glebe Town Hall will remain a community venue for hire, managed by the City.
8. As a significant heritage building, it provides spaces for individuals and organisations to conduct a diverse range of developmental, recreational, social and cultural activities that contribute to and enhance the wellbeing of the local community.
9. Three spaces space in the building were offered via an AGP expression of interest process. Applicants could apply for use of one or all offered spaces.

Grant program opened	8 May 2026
Grant program closed	4pm 19 June 2026
Number of eligible applications received	9
Number of applications from for-profit organisations and/or sole traders	1
Number of grants recommended	1 (one applicant to be provided all 3 spaces)
For-profit organisations and/or sole traders recommended	Nil

Grants assessment process

10. The City's Grants programs are highly competitive. Applications that are not recommended have either not scored as highly against the assessment criteria as the recommended applications or have incomplete or insufficient information. The City's Grants team provides feedback to unsuccessful applicants.
11. The assessment process includes advice and recommendations from a suitably qualified assessment panel. The applications are scored against defined assessment criteria for each grant program as well as the integrity of the proposed budget, project plan, partnerships, contributions and connection to the local community and industry sectors.
12. The published assessment criteria for the spaces offered via these AGP expression of interest processes were:
 - the need for the tenancy and proposed results
 - your capacity and experience
 - connection and benefit to the local area and communities

- diversity, inclusion and equity in the planning and development of the project
 - how the proposal aligns with the funding priorities
 - any other criteria for specific properties as they become available
 - or renewals, compliance with past agreements, lease terms and demonstration of ongoing need.
13. The initial assessment meeting for both 12A Dudley Street and Glebe Town Hall was held on 13 July 2026 with a follow up meeting to confirm recommendations on 14 July 2026. All applications were assessed against the published assessment criteria. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from City Life, the First Nations Leadership team and Property Services.

The Rex Centre 58 Macleay Street, Potts Point

14. The Rex Centre at 58 Macleay Street, Potts Point, is a City venue for hire. The centre comprises 4 spaces for hire (2 larger rooms called Baroda and Fitzroy, and 2 smaller rooms called Macleay and Greenknowe), a shared kitchen and toilets, and an office space. The office is currently leased through the AGP to the Australian Screen Editors Guild and Australian Guild of Screen Composers, who share the space. The hire spaces are available 8am to 11pm, 7 days per week. All spaces are on the first floor of the mixed residential and retail building.
15. Following discussions with the Inner City Legal Centre and an understanding of their requirements, including for at least 300sqm of space, it is recommended that the larger 2 rooms (Fitzroy and Baroda) of the Rex Centre be provided to the Inner City Legal Centre under the AGP in place of their current 118sqm location at 50-52 Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross.
16. This configuration will provide the Inner City Legal Centre with 333sqm of space for the LGBTIQ+ Services Hub and leave 119sqm for continued community use as venues for hire under the current arrangements. There are no other available locations appropriate for the establishment of the LGBTIQ+ Services Hub based on space and location requirements.
17. The new agreement with the Inner City Legal Centre will be under the same terms as the existing agreement.
18. Fit out of the space is to be the responsibility of the Inner City Legal Centre. They have indicated that they have received sufficient grant funding to cover the required minor building works.
19. The 2 smaller rooms of the Rex Centre (Macleay and Greenknowe) and the nearby Reginald Murphy Community Centre a very short distance away in Greenknowe Street, Potts Point, can accommodate most regular hirers. Larger groups will be relocated to other nearby hireable spaces, including the Juanita Nielsen Community Centre in Woolloomooloo.

20. The Inner City Legal Centre intend to partner to create a unique LGBTIQ+ Services Hub that will be the first of its kind providing much needed legal and other supports to the gender and sexuality diverse community. Services that plan to join the Hub include the Trans Justice Project, Queer Screen, the HIV Aids Legal Centre and the Racial Justice Centre.
21. The City will review possible uses for the premises at 50-52 Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross to be vacated by the Inner City Legal Centre and provide an update to Council.

Key implications

Strategic alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

22. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This program is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - The recommended AGP recipients in this report contribute to community development and support active participation in civic life. They empower the community to address issues that matter to them and drive projects to create a more inclusive and resilient City.

Organisational impact

23. All grants are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits and development consents are obtained by the applicant.
24. All recommended grant recipients will be required to enter into an occupancy agreement, meet specific performance outcomes and complete an annual performance review. The management of occupancy agreements will involve key staff across the City.
25. Staff will work with the recommended recipients to ensure the facility meets intended use and closely monitor how recommended recipients meet performance measures.

Risks

26. This recommendation is within the City's risk appetite, which states:
 - (a) We make decisions that align with our corporate objectives, policies and strategies and are committed to conducting our activities in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations and relevant industry standards.
 - (b) We foster a culture of ethics, integrity and responsible behaviour across our organisation. By creating a strong ethical foundation, we aim to minimise the likelihood of reputation-damaging incidents and enhance our ability to respond effectively when challenges arise.
 - (c) The City has a responsibility to ensure that it has sufficient resources in the short, medium and long term to provide the levels of service that are both affordable and considered appropriate by the community.

Social / Cultural / Community

27. The City's Grants program provides the City with a platform to support cultural, economic, environmental and social initiatives from the communities and business, within the local area.

Financial implications

28. The new spaces were not budgeted as part of the accommodation grant program; however, there is no financial impact as the increase in grant funding is matched by additional revenue.
29. The total value of the subsidies for the recommended grants are as follows:
- (i) 12A Dadley Street: \$355,710 in total rent subsidy
 - (ii) Glebe Town Hall (3 spaces: Office 1, Meeting Room 1 and Meeting Room 2): \$384,557 in total rent subsidy
 - (iii) Rex Centre (2 rooms): \$885,564 in total rent subsidy
30. Full details of the subsidy values and how they relate to the market value for each space is detailed in Attachment A to the subject report.

Relevant legislation

31. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 provides that a council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions, and section 377(1A) permits the delegation of the granting of financial assistance in certain circumstances.
32. Sections 356(3)(a) to (d) with respect to providing grant funding to for profit organisations, and sections 377(1A)(a) to (d) with respect to the delegation of the granting of financial assistance, are satisfied because:
- (a) the funding is a part of the accommodation grants program
 - (b) the details of the program were included in the Council's adopted operational plan for financial year 2026/27
 - (c) the program's proposed budget does not exceed 5% of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates for and the financial year 2026/27
 - (d) the program applies to a significant group of persons within the local government area.

Critical dates / Time frames

33. Each occupancy agreement recommended in this report is for a period of up to 5 years, commencing by or around October 2026 and ending on 30 June 2031.

Public consultation

34. During this AGP expression of interest processes for 12A Dadley Street, Alexandria and Glebe Town Hall, the City delivered several community-focused in-person information sessions and site visits designed to share more details of the opportunities, view the sites and support prospective applicants. Details of the number of sessions and attendees are included in the table below:

Type of information session	Details of sessions	Total number of registered attendees (across all sessions)
In-person site visit - Glebe Town Hall, Glebe	5 sessions between Friday 15 May, and Thursday 18 June 2026.	23
In-person site visit - 12A Dadley St, Alexandria	4 sessions between Wednesday 13 May, and Wednesday 17 June 2026.	41

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