

Major Events and Festivals Charity Partners - 2023/2024

File No: 2023/134808

Summary

The City appoints a charity partner for each of its three major events: Sydney Christmas, Sydney New Year's Eve and Sydney Lunar Festival. The selected charity partner for each event is promoted through event marketing and communications.

Association with these major events provides charity organisations with a highly visible platform to build awareness of their work and use the events program as an opportunity for fundraising. It gives event audiences the opportunity to reflect on broader community issues and needs.

Charity partners for each event are chosen through an open and competitive process in accordance with the City's Support for Charities Policy. The recommended charity partners for the 2023/24 event season (with the option to extend one year) are:

Sydney Christmas - Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation

Sydney Children's Hospital is one of the largest children's health charities in the country. Since 1986, they have been delivering on their vision of a world where every child has access to the best healthcare when and where they need it. Each year, they raise vital funds for five of their key entities including Sydney Children's Hospital Randwick, The Children's Hospital at Westmead, Bear Cottage, Kids Research and Newborn and Paediatric Emergency Transport Service (NETS), to enable powerful change for children's health care.

Sydney New Year's Eve - National Breast Cancer Foundation

National Breast Cancer Foundation is a leading not-for-profit organisation funding world-class breast cancer research. Since their inception in 1994, they have been involved in more than 600 world-class research projects across Australia and continue to fund further research to create a greater impact and help reach their vision of Zero Deaths from breast cancer.

Sydney Lunar Festival - Settlement Services International Limited (SSI)

Settlement Services International Limited (SSI) is a not-for-profit organisation established over 20 years ago who provide life-changing human and social services. Their purpose is to empower individuals, children, families and communities from diverse backgrounds and identities to fully participate in the economic, social, civic and diverse cultural life of Australia. SSI's mission is to create a more equitable, resilient, enriched and inclusive society.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the appointment of Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation Limited (ABN: ABN 72 003 073 185) as the charity partner for Sydney Christmas 2023, with the option to extend to 2024;
- (B) Council approve the appointment of National Breast Cancer Foundation, (ABN: 37 144 841 707) as the charity partner for Sydney New Year's Eve 2023, with the option to extend to 2024;
- (C) Council approve the appointment of Settlement Services International Limited (SSI) (ABN: 38 031 375 761) as the charity partner for Sydney Lunar Festival 2024, with the option to extend to 2025; and
- (D) authority to be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into agreements with Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation Limited, National Breast Cancer Foundation and Settlement Services International Limited to establish their charity partner status for the respective events.

Attachments

Nil.

Background

1. An Expression of Interest was advertised seeking proposals from suitable charitable organisations to partner with Sydney Christmas 2023 (with the option to extend one year), Sydney New Year's Eve 2023 (with the option to extend one year) and Sydney Lunar Festival 2024 (with the option to extend one year).
2. The Expression of Interest was promoted through the City of Sydney News announcement and email digest, Instagram story, LinkedIn advertising and posts, and through the City's corporate webpage on Monday 24 April 2023, and was open until 11:59pm Tuesday 9 May 2023.
3. The benefits offered by the City to charity partners include incorporation in the City's event marketing materials and event collateral, the opportunity to support on-site event activations and conduct fundraising at the event, the opportunity to conduct an online campaign to raise awareness and conduct fundraising, speaking opportunities (as appropriate), and leveraging opportunities through other event partners (where possible).
4. The City received 35 submissions from 17 organisations. They responded to the criteria for each of the events, which were provided on the City's corporate webpage.
5. Applicants were assessed by:
 - (a) Producer, Major Events and Festivals;
 - (b) Audience Manager, Major Events and Festivals; and
 - (c) Social Programs Officer (LGBTIQA +), Social City.
6. Organisations had the opportunity to apply for more than one event.

Sydney Christmas

7. Sydney Christmas runs the last Saturday in November through to Christmas Day and consists of up to six outdoor Christmas concerts, a choir program, decorations throughout the CBD and neighbourhoods including the Martin Place Christmas tree, decorative lighting installations, and a program of associated events.
8. Previous charity partners include: The Kids' Cancer Project (2021 - 2022), OzHarvest(2020), Surf Lifesaving Australia (2019), Variety - The Children's Charity (2017- 2018), Guide Dogs NSW / ACT (2015 - 2016) and the Australian Children's Music Foundation (2011 - 2014).
9. In the selection of a charity partner for Sydney Christmas, the following criteria were considered:
 - (a) the organisation must be an official registered charity or public benevolent institution and have no religious affiliation;
 - (b) the organisation must undertake work which produces significant benefit to our communities;
 - (c) the organisation must have an organisational focus that aligns with the City's values and be able to explain how these are important for the Sydney Christmas event;

- (d) the organisation must be able to provide and manage employees and volunteers to operate an interactive paid activation at each of the Christmas concert events;
 - (e) the organisation must have a cash handling policy;
 - (f) the organisation must have point of sale infrastructure and floats for interactive activations; and
 - (g) the organisation must hold the insurances reasonably required by the City of Sydney.
10. The recommended charity partner for Sydney Christmas 2023 (with the option to extend one year) is Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation Limited. Sydney Children's Hospital is made up of five entities who provide specialised care and cutting-edge paediatric services and research across NSW. Their work in the community cares for tens of thousands of children who are critically ill or require respite and end of life care. They are dedicated to discovering new ways to improve the health of children, as well as developing significant advances to treat childhood diseases. The organisation is well aligned with the City's values through its drive for innovation and collaboration to produce quality initiatives for the community.
11. Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation Limited demonstrated its capacity to deliver above and beyond the minimum requirements for the Sydney Christmas charity partnership with a strong response outlining their understanding of operational aspects of the event, including the managing of activations, and providing fundraising support. They demonstrated their ability to be able to successfully recruit and manage volunteers.
12. By providing the opportunity to build awareness around their work and continue to support children's healthcare, the charity will be able to continue championing better health outcomes for sick children. This includes raising vital funds for hospital wards, treatment rooms, research laboratories and outreach programs.

