

Grants and Sponsorship - Round Two 2020/21 - Knowledge Exchange Sponsorships

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 and assist in the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. To achieve the objectives of the Community Recovery Plan and Sustainable Sydney 2030, genuine partnership between government, business and the community is required.

The provision of grants and sponsorships is a mechanism to further the aims identified in the City's social, cultural, 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 achieve the goals of the Community Recovery Plan and Sustainable Sydney 2030.

The City advertised the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program as part of Round Two of the annual Grants and Sponsorship Program for 2020/21.

Seventy eligible applications were received. This report recommends 19 grants to a total value of \$646,086 in cash and \$4,137 revenue foregone/value-in-kind for the 2020/21 financial year.

On 11 December 2017, Council adopted a revised Grants and Sponsorship Policy. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines that support the Policy were revised to include priority areas of support informed by the Community Recover Plan. All grants in this report were assessed in accordance with the Grants and Sponsorship Policy, the Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines, the priorities set out in the Community Recovery Plan and various other relevant City strategies and action plans.

All grant recipients 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 the cash and revenue foregone/value-in-kind recommendations for the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program as per Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council note the applicants who were not successful in obtaining a cash grant for the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program as per Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council note that expenditure for the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program approved in this report exceeds the nominated budgets for the 2020/21 financial year outlined in the Operational Plan, however any overspend will be offset in full by savings in the overall Grants and Sponsorship Program budget, so that the total amount of expenditure under the overall Grants and Sponsorship Program budget will not be exceeded.
- (D) Council approve the altering of the 2020/21 budget for the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program from \$772,000 to \$822,586;
- (E) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST and all value-in-kind offered is subject to availability;
- (F) 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; and
- (G) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to correct minor errors to the matters set out in this report, noting that the identity of the recipient will not change, and a CEO Update will be provided to Council advising of any changes made in accordance with this resolution.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Recommended for Funding - Round Two 2020/21 Knowledge Exchange Sponsorships
- Attachment B.** Not Recommended for Funding - Round Two 2020/21 Knowledge Exchange Sponsorships

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 24 August 2020, the City announced the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship grants program for 2020/2021 as being open for applications on the City's website, with grant applications closing on 21 September 2020.
3. In June 2020, the Council adopted the Community Recovery Plan, a strategic plan for economic, cultural and social recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. All grants approved for funding in this report that contribute to the AI Fresco City recovery program, as adopted by Council in October 2020, will be considered and engaged as part of this program of work.
5. Information about the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program (such as application dates, guidelines, eligibility criteria and sample applications) was made available on the City's website. The City actively promoted the program through Facebook, Twitter, What's On, postcard distribution, an ArtsHub publication and affiliated website and Facebook promotion. 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.
6. Following adoption of the revised Grants and Sponsorship Policy on 11 December 2017, the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program is open to for-profit organisations.
7. Thirty-six applications were received in the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program round from for-profit organisations and nine for-profit organisations are recommended in this report:
 - (a) ACN 643074506 Pty Ltd trading as VillageHub;
 - (b) Decode Pty Ltd;
 - (c) Edge Environment Pty Ltd;
 - (d) Inspiring Rare Birds Pty Ltd;
 - (e) Intersective Pty Ltd;
 - (f) Michelle Tabet Pty Ltd;
 - (g) Q-ctrl Pty Ltd;
 - (h) Strata Answers Pty Ltd; and
 - (i) VibeLab Asia Pacific.
8. These applications meet the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship for-profit eligibility criteria.

9. Park hire requests are not listed in the table for recommendations, as not-for-profit organisations are eligible for free park hire. However, these organisations must pay the \$100 application fee and other related fees and charges, such as electricity and water. Individuals or unincorporated community groups are required to be auspiced by a not-for-profit organisation to be eligible for free park hire. All park hire is subject to availability. For-profit organisations are required to pay park hire fees.
10. It is expected that all successful applicants will work co-operatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding. Contact details for the relevant City staff are provided to all successful grant recipients.
11. All grants and sponsorships are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits and development consents are obtained by the applicant. In the current environment this includes but is not limited to, requirements associated with the service of alcohol or food services, consent from the respective landowner(s), NSW Planning Legislation and NSW Government health requirements. The City approves Development Applications and outdoor temporary event activities.
12. The City's Grants and Sponsorship Program is highly competitive. Applications not recommended have either not scored as highly against the assessment criteria as the recommended applications, or have incomplete or insufficient information. The City's Grants and Sponsorship team provides feedback and support to unsuccessful applicants.
13. The assessment process includes advice and recommendations from the key stakeholders on the assessment panel, depending upon the nature of each submission. The integrity of the proposed budget, project plan, contributions and partnerships are assessed, scored and ranked against defined criteria. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed, which includes conditions that must be adhered to, and acquitted against.
14. In assessing the grant applications, the assessment panels included in their considerations and recommendations:
 - (a) Community Recovery Plan 2020;
 - (b) Sustainable Sydney 2030;
 - (c) Grants and Sponsorship Policy; and
 - (d) alignment with other core City strategic policies and action plans.
15. Applicants are requested to list their project's community partners, confirmed funding sources and the contribution the organisation is making to the project (cash or in-kind) to demonstrate their contribution.

Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program

16. The Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program funding supports showcasing local expertise and encourages dialogue on local and global issues.

17. Sponsorship includes support for research, strategic initiatives, programs or events that promote the sustainable development of cities; mentorship and networking events that bring people together to learn from each other; tools or guides to communicate best practice; and build skills and expertise within social, cultural, green and business industry sectors.
18. The assessment panel for the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program consisted of members from City’s Culture and Creativity, Economic Programs, Economic Strategy, Major Events, Sustainability Programs, Social Programs and Services and Social Strategy teams, with additional specialist input from the City’s Cultural Strategy, Cycling Strategy and Indigenous Leadership teams.
19. Overview of 2020/21 Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program:

Total cash budget for 2020/21	\$772,000
Total already committed to previously approved applications	\$176,500
Total amount available for 2020/21	\$595,500
Total number of eligible applications this round	70
Total cash requested from applications	\$2,273,120
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$45,271
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value-in-kind support	19
Total amount of cash funding recommended 2020/21	\$646,086
Total amount of value-in-kind support recommended 2020/2021	\$4,137
Total cash overspend to be absorbed in the overall Grants and Sponsorship Program budget cash amount remaining in 2020/21 (see below for source of funds for overrun)	\$-50,586

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

20. 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 program 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.
 - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to fostering strong and sustainable local economies.
 - (c) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City - the grant projects recommended in this report will provide opportunities for creative participation, enhance creativity in the public domain and strengthen the sustainability and capacity of the City's cultural and creative industries.

Organisational Impact

21. The grants and sponsorships contract management process will involve key staff across the City of Sydney. Identified staff set contract conditions and performance measures for each approved project and review project acquittals, which include both narrative and financial reports.

Social / Cultural / Community/ Environmental and Economic

22. The City's Grants and Sponsorship Program provides the City with a platform to support cultural, economic, environmental and social initiatives from the communities, and community organisations, within the local area. The anticipated outcomes of this grant program include:
- (a) adoption and implementation of best-practice approaches by organisations and individuals;
 - (b) strong networks where participants share resources and acquire new knowledge and skills;
 - (c) increased recognition of Sydney as an innovative and creative city;
 - (d) improved capacity in organisations and individuals to develop socially just, inclusive and resilient communities; and
 - (e) improved capacity in organisations and individuals to develop and maintain sustainable sectors.

Financial Implications

23. A combined total of \$646,086 in cash and \$4,137 in revenue foregone/value-in-kind is recommended in this report which exceeds the 2020/21 Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship program budget, as noted in the financial table above.
24. All expenditure that exceeds the nominated budgets for the 2020/21 financial year outlined in the Operational Plan will be offset in full by savings in the overall Grants and Sponsorship Program budget. These savings have occurred as a result of general savings in the Cultural and Creative Grants and Sponsorship Program and the Environmental Performance Grants Program as well as some Grantees returning funds to the City, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic through major contracts for the Commercial Creative and Business Events Sponsorship Program, some out of policy grants and the Covid-19 Relief Programs.

Relevant Legislation

25. 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.
26. 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 has been included in Council's draft operational plan for financial year 2020/21;
 - (c) the program's proposed 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

27. The funding period for Round Two of the Grants and Sponsorship Program for 2020/21 is for activity taking place from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021. Contracts will be developed for all successful applications after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for projects starting in January 2021.

Public Consultation

28. An online briefing session was held over Zoom to inform the community about the grant program and to assist potential applicants with their applications on Wednesday 2 September 2020, 12pm to 1.30pm. 160 community members attended.
29. Four separate meetings specifically for social, environmental, cultural and economic projects were held during the session where prospective applicants sought advice from City staff about their project proposals and the application process.
30. This new process proved to be an effective way for the community to understand the objectives of the program and have their questions answered directly.

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