

Item 9.

Grants and Sponsorship - Round One 2021/22 - Economic 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 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 following three categories of the Business Support Grant Program as part of Round One of the annual Grants and Sponsorship Program for 2021/22:

- Business Support Grant - Live Music and Performance;
- Business Support Grant - Night Time Diversification; and
- Business Support Grant - Place and Industry.

For the Business Support Grants - Live Music and Performance program, 15 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of eight grants to a total value of \$90,368 in cash for the 2021/22 financial year.

For the Business Support Grants - Night Time Diversification program, 30 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of seven grants to a total value of \$126,840 in cash for the 2021/22 financial year.

For the Business Support Grants - Place and Industry program, applicants can apply for up to three projects per application. Nine eligible applications were received which included 22 projects. This report recommends a total of nine grants, including all of the 22 projects submitted, to a total value of \$355,000 in cash for the 2021/22 financial year.

On 22 February 2021, Council adopted a revised Grants and Sponsorship Policy. The Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines that support the Policy were also revised and approved by Executive on 24 February 2021. 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 recommendations for the Business Support - Live Music and Performance Grant 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 Business Support - Live Music and Performance Grant Program as per Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council approve the cash recommendations for the Business Support - Night Time Diversification Grant Program as per Attachment C to the subject report;
- (D) Council note the applicants who were not successful in obtaining a cash grant for the Business Support - Night Time Diversification Grant Program as per Attachment D to the subject report;
- (E) Council approve the cash recommendations for the Business Support - Place and Industry Grant Program as per Attachment E to the subject report noting that all applications are recommended;
- (F) Council note that all grants amounts are exclusive of GST;
- (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; and
- (H) 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 One 2021/22 - Live Music and Performance Grant Program
- Attachment B.** Not Recommended for Funding – Round One 2021/22 - Live Music and Performance Grant Program
- Attachment C.** Recommended for Funding – Round One 2021/22 - Night Time Diversification Grant Program
- Attachment D.** Not Recommended for Funding – Round One 2021/22 - Night Time Diversification Grant Program
- Attachment E.** Recommended for Funding – Round One 2021/22 - Place and Industry 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 25 February 2021, the City announced Round One of the annual grants program for 2021/22 as being open for application on the City's website, with grant applications closing on 29 March 2021.
3. The three categories of the Business Support Grant promoted were:
 - (a) Live Music and Performance;
 - (b) Night Time Diversification; and
 - (c) Place and Industry.
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 program through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, What's On, and ArtsHub. Supply Nation, Multicultural NSW, Digest, Sydney University and Haymarket Chamber of Commerce also promoted the program through their networks. The City Business team worked closely with industry stakeholders to promote these grants and delivered a dedicated virtual briefing for business intermediaries such as local chambers of commerce, industry organisations and Liquor Accord associations to promote these programs through their channels and networks. Email campaigns were 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.
5. Following adoption of the revised Grants and Sponsorship Policy on 11 December 2017, the Live Music and Performance and Night Time Diversification categories are open to appropriately incorporated for-profit organisations and partnerships.
6. Thirteen applications were received this round from for-profit organisations and sole traders through the Business Support Grant - Live Music and Performance category and the following six for-profit organisations and sole traders are recommended in this report:
 - (a) Austin Benjamin Buckett;
 - (b) Cobbstar Productions Pty Ltd;
 - (c) Crumb Consortium Pty Ltd;
 - (d) Im Operating Pty Ltd;
 - (e) Lynch and Wallace Pty Ltd; and
 - (f) Murray Stewart Lake.

