

Grants and Sponsorship - Round One 2020/21 - Environmental Performance Grants

File No: S117676

Summary

The City of Sydney's Grants and Sponsorship Program supports initiatives and projects that build the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of the city. To achieve the objectives of Sustainable Sydney 2030 requires genuine partnership between government, business and the community.

The provision of grants and sponsorships is a mechanism to further the aims identified in the City's social, economic and environmental policies. Applications are assessed against these policies and against broad City objectives and plans. In this way, the City and the community act collaboratively to bring to life Sustainable Sydney 2030 and the City of Villages its envisions.

The City advertised the following three environmental grant programs in Round One of the annual grants and sponsorship program for 2020/21:

- Environmental Performance - Building Operations; funding is available to help lower the costs of implementing building operations efficiency measures;
- Environmental Performance - Ratings and Assessments; funding is available to undertake building performance ratings and certifications, energy audits and assessments to enable a building or facility owner to understand their opportunities to improve environmental performance; and
- Environmental Performance – Innovation; funding is available to assess or demonstrate new technologies or processes that are currently not being implemented in the local market but have the potential to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions and resource efficiencies that could be rolled out at scale within the local area.

For the Environmental Performance Grants, 19 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 11 grants to a total value of \$234,781 for the 2020/21 financial year.

On 11 December 2017, Council adopted a revised Grants and Sponsorship Policy. All grants in this report were assessed against criteria and guidelines set out in this policy, with reference to Sustainable Sydney 2030, the Environmental Action 2016-2021 Strategy and Action Plan, and the Residential Apartments Sustainability Plan.

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

All cash figures in this report exclude GST.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the cash recommendations for the Environmental Performance - Building Operations Grant Program as per Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council note the applications not recommended for a cash grant for the Environmental Performance - Building Operations Grant Program as per Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council approve the cash recommendations for the Environmental Performance - Innovation Grant Program as per Attachment C to the subject report;
- (D) Council note the applications not recommended for a cash grant for the Environmental Performance - Innovation Grant Program as per Attachment D to the subject report;
- (E) Council approve the cash recommendations for the Environmental Performance - Ratings and Assessment Grant Program as per Attachment E to the subject report noting all grants in this program are recommended;
- (F) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST; and
- (G) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer agreements with any organisation approved for a grant or sponsorship under terms consistent with this resolution and the Grants and Sponsorship Policy.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Recommended for Funding - Round One 2020/21 Environmental Performance - Building Operations Grant Program
- Attachment B.** Not Recommended for Funding - Round One 2020/21 Environmental Performance - Building Operations Grant Program
- Attachment C.** Recommended for Funding - Round One 2020/21 Environmental Performance - Innovation Grant Program
- Attachment D.** Not Recommended for Funding - Round One 2020/21 Environmental Performance - Innovation Grant Program
- Attachment E.** Recommended for Funding - Round One 2020/21 Environmental Performance - Ratings and Assessment Grant Program

Background

1. The City of Sydney's Grants and Sponsorship Program supports residents, businesses and not-for-profit organisations to undertake initiatives and projects that build the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of the city.
2. On 5 February 2020, the City announced Round One of the annual grants program for 2020/21 as being open for applications on the City's website, with grant applications closing on 9 March 2020.
3. The three environmental programs promoted were:
 - Environmental Performance - Building Operations;
 - Environmental Performance - Innovation; and
 - Environmental Performance - Ratings and Assessments.
4. Information about these grant programs (such as application dates, guidelines, eligibility criteria and sample applications) was made available on the City's website. The City actively promoted the programs through Facebook, Twitter, What's On and Google AdWords. Email campaigns were also utilised to target interested parties who have applied previously for grants at the City or who have expressed an interest in the City's programs. The grants were also promoted to peak industry organisations, networks and stakeholders.
5. In response to the evolving nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, all applicants were invited to provide additional information once the application period had closed. Applicants were asked how their project would be impacted by Covid-19 and whether they wanted to continue through the assessment process. The vast majority of projects advised they wished to continue and provided useful information on how their project would adapt. This information was taken into consideration in the assessment process.
6. The three Environmental Performance programs are open to appropriately incorporated for-profit and not-for-profit organisations. Twelve applications were received this round from for-profit organisations. Six of the applications from for-profit organisations are recommended in this report:
 - (a) Dexus Funds Management Ltd;
 - (b) Enosi Australia Pty Ltd;
 - (c) Flipp Pty Ltd;
 - (d) Glory Property III Investment Pty Ltd;
 - (e) Leon Energy Pty Ltd); and
 - (f) Spark and Burnish Pty Ltd.
7. The three Environmental Performance Grant programs aim to build capacity and address barriers to the implementation of environmental actions within key customer sectors.

8. The assessment panel consisted of members from the City's City Sustainability Unit, Environmental Projects Unit, Health and Building Unit and Sustainability Programs Unit.

Environmental Performance - Building Operations Grant Program

9. The Environmental Performance - Building Operations Grant Program aims to improve the environmental performance of buildings by lowering the costs and mitigating the barriers of implementing building efficiency measures, such as water monitoring in residential apartments.
10. Four applications have been received and assessed. Two are recommended for support to a value of \$20,000. One application was received from the accommodation and entertainment building sectors and one application was received from the commercial office building sector.

