

Major Events and Festivals Charity Partner 2020/21

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Summary

For more than 10 years, the City has appointed charity partners for major events such as Sydney Christmas, Sydney New Year's Eve and Sydney Lunar Festival. Charity partners are recognised on marketing materials and press releases, receive speaking opportunities at event launches, and have the option to create activations and fundraise at events.

The upcoming 2020/2021 event season will be very different to previous years. The City will not be producing New Year's Eve 2020. The programs for Sydney Christmas 2020 and Sydney Lunar Festival 2021 will focus on public domain decorations and small scale activations, with increased online content and a reduction in physical activity to comply with Public Health Orders in order to manage Covid-19. This limits the possible benefits for charity partners, removing the possibility for them to undertake physical activations and fundraising at events.

To boost the city centre economy, support business and create jobs across the vital summer period, the NSW Government and City of Sydney have announced up to \$20 million in joint funding to fund programs that will reinvigorate the city centre and encourage the community to return to the CBD.

At the start of the pandemic response, the City identified a key need for basic food support within the community, and supported OzHarvest with \$1 million to assist them in providing services to our vulnerable communities. This funding support concludes at the end of 2020.

For the 2020/21 summer event season, it is proposed that the City appoints OzHarvest as the charity partner for Sydney Christmas 2020, Sydney Lunar Festival 2021 and any other relevant summer public domain activations undertaken by the City. This will enable the City to continue to support OzHarvest through acknowledgement on marketing materials, digital assets and onsite signage at these events and activations in recognition of the contribution their work is making to the City's community recovery. It will allow OzHarvest to further leverage this opportunity, increase public awareness of their work and develop opportunities for public fundraising.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the appointment of OzHarvest as the Charity Partner for Sydney Christmas 2020, Sydney Lunar Festival 2021 and any other relevant summer public domain activations;
- (B) authority to be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an agreement with OzHarvest to establish their Charity Partner status for these respective events.

Attachments

Nil.

Background

1. In previous years, the City has appointed a Charity Partner for each of its three major events: Sydney Christmas, Sydney New Year's Eve and Sydney Lunar Festival. The charity and its event activation is promoted through event marketing and communication.
2. Typically, association with each of these major events provides the charity organisations with an exclusive and highly visible platform. The partnership allows charities to build awareness of their work and integrate their fundraising activities into event programming. It also gives event audiences the opportunity to reflect on broader community issues and needs.
3. In the past, Charity Partners for each event are chosen through an open, competitive process. However, due to Covid-19 the 2020/21 event season will be very different to previous years, with increased online content and a reduction in physical activity. In 2020, Sydney New Year's Eve will be produced by the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet due to the additional requirements associated with the pandemic, and Sydney Christmas 2020 and Sydney Lunar Festival 2021 will be small scale pop-up style events and decorations throughout the city and villages, with a greater emphasis on online content. This approach is to ensure the safety of our community and event audiences.
4. The result of these changes is that the Charity Partners will have fewer opportunities to connect with the event audiences in a physical location to activate, raise awareness and fundraise and will thus lose some of the sponsorship benefits previously able to be offered by the City.
5. At the beginning of the pandemic response, the City identified a key need for food support within the community, and supported OzHarvest with \$1 million to assist the organisation to provide much needed services to our local vulnerable communities. That funding support concludes at the end of 2020.
6. OzHarvest is a Sydney-based leading food rescue organisation, collecting quality excess food from commercial outlets and delivering it directly to more than 1300 charities supporting people in need across the country. OzHarvest has four pillars that direct its work; Rescue, Educate, Engage and Innovate. These values and the social and community outcomes that OzHarvest deliver, align with the City's Community Recovery Plan.

Key Implications

Organisational Impact

7. Staff from the Major Events and Festivals team will manage the Charity Partner relationship with OzHarvest to ensure maximum benefits and beneficial outcomes are realised.

Social / Cultural / Community

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

9. 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. Through a charity partnership, not-for-profit organisations can leverage community awareness from the cross-promotional possibilities associated with these well-known events and in 2020/21 via a greater emphasis online.
10. In 2020/21 it is envisaged that the City, together with OzHarvest will continue to deliver significant benefit to Sydney's vulnerable communities and through the association with the City's major events raise awareness, educate audiences and raise financial support.

Environmental

11. The partnership with OzHarvest contributes to the Sustainable Sydney 2030 goals with OzHarvest redirecting food to those who need it and in turn reducing the wastage of both food and water. Through its curriculum-aligned national education program, it inspires students to eat healthy, waste less and be change-makers in their local community.

Financial Implications

12. Activities undertaken by the City in alignment with the Charity Partner's programs is provided for within the Major Events and Festivals 2020/21 operating budget.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

13. Signed Letters of Agreement with the appointed Charity Partners are required by late-November, to enable:
 - (a) announcement of the appointment as part of the first release of event information;
 - (b) integration of partnership opportunities into event programming for the 2020/21 event season.
 - (c) acknowledgement of the Charity Partner within print materials used to promote the program of events and summer public domain activations.

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