7. Twenty-nine applications were received this round from for-profit organisations, partnerships, trusts and sole traders through the Business Support Grant - Night Time Diversification category, and the following six for-profit organisations, partnerships and trusts are recommended in this report:
 - (a) Lendlease Property Management (Australia) Pty Ltd;
 - (b) Mecca Coffee Roasters Pty Ltd;
 - (c) Sorry Thanks I Love You Pty Ltd;
 - (d) Sydney Tower Observatory Pty Ltd;
 - (e) T.r Hespe & T.e Kennedy; and
 - (f) The Trustee for The Sussex Lane Unit Trust.
8. There were a total of 54 grant applications received under the Business Support Grants. Twenty-four are recommended for funding as detailed in this report.
9. It is expected that all successful applicants will work co-operatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding. Some applicants will be required to meet with City staff and further define the strategic outcomes of their project prior to receiving the grant and commencing their project.
10. 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), and State Planning Legislation and State Government health requirements. What the City does approve includes Development Approvals and outdoor temporary event activities.
11. The City's Grants and Sponsorship Program is highly competitive. Applications that are 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 to unsuccessful applicants.
12. The assessment process includes advice and recommendations from a suitably qualified assessment panel. The applications are scored against defined criteria for each grant program as well as the integrity of the proposed budget, project plan, partnerships, contributions and connection to the local community and industry sectors. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed, which includes conditions that must be adhered to, and acquitted against.
13. In assessing the grant applications, the assessment panels included in their considerations and recommendations:
 - (a) Community Recovery Plan 2020;
 - (b) Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan;
 - (c) Economic Development Strategy;
 - (d) Grants and Sponsorship Policy;
 - (e) Live Music and Performance Action Plan;

- (f) OPEN Sydney Strategy and Action Plan;
 - (g) Sustainable Sydney 2030; and
 - (h) alignment with other core City strategic policies and action plans.
14. Assessors consider the cash and in-kind contribution from the applicant and other sources in reviewing applications. Applicants are asked to demonstrate a capacity to match the grant investment with other sources of funding or contribute their own cash resources to the project.
 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.

Business Support Grants - Live Music and Performance

16. The Live Music and Performance category aims to support local businesses, venues and licensed premises to undertake capital works or equipment upgrades to either introduce live entertainment to a business's offerings or to improve existing live music and performance venues, rehearsal and recording studios and spaces for creative production and participation. These projects might include:
 - (a) acoustic improvements to help manage sound transfer from venues to surrounding properties;
 - (b) investment in equipment or in-venue acoustics which improve audience experience;
 - (c) works that facilitate the introduction of live music or performance programming, or significantly improve/expand existing programming; or
 - (d) works that improve the health and safety of audiences, performers and venue staff.
17. The assessment panel for the Live Music and Performance Program consisted of members from the City's City Business and Safety, Culture and Creativity, Venue Management, Strategy, Urban Analytics and Communications teams, as well as representatives from Brand X and Music NSW (the state's peak industry body for the contemporary music sector).
18. One application was received from an existing Accommodation Grants tenant requesting cash to support activation fit outs to maximise their tenancy at a City owned property – Paddington Town Hall. Whilst fit outs are usually the responsibility of tenants the assessment panel have recommended the application, noting it strongly meets the outcomes of the program and that the works will improve the capacity of the venue to deliver quality live music and performance programming.
19. The applications recommended for the Live Music and Performance Program are outlined in Attachment A to this report. The applications not recommended are listed in Attachment B to this report.

20. The Business Support Grants - Live Music and Performance budget is set out below:

Total cash budget for 2021/22	\$225,000
Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$0
Total cash available for 2021/22 Round 1	\$225,000
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	15
Total cash value requested from applications	\$238,187
Total number of applications recommended for cash support	8
Total amount of cash funding recommended	\$90,368
Cash amount remaining for subsequent allocation of the program 2021/22	\$134,632

Business Support Grants - Night Time Diversification

21. The Night Time Diversification category aims to support projects that increase the variety of business offerings and activities in commercial precincts after 6pm. The grants assist businesses to trade later through creative programming and initiatives, and in doing so, attract new customers and create lively, safe and engaging city precincts after dark, contributing to the night time economy and the cultural and economic character of the city. The grant also supports live entertainment venues to extend or expand their programming of live music and performance (such as comedy, cabaret, theatre and poetry programs) as well as creative producers who wish to work with businesses in their area to curate a program of events or night-time activities.
22. The assessment panel for the Night Time Diversification program consisted of members from the City's City Business and Safety, Strategy, Urban Analytics and Communications, Grants and Sponsorship, Culture and Creativity, Cultural Venues and Social Programs and Services teams.
23. The applications recommended for the Night Time Diversification Program are outlined in Attachment C to this report. The applications not recommended are listed in Attachment D to this report.