Environmental Performance - Innovation Grant Program

11. The Environmental Performance - Innovation Grant Program supports the feasibility or demonstration of new technologies or processes that are currently not being implemented in the local market but have the potential to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions and resource efficiencies that could be rolled out at scale within the local area. Twelve applications have been received and assessed. Six are recommended for support to the value of \$192,500.
 - (a) Bugisu Project Limited propose to demonstrate the possibilities of a circular coffee economy by educating coffee drinkers in businesses about the environmental benefit of their zero-waste supply chain.
 - (b) Enosi Australia Pty Ltd propose to demonstrate the benefits of a power purchase agreement by showing consumers how to trade energy to bring the cost of renewable energy to the same cost as grid energy.
 - (c) Flipp Pty Ltd propose to educate consumers on the benefits of a sharing economy by encouraging families to swap their children's unwanted toys with nearby families via an online platform with each toy listing their weight and the amount saved from landfill.
 - (d) Leon Energy Pty Ltd propose to investigate the feasibility of storing energy in mechanical battery flywheels for twice daily peak-time use reducing grid use, carbon emissions and landfill by producing zero-waste by-products.
 - (e) Spark and Burnish Pty Ltd propose to investigate the feasibility of an on-site plastic milk bottle circular economy by using the waste generated to create interior building products for use in offices and their facilities.
 - (f) University of Technology Sydney propose to investigate the feasibility of installing wireless sensors to reduce energy consumption in commercial buildings by occupants using an interactive app to enter feedback on the comfort levels of their indoor environment.

Environmental Performance - Ratings and Assessments Grant Program

12. The Environmental Performance - Ratings and Assessments Grant Program aims to address barriers to the uptake of building performance ratings and assessments across energy, water, waste and other sustainability aspects. Ratings and assessments enable a building owner or facility manager to understand their building's environmental performance and to identify efficiency opportunities. Applicants are required to implement efficiency measures based on the recommendations of the assessments.
13. Three applications have been received and assessed. All are recommended for support to a value of \$22,281. All three applications were received from the residential building sector.
14. The 2020/21 Environmental Performance Program budget is summarised as follows:

Total cash budget	\$910,000
Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$29,897
Total cash amount available for allocation	\$880,103
Total number of eligible applications	19
Total cash requested	\$584,716
Total number of applications recommended for cash support	11
Total amount of funding cash recommended	\$234,781
Amount remaining for subsequent allocation of the program	\$645,322

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

15. 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 - the grant projects recommended in this report will support the City's endeavours to work with our business and residential communities to reduce greenhouse emissions and potable water use and encourage diversion of waste from landfill across the local government area.

Organisational Impact

16. The grants and sponsorships contract management process will involve staff in the City's grants and sustainability teams setting contract conditions and performance measures for each approved project and reviewing project acquittals.

Environmental

17. The recommended environmental grants under the Building Operations Program will enhance knowledge sharing amongst building users to improve energy and water efficiency by the installation of technology or equipment to monitor and measure existing services.
18. The recommended environmental grants under the Innovation Program will enhance knowledge sharing, skills uptake and capacity in best practice environmental performance, approaches and solutions in the local area.
19. The recommended environmental grants under the Ratings and Assessments Program will provide energy and water savings as a result of improved monitoring and applicants implementing efficiency measures as a condition of the grants.

Budget Implications

20. A total value of \$234,781 in cash is recommended in this report and is provided in the draft 2020/21 draft Grants and Sponsorship budget for this program.

Relevant Legislation

21. 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.
22. Section 356(3)(a) to (d) is satisfied for the purpose of providing grant funding to for profit organisations because:
 - (a) the funding is part of the Environmental Grants - Environmental Performance Grants program;
 - (b) the details of the program have been included in Council's draft operation plan for financial year 2020/21;
 - (c) the program's budget does not exceed five per cent of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates for financial year 2020/21; and
 - (d) the program applies to a significant group of persons within the local government area.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

23. The funding period for Round One of the annual Grants and Sponsorship Program for 2020/21 is for activity taking place from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021. Contracts will be entered into with all successful applicants after Council approval is received to ensure funding is released in time for projects starting in August.

Public Consultation

24. For all programs open to application in Round One of the annual Grants and Sponsorship Program for 2020/21, two question and answer sessions were held in Town Hall House to assist potential applicants with their applications on Thursday 13 February 2020, 4pm to 7pm and Tuesday 18 February 2020, 4pm to 7pm.
- (a) Fifty-six individual meetings were held during the question and answer sessions where prospective applicants sought advice from City staff about their project proposals and the application process.
 - (b) Sixty-four per cent of these attendees advised they had not applied for a City of Sydney grant previously.
 - (c) Fourteen per cent of these attendees requested a member of the Indigenous Engagement team to be present during their meeting.
25. Two additional question and answer meetings were held targeting Haymarket businesses due to the early impact of Covid-19 on Tuesday 3 March 2020 5pm to 7pm at Ultimo Community Centre and Wednesday 4 March 2020 12pm to 2pm at the Darling Exchange Library.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

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