

## **Sydney Chinese New Year Festival - 2019 and 2020 Charity Partner**

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### **Summary**

The City of Sydney has successfully appointed annual Charity Partners for its three key events in recent years: Sydney Christmas (since 2003), Sydney New Year's Eve (since 2004), and Sydney Chinese New Year Festival (since 2006). These appointments offer a significant platform for charities to build awareness through integration in the City's events and via the event marketing and communications. They also provide an opportunity for the City's event audiences, beyond the celebration and participation in these events, to reflect on the broader needs of communities. Typically, two-year agreements are offered for each event's charity partnerships in order to maximise benefits to both the City's events and the respective Charity Partners.

In 2018, a one-year agreement was offered for the Sydney Chinese New Year Festival charity partner Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to align with the Year of the Dog celebrations.

An Expression of Interest was released in March 2018 to seek an event charity partner for the Sydney Chinese New Year Festival for 2019 (Year of the Pig) with an option to extend the arrangement to 2020 (Year of the Rat).

The recommended Sydney Chinese Year Festival Charity Partner for 2019, with an option for extending to 2020, is Surf Life Saving NSW.

### **Recommendation**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the appointment of Surf Life Saving NSW for the 2019 Sydney Chinese New Year Festival with an option to extend to 2020; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into agreements with Surf Life Saving NSW to establish their Charity Partner status for the respective Chinese New Year events.

### **Attachments**

Nil.

## Background

1. The advertisement seeking expressions of interest for charity partners and an information sheet were posted on the City's Creative City website from Monday 26 March 2018 to Sunday 22 April 2018, and advertised in the Public Notice sections of The Daily Telegraph and The Sydney Morning Herald on Monday 26 March 2018. The closing date for submissions was Sunday 22 April 2018, noting that the City reserved the right to appoint or not appoint a Charity Partner.
2. Bidders were invited to submit a four-page document on the suitability of their organisation to partner with the Sydney Chinese New Year Festival. The benefits offered by the City to Charity Partners include: incorporation in the City's event marketing materials and event collateral; opportunities to provide on-site event activations; speaking opportunities (as appropriate); and leveraging opportunities through other event partners (where possible).
3. The City received two submissions for the Sydney Chinese New Year Festival - Event Charity Partnership by the closing date.
4. Applications were assessed by a panel of three City of Sydney staff members.
5. The City's Sydney Chinese New Year Festival falls in January/February each year and includes a series of events, including the Lunar Lanterns exhibition in Circular Quay and Dragon Boat Races in Darling Harbour.
6. The City has appointed an annual Charity Partner for Sydney Chinese New Year Festival since 2006. Previous Charity Partners include Guide Dogs NSW/ACT (2018 and 2006); Cure Brain Cancer Foundation (2016 and 2017); Barnardos Australia (2015); Chinese Parents Association - Children with Disabilities (2014); the Taronga Foundation (2012 and 2013); the Fred Hollows Foundations (2011); World Wildlife Fund (2010) and Oxfam (2009).
7. In recommending the selection of this Charity Partner, the following seven criteria were considered:
  - (a) the organisation is an official registered charity or public benevolent institution;
  - (b) the charity is reputable;
  - (c) the charity has no religious affiliation;
  - (d) the charity's operation and organisational focus is compatible with the City of Sydney's values and Sydney Chinese New Year Festival;
  - (e) the proposal for a program and/or activations align with Sydney Chinese New Year Festival or Year of the Pig;
  - (f) suitability of the proposed staffing plan to deliver these activations; and
  - (g) suitability of suggestions for program activations.
8. The recommended Charity Partner for 2019 Chinese New Year Festival is Surf Life Saving NSW. They have presented a submission that aligns the organisation with the Chinese New Year Festival.

9. The Chinese New Year Festival is held during the peak Surf Life Saving season and provides an opportunity to educate and build awareness about water safety to visitors and tourists, to both a local and international audience.
10. Surf Life Saving NSW have resources and initiatives that target water safety information to visitors and tourists. These aim to communicate essential beach safety messages to a diverse audience, who may be unfamiliar with beach and water safety practices.
11. Surf Life Saving NSW's involvement in the Chinese New Year Festival will build awareness about water safety to both local and international audiences, an important message during Chinese New Year and summer in particular
12. Surf Life Saving NSW's proposed community engagement through activation brings the beach to the City and aligns with the City's Sustainability Policy and waste targets.
13. Surf Life Saving NSW is the peak water safety, drowning prevention and rescue organisation in NSW and one of the largest volunteer-based community service organisations in Australia. Throughout NSW, the organisation's 11 Branches and 129 Surf Life Saving Clubs comprise more than 75,000 members.
14. The involvement of Surf Life Saving NSW will expose the Chinese New Year Festival to a new audience. The organisation has more than 75,000 members, 4,000 followers on Facebook and 2,000 followers on Instagram.
15. Surf Life Saving NSW encompasses several diverse arms - lifesaving services, community education, surf sports, fundraising and commercial training, which all contribute to the overarching purpose of saving lives and meeting their target of zero preventable deaths and injuries on NSW beaches.
16. Surf Life Saving NSW is a large organisation with many volunteers that has the capacity to deliver on the proposed activations as well as being available for promotions and media events as part of the Chinese New Year Festival.
17. In the 2016/17 patrol season, the organisation's surf lifesavers spent more than 643,184 hours patrolling the NSW coastline, saved 4,966 lives, performed 127,161 preventative actions and 15,750 first aid treatments - all in an effort to ensure everyone in the community is safe at the beach and in the water.
18. It is also recommended that an option to extend for a second year to the 2020 Festival is approved.

## **Key Implications**

### **Risks**

19. For the City, there is reputational risk in partnering with charitable organisations, and mechanisms have been put in place to manage this risk. All selected charity partners have submitted evidence of their charity status.

### **Social / Cultural / Community**

20. The appointment of Charity Partners each year is intended to engender a favourable community sentiment for the selected charity, the City and the event.

21. As noted in the City's Cultural Policy, not only do festivals and special events add to a city's cultural layer, but they also bring economic benefits to businesses in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors. Visitors come from interstate and around the world to be part of the Sydney Chinese New Year Festival, which is the biggest celebration of the Lunar New Year outside of Asia. Through a charity partnership exposure, not-for-profit organisations can leverage community awareness from the cross-promotional possibilities associated with these large international events.

### **Budget Implications**

22. Any activity or activation agreed by both parties will be covered by the existing operational budgets for the respective Major Events and Festivals units.

### **Critical Dates / Time Frames**

23. A signed Charity Partnership Agreement with Surf Life Saving NSW is required by 31 August 2018 to enable:
- (a) public announcement of the appointment as part of the first release of event information;
  - (b) sufficient timing to produce effective initiatives and attract sufficient numbers of volunteers to plan and implement such initiatives; and
  - (c) integration of partnership opportunities into event programming, which occurs mid-2018.

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