

Item 12.**Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship - My Online Career Portal****File No: X018040****Summary**

In December 2013, Council adopted the Economic Development Strategy – a ten-year strategy which aims to strengthen the city economy and support business. The Tech Startups Action Plan (endorsed by Council in June 2016) is consistent with this strategy. It identifies how the City can support entrepreneurs, with a focus on innovative, new businesses based on technology and designed for fast growth that are ‘tech startups.’

The Tech Startups Action Plan focuses on creating an ecosystem that enables knowledge-based, innovation-driven businesses to flourish, and highlights the importance to Sydney’s entrepreneurs of access to entrepreneurship information, mentors and investors.

An application has been received for sponsorship under the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program from My Online Career Portal Pty Ltd (trading as Zambesi) to support their initiative ‘Essential skills for emerging businesses workshop series’, a series of 10 three-hour workshops to support local emerging businesses to develop entrepreneurial and digital skills.

The 10 workshops aim to reach a total of 600 small business owners, startup founders and employees to better prepare them to compete in an increasingly digital economy. The program is also designed to foster collaboration between leaders and emerging entrepreneurs in the Sydney business community.

If approved, the City of Sydney’s cash sponsorship will represent 42 percent of the total cost to deliver the program and will allow Zambesi to provide each workshop at a subsidised cost of \$45 per participant.

This initiative aligns with the City’s Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program objectives in that it builds new digital skills and knowledge for small business and startup owners, it provides networking opportunities, and it provides a platform for local businesses to share best practice and learn from each other. It also builds on the existing work of the City through programs such as the Small Business Digital 101 Seminar Series and the Visiting Entrepreneur Program.

The application has been assessed as part of the City’s Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program and sponsorship of \$30,000, excluding GST, is recommended.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash sponsorship of \$30,000 (excluding GST) to My Online Career Portal Pty Ltd trading as Zambesi for the delivery of the 'Essential skills for emerging businesses workshop series'; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and enter into a sponsorship agreement with My Online Career Portal Pty Ltd.

Attachments

Nil.

Background

1. My Online Career Portal Pty Ltd, trading as Zambesi, is a marketplace for face-to-face education. They enable leaders at high growth technology companies to create and lead their own face-to-face training programs to other business people in the community.
2. Zambesi identifies leaders at local high growth technology companies and trains them to deliver engaging educational programs using best practice instructional design. The workshops are interactive, participants collaborate with each other and walk away with practical skills and a plan to take back to their business.
3. Zambesi experts are high profile leaders from companies including Canva, Showpo, Airtasker, Hipages, TEDxSydney and more. Each expert delivers well-crafted workshops to share skills and expertise with other members of the Sydney business community.
4. Through the 'Essential skills for emerging businesses workshop series' program, Zambesi will create a series of 10 three-hour workshops to support local emerging businesses to develop these skills.
5. Australia's top practitioners in each field – people who are leading their field today (not trainers teaching a curriculum) – will lead each workshop.
6. Each workshop is also an opportunity for Sydney business owners and their teams to learn best practice and advanced techniques from a local leader in the topic area. This program encourages the exchange of ideas and gives local business owners the opportunity to meet, learn and collaborate with others who are interested in up-skilling in a similar field (eg digital marketing).
7. The 'Essential skills for emerging businesses workshop series' program is designed to also allow business owners all over Sydney to network, fostering collaboration between leaders and emerging leaders in the Sydney business community.
8. Small and medium sized businesses require a new and evolving set of skills in order to grow. Great product and customer service is not enough anymore. To flourish, today's businesses need world-class strategies for digital marketing, cyber security, personal branding, a highly-skilled team, a strong and inclusive culture and more.
9. Zambesi anticipates the majority of participants will be solo-preneurs and working in small to medium sized businesses of 2 - 50 employees.
10. By empowering local business leaders to share skills with the business community, the program will provide access to new skills and networks in a collaborative and inclusive environment.
11. One of the workshops in the series is specifically designed for women founders, and other workshops, such as personal branding and cyber security will help enable technical leadership for non-technical business owners, and will also be popular with, and beneficial to, women.

