

## **Ad Hoc Community Services Grant Program - The Bower Re-use and Repair Centre Co-Operative Limited**

**File No: S116522**

### **Summary**

The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative is a registered environmental charity and education and resource centre for environmentally sustainable living. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative works to reduce the amount of hard waste going into landfill through education, repair, reuse and resale.

In June 2017, Council resolved to lease the Banga Community Shed, 3 Joynton Avenue, Zetland to The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative for five years at 100 percent subsidy under the Accommodation Grants Program. The lease was signed in May 2018. The Accommodation Grant is to provide an electronics repair café and the introduction of community shed programs.

The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative has submitted an out-of-round proposal for a three-year cash grant from the City for 2018 to 2021 under the Community Services Grants program for the establishment of programming at the Banga Community Shed. Programming will include a weekly repair café, a tool library, a test and tag service and electronic repair courses. It will also provide free assistance to people to repair their broken electronics, become an e-waste collection point and engage volunteers to help manage the programs.

The application for funding has been assessed as being consistent with the objectives of the City's Community Services Grant program. It is recommended that a three-year cash grant is provided that comprises of \$29,630 in year one, \$15,960 in year two and \$11,080 in year three.

The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre intend for their operations the Banga Community Shed to become financially self-sufficient by year four of operation.

The Bower will be required to sign a contract, meet specific performance outcomes and acquit their grant.

All figures in this report exclude GST.

## **Recommendation**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve three years of funding from when the agreement is signed at a total of \$56,670 (excluding GST), to be paid as a cash grant of \$29,630 (excluding GST) in year one, \$15,960 (excluding GST) in year two and \$11,080 (excluding GST) in year three to The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative for the establishment of programming at the Banga Community Shed; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer an agreement under terms consistent with this resolution and the Grants and Sponsorship Policy.

## **Attachments**

Nil.

## Background

1. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative is a registered environmental charity and an education and resource centre for environmentally sustainable living. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative works to reduce the amount of hard waste going into landfill through education, repair, reuse and resale.
2. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative has shopfronts in Marrickville and Parramatta where they sell a range of goods, including: second-hand furniture, appliances, household goods, salvaged building materials and bikes. They also offer a collection and re-homing service and a range of repair and reuse workshops.
3. In December 2012, Council resolved that The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative take over the lease for the workshop space at 107 Redfern Street, Redfern through the Accommodation Grant Program. The subsequent lease is until 30 June 2021 at 100 percent subsidy. This Accommodation Grant is to provide space for workshops and the 'rent a bench' program.
4. In June 2017, Council resolved to lease the Banga Community Shed, 3 Joynton Avenue, Zetland to The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative for five years at 100 percent subsidy under the Accommodation Grants Program. The lease was signed in May 2018. The Accommodation Grant is to provide an electronics repair café and the introduction of community shed programs.
5. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative has submitted a proposal for a three-year grant from the City for 2018 to 2021. This application has been assessed against the City's Community Services Grant Program. It was found to strongly align with the following key outcomes of the program:
  - (a) increased community capacity to address local needs/opportunities; and
  - (b) reducing disadvantage and increasing access to opportunities.
6. The grant will enable The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative to provide a range of programs at the Banga Community Shed, including a weekly repair café, a tool library, a test and tag service and electronic repair courses. It will also provide free assistance to people to repair their broken electronics, become an e-waste collection point and engage volunteers to help manage the programs.
7. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative's community-led resource recovery and re-use model is a strategic fit with the City's Waste Strategy and the Residential Apartments Sustainability Plan. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative intends to implement a phased program to teach new skills to community groups to enable them to re-purpose household items to reduce the amount of hard waste going to landfill.
8. Through this phased approach, The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative will establish an electronic repair cafe at the Banga Community Shed. The community will be invited to join in establishing a community hub at the space, focused around the repair of electronic items. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative will then work with members to identify local community interests, and will provide the support required to introduce community-driven programs and activities. The Banga Community Shed will then be opened to the broader community and provide opportunities for members of the community to engage in repair of broken electrical goods, and to create environmental awareness about the growing e-waste problem.

9. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative will prioritise supporting people experiencing disadvantage or financial hardship by providing a range of discounts and tailored programs. They will also reach out proactively to disadvantaged or at risk groups, and the organisations who support them, to attend the repair café and other social events to build social cohesion. Providing these groups with skills to repair and reuse items, rather than re-purchasing, will enable people experiencing disadvantage to use their financial resources to cover essential costs.
10. The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative intends to measure a range of project outcomes, including attendance numbers and qualitative feedback, to refine programs over time. This data will be collected through a range of methods, including: attendance numbers, participant surveys, testimonials, photos and videos. In addition, a log book of volunteer numbers and frequencies will also be maintained.
11. It is recommended that Council approve a total cash grant of \$56,670 over three years. The higher funding amount of \$29,630 in the first year will contribute to one-off establishment costs, including the purchasing of tools, building internal infrastructure, training local community members, the development of programs and promotional materials. Funding is reduced to \$15,960 in the second year and \$11,080 in the third year as the Bower Reuse and Repair Co-Operative increase capacity and establish income streams through course registrations, tag and testing service and rental fees for the tool library. The Bower Reuse and Repair Co-Operative intend to be operating as a self-sustaining entity from year four onwards.
12. City staff will work closely with The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative over the next three years to ensure the delivery of the program, good governance, quality assurance and continuous improvement. The City will also link The Bower Reuse and Repair Centre Co-operative with local environmental and community groups and organisations.

## Key Implications

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

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 grant is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
  - (a) Direction 2 provides a road map for the City to become A Leading Environmental Performer - this grant will enable The Bower to provide a service that empowers communities to come together and repair the items for reuse to reduce the amount of hard waste going into landfill through education, repair, reuse and resale.
  - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - this grant will enable The Bower to provide a community hub where residents can come together to repair small household appliances, learn new skills, build social connections and increase community capacity. This will reduce social isolation and disadvantage and increase access to opportunities for communities at risk of financial hardship.

**Social / Cultural / Community**

14. This project aligns with the City's social sustainability goals, including through the provision of free services for people experiencing disadvantage and fostering connections and trust in dense housing, which is increasing in the local area.

**Environmental**

15. This project aligns with the City's Waste Strategy in addressing waste avoidance by increasing awareness and empowering communities to reduce waste to landfill by repairing and reusing goods.

**Budget Implications**

16. Sufficient funds are available for this grant in the Grants and Sponsorship 2018/19 operating budget for the current financial year.
17. Provision will be made for this funding in future Grants and Sponsorship budgets.

**Relevant Legislation**

18. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993. 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.

**Critical Dates / Time Frames**

19. A contract will be developed for this application after Council approval to ensure funding is released in time for the project to commence in September 2018.

**ANN HOBAN**

Director, City Life

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