24. The Business Support Grants - Night Time Diversification Program budget is set out below:

Total cash budget for 2021/22	\$200,000
Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$0
Total cash available for 2021/22 Round 1	\$200,000
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	30
Total cash value requested from applications	\$705,926
Total number of applications recommended for cash support	7
Total amount of cash funding recommended	\$126,840
Cash amount remaining for subsequent allocation of the program 2021/22	\$73,160

Business Support Grants - Place and Industry

25. The Place and Industry category aims to support projects that promote local economies for the benefit of businesses, connect business to opportunities, grow business skills and capacity, and advocate on key issues on behalf of local business. The grants assist local businesses to increase awareness of local business offerings and experiences; increase footfall, patrons and spending in local retail precincts; improve access to industry information, upskilling and networking opportunities for local businesses; and strengthen advocacy by local chambers of commerce and precinct associations.
26. The program is only available to not-for-profit, members-based organisations with an economic focus, such as a chamber of commerce or industry association.
27. The assessment panel for the Place and Industry program consisted of members from City Business and Safety and Strategy, Urban Analytics and Communications teams as well as a representative from NSW Treasury.
28. Applicants of the Place and Industry category were invited to meet with the assessment panel on 13 April 2021 to present their projects to the panel. Applicants were provided with 15 minutes to present the projects they had applied for, followed by 10 minutes of questions from the panel. All applying organisations took up this opportunity.
29. The applications recommended for the Place and Industry Program are outlined in Attachment E to this report, noting that some applications contained multiple projects.

30. The Business Support - Grants Place and Industry Program budget is set out below:

Total cash budget for 2021/22	\$355,000
Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$0
Total cash available for 2021/22	\$355,000
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	9
Total cash value requested from applications	\$396,916
Total value-in-kind requested from applications	\$0
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value-in-kind support	9
Total amount of cash funding recommended	\$355,000
Total amount of value-in-kind support recommended	\$0
Cash amount remaining for subsequent allocation of the program 2021/22	\$0

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

31. 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 report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:

- (a) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to fostering strong and sustainable local economies.
- (b) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to a city where opportunities for individual creative expression and participation in all its forms are visible, valued, and accessible, and where business and creative opportunities for local artists, creative workers and cultural organisations are supported.

Organisational Impact

32. 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.

Economic

33. 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.

Financial Implications

34. There are sufficient amounts allocated in the Economic Grants program budget, included in the City's draft operating budget for 2021/22, to fund the recommended amounts. A total of \$572,208 in cash is recommended from the 2021/22 (draft) cash budget, as follows:
 - (a) Business Support Grant - Live Music and Performance – \$90,368 is provided in the draft budget of \$225,000;
 - (b) Business Support Grant - Night Time Diversification – \$126,840 is provided in the draft budget of \$200,000; and
 - (c) Business Support Grant - Place and Industry – \$355,000 is provided in the draft budget of \$355,000.

Relevant Legislation

35. 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.
36. 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 following programs:
 - (i) Business Support Grant – Live Music and Performance;
 - (ii) Business Support Grant – Night Time Diversification; and
 - (iii) Business Support Grant – Place and Industry;
 - (b) the details of the Business Support Grant programs have been included in Council's draft operation plan for financial year 2021/22;
 - (c) the program's proposed budgets do not exceed five per cent of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates for financial year 2021/22; and

- (d) these programs apply to a significant group of persons within the local government area.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

37. The funding period for Round One of the Business Support Grants for 2021/22 is for activity taking place from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Contracts will be developed for all successful applications after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for projects starting in July.

Public Consultation

38. For all Round One 2021/22 programs open to application, two information sessions were held over Zoom on Wednesday 3 March 2021 and Friday 5 March. One information session was held at Redfern Community Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants on Thursday 4 March 2021.
- (a) Seventy-seven prospective applicants attended the general information session, followed by individual pillar sessions for advice from City staff about their project proposals and the application process.
 - (b) Five prospective applicants attended the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander information session held in person at Redfern Community Centre.
 - (c) Six prospective applicants attended the information session focusing on business grants with a Mandarin translator.
 - (d) Seventy-four per cent of these attendees advised they had not applied for a City of Sydney grant previously.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

Peter Keogh, Grants Officer