12. The City's Tech Startups Action Plan identifies the need to place an emphasis on the upskilling of female entrepreneurs. Women account for more than half of the population, but very few are entrepreneurs founding high-growth businesses. Startups, especially high-growth startups, are key to job creation and leadership in new industries. Women now make up nearly half the workforce and more than half of university students, so their lack of representation in building high-growth firms has become a major economic deficit. The nation has fewer jobs – and less strength in emerging industries – than it could if women's entrepreneurship were on par with men's. Women capable of starting growth companies may well be our greatest underutilised economic resource.
13. The 'Essential skills for emerging businesses workshop series' program will consist of 10 half-day workshops for 60 participants each (total of 600 participants). The workshops will run on the second or third Monday of each month (excluding January) between August 2018 and June 2019. The workshops will be held at the We Work classroom facility between 2pm and 5pm on a Monday afternoon.
14. The series will consist of the following 10 workshops:
15. 'Brilliant Digital Marketing' with Mark Baartse, CMO Showpo
16. 'Develop a Personal Brand that Sells', Fleur Brown, Cofounder TEDx Sydney
17. 'Lean Canvas Business Strategy' with Mike Knapp, Cofounder Shoes of Prey
18. 'Practical Steps to Launch your Online Business Idea with Holly Stephens, Founder Triangles – a special event for female entrepreneurs
19. 'Recruitment, People and Culture' with Mahesh Muralidhar, Head of People Operations at Airtasker, formerly Canva
20. 'Build a World-class Sales Funnel' with Robert Coorey, sales guru and best-selling author (for B to B businesses)
21. 'Best Practice Product Management' with Lyndon Maher, Head of Product Domain
22. 'Surviving Cyber Crime' with Craig McDonald, Founder MailGuard
23. 'PR and Media Training' with Mat Beeche, Founder Startup Daily
24. 'Raise Capital for your Business' with Rebekah Campbell, Co-founder Hey You, Founder Zambesi
25. Sponsorship of Zambesi aligns with the City's Economic Development Strategy and the Tech Startups Action Plan. The action plan identifies how the City can support entrepreneurs, with a focus on innovative, new businesses based on technology and designed for fast growth — tech startups.
26. The City wants to work with industry and government partners to strengthen the ecosystem which enables entrepreneurs to start and grow successful global businesses. It aims to contribute to building a strong entrepreneurial culture and community and creating skilled and connected entrepreneurs.

27. Sponsorship benefits include logo acknowledgement on the Zambesi website as a major program sponsor, logo acknowledgement on Zambesi social media, workshop tickets, and a City of Sydney banner.
28. Evaluation of the sponsorship will include, for example, a report including results from a participant survey, participant feedback, website analytics and media mentions. The evaluation requirements will be included as part of the City's standard sponsorship agreement.
29. Under the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program, not-for-profit and for-profit organisations, as well as social enterprises, are eligible. My Online Career Portal Pty Ltd (trading as Zambesi) is a for-profit organisation.
30. Sponsorship for My Online Career Portal Pty Ltd is recommended so that participants can increase their digital and business skills, share knowledge and build relationships in order to develop their business and this emerging industry sector.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

31. 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 - supporting the small business and startup business community to start and grow innovative businesses will potentially create more employment, boost Sydney's economy, strengthen global connections and make the City a more desirable place to live, work and visit.

Economic Benefits

32. Supporting a capacity-building program for small and medium sized businesses (including tech startups) will contribute to the City having a vibrant, diverse and creative economy.

Budget Implications

33. Provision has been made in the draft 2018/19 and 2019/20 Knowledge Exchange Grants and Sponsorship budgets as follows:
 - (i) \$25,000 - 2018/19
 - (ii) \$5,000 - 2019/20

Relevant Legislation

34. 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.
35. Section 356(3)(a) - (d) is satisfied for the purpose of providing grant funding to for-profit organisations because:
 - (a) the funding is part of the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program;
 - (b) the details of the program have been included in Council's draft operation plan for financial year 2018/19;
 - (c) the program's proposed budget does not exceed 5 per cent of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates for financial year 2018/19; and
 - (d) the program applies to a significant group of persons within the local government area.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

36. The series of 10 workshops will run between August 2018 and June 2019.

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