

Item 3.

Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship - The Equality Project Australia

File No: S117676

Summary

An application for sponsorship under the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program has been received from The Equality Project Ltd (The Equality Project Australia).

The Equality Project is seeking \$20,000 towards the costs of organising the Better Together National LGBTIQ+ Conference Sydney in January 2019.

Better Together aims to explore issues facing the LGBTIQ+ community in Australia, bringing together voices from First Nations communities, people with a disability, and multicultural and multi-faith communities. The goal is to create discussion about achieving meaningful social change. The Equality Project also seeks to build community capacity by offering leadership skills training for emerging leaders in the LGBTIQ+ community.

The request for sponsorship has been assessed against the aims of the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program and was found to strongly align with the majority of the sponsorship program's key outcomes, in particular:

- encouraging the exchange of ideas and knowledge
- the development of strong networks through which participants can share resources and acquire new knowledge and skills, and
- improved capacity in organisations and individuals to develop socially just and resilient communities.

The Equality Project has experience in running a similar successful conference in Melbourne in January 2018, which was attended by over 670 people from across Australia as well as a number of delegates from the United States, United Kingdom and the Philippines.

The City's sponsorship would support the provision of scholarship places for delegates experiencing financial hardship, Auslan interpreters and other conference expenses.

Benefits to the City would include co-branding as a major partner on The Equality Project website and in program material, acknowledgement through social media and as well as verbal acknowledgements during the final plenary.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash sponsorship of \$20,000 (excluding GST) to The Equality Project Ltd. for the Better Together National LGBTIQ+ Conference 2019
- (B) Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with The Equality Project Ltd.

Attachments

Nil

Background

1. The Equality Project is a new national organisation, established in 2017, which brings together LGBTIQ+ people with allies across the social justice movement, to advocate for a better, more just, and fairer society. The Equality Project is a non-profit organisation and charity, incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.
2. Their inaugural conference, Better Together 2018, was held at the Melbourne Town Hall from 13-14 January 2018. It was attended by over 670 people from across Australia as well as a number of delegates from the United States, United Kingdom and the Philippines.
3. The next national conference, Better Together 2019, is due to be held in Sydney from 11-12 January 2019. The conference aims to explore current issues facing the LGBTIQ+ community, including transgender, intersex and bisexual communities, and bring together intersectoral voices from First Nations communities, people with a disability, the Deaf community, as well as multicultural and multi-faith communities.
4. As part of the lead up to the conference, prospective delegates in Sydney were invited to attend a two-day advocacy, leadership and media training event held on 13 and 14 October 2018. Other training sessions were also held in Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Canberra.
5. The conference will offer 20 percent of seats as fully subsidised scholarships for people experiencing financial hardship from multicultural/multi-faith communities, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, people with a disability, and people from regional and rural areas.
6. Based on attendances at the Melbourne conference, The Equality Project expect representation from approximately 80 percent of Australia's LGBTIQ+ organisations. ACON and Rainbow Families NSW will also provide up to 40 volunteers for the conference as ushers and support people.
7. The Equality Project is seeking \$20,000 in funding from the City of Sydney to assist with the costs of running the conference. The Equality Project has established other partnerships for both the 2019 conference and pre-conference training program with a number of organisations, including Dowson Turco Lawyers, Mercer Australia, Macquarie, GLAAD USA (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), Stonewall UK, PricewaterhouseCoopers(PwC) Australia, Pride in Diversity, National LGBTI Health Alliance, ACON, Rainbow Families and the University of Technology Sydney.
8. City of Sydney funds will be used to provide scholarship places for delegates experiencing financial hardship, Auslan interpreters and other conference expenses.
9. The City would be acknowledged as a major partner on The Equality Project website and in program material, acknowledgement through social media and in verbal acknowledgements during the final plenary session.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

10. 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 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - the conference aims to strengthen LGBTIQ+ leadership and advocacy, increase intersectoral collaboration and connection and provide leadership, networking and mentoring opportunities for participants.
11. The sponsorship also aligns with the City's Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan 2018-2028, Strategic Direction 2 - Connected City: diverse, cohesive communities. The conference will provide opportunities to increase social connectedness among diverse communities; enhance a sense of belonging among diverse communities; strengthen social cohesion among culturally diverse communities, and encourage active participation community life.

Organisational Impact

12. The delivery of the sponsorship will require a contract and relationship manager for the duration of the project, which can be managed within existing resources.

Social / Cultural / Community

13. The conference will have a strong focus on collaborative action and connection between individuals, groups, organisations and communities, including LGBTIQ+ people from First Nations communities, people with a disability, the Deaf community, as well as multicultural and multi-faith communities. The conference will contribute to increased social cohesion by building capacity within the LGBTIQ+ communities and organisations to collaborate with other groups of diverse and intersectional backgrounds. As an outcome of this process it is expected that there will be greater understanding and acceptance of difference between the diverse groups represented.

Budget Implications

14. Funding of \$20,000 (excluding GST) can be accommodated within the Knowledge Exchange grants and sponsorship budget for the financial year 2018-19.

Relevant Legislation

15. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

16. A contract will be developed for this application after Council approval to ensure funding is released in time for the conference, due to be held on 11 and 12 January 2019.

ANN HOBAN

Director City Life

Jackie Campisi, Social Policy Officer