Sydney New Year's Eve

13. Sydney New Year's Eve is an annual event viewed by more than one million people around the harbour foreshore and an estimated 425 million around the world.
14. Previous charity partners include: The Smith Family (2021 - 2022), Refugee Council of Australia (2019), Habitat for Humanity (2015 - 2016), Engineers Without Borders (2013 - 2014), the Fred Hollows Foundation (2012), and CARE Australia (2011).
15. In the selection of a charity partner for Sydney New Year's Eve, the following criteria were considered:
- (a) the organisation must be an official registered charity or public benevolent institution and have no religious affiliation;
 - (b) the organisation must undertake work which produces significant benefit to our communities;
 - (c) the organisation must have an organisational focus that aligns with the City's values and be able to explain how these are important for the Sydney New Year's Eve event;

- (d) the organisation must be able to demonstrate previous experience in successful online fundraising; and
 - (e) the organisation must hold the insurances reasonably required by the City of Sydney.
16. The recommended charity partner for Sydney New Year's Eve 2023 (with the option to extend one year) is National Breast Cancer Foundation. With this partnership, National Breast Cancer Foundation aims to leverage the use of both organisations to raise funds to support their research and ultimately, reach their vision of Zero Deaths from breast cancer.
17. National Breast Cancer Foundation was founded in 1994 and since this time, have invested in over 600 world-class research projects across the country. In 2023, they are participating in 16 research projects to help reach their vision. Their research includes many innovative projects which could save lives through better understanding of genetic causes, investigating treatments for hard-to-treat breast cancers and reducing the spread of breast cancer. The charity has a strong alignment with the City's values driving collaboration courage and innovation in all its work.
18. National Breast Cancer Foundation can draw on their significant experience in event and campaign management to provide a successful charity partnership. Their application demonstrates success in previous online campaigns, with their online portfolio increasing by 63 per cent over the last few years. Their online portfolio caters to the broader community and uses real-life stories as part of their engagement. Previous campaigns have generated significant funds which they have been able to use successfully towards their projects.

Sydney Lunar Festival

19. Sydney Lunar Festival is a celebration of the Lunar New Year. It is one of the largest Lunar New Year celebrations outside of Asia and includes the Lunar Streets event in Haymarket, decorative installations, community performances and associated event programs.
20. Previous charity partners include: Benevolent Society (2022 - 2023), OzHarvest (2021), The Fred Hollows Foundation (2020), Surf Lifesaving NSW (2019), Guide Dogs NSW / ACT (2018), Cure Brain Cancer Foundation (2016 - 2017), Barnardos Australia (2015), Chinese Parents Association - Children with Disabilities (2014) and Taronga Foundation (2012 - 2013).
21. In the selection criteria for the Sydney Lunar Festival charity partner, the following criteria are considered:
- (a) the organisation must be an official registered charity partner or public benevolent institution and have no religious affiliation;
 - (b) the organisation must undertake work which produces significant benefit to our communities;
 - (c) the organisation must have an organisational focus that aligns with the City's values and be able to explain how these are important for the Sydney Lunar Festival event;
 - (d) the organisation must be able to demonstrate previous experience in successful online fundraising; and

- (e) the organisation must hold the insurances reasonably required by the City of Sydney.
22. The recommended charity partner for Sydney Lunar Festival 2024 (with the option to extend one year) is Settlement Services International Limited (SSI). The charity presented a submission which highlights the significant benefit they provide to communities through their services. SSI aims to empower those from diverse backgrounds and identities to make Sydney inclusive and welcoming.
 23. The charity works with newcomers to Australia, children and young people from diverse cultural backgrounds, people seeking employment, people with disability and women from diverse backgrounds and identities and helps them to achieve their full potential. SSI has a strong alignment with the City's values, championing inclusivity and equality in all communities.
 24. SSI has demonstrated their ability to effectively manage a successful charity partnership. Their previous online campaign raised funds to assist over 770 individuals who are from their most vulnerable communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 25. SSI provides services and programs locally, nationally and internationally including their Humanitarian Settlement Program, Local Area Coordination, employment services, diversity training, multicultural foster care, community engagement and an arts and culture program.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

26. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. 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 - An equitable and inclusive city - the charity partnership is an open opportunity for local charities to engage with the community and leverage their brand and cause from the impact of our events. The recommended charities aim to provide the best possible services for the community through research, critical healthcare, and inclusive programs.
 - (b) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - charity partnerships contribute to the creative and cultural life of the events they represent through the activations and programs they offer.

Organisational Impact

27. The impact of the charity partnership is minimal in terms of staff support, guidance, and contract management. Charity partnership programs are designed for external organisations to be able to leverage from existing work that the City is already presenting.

Risks

28. The Expression of Interest is an open process that is carefully vetted. There are possible reputational risks by association, however the City in its evaluation looks to work with registered charities that have a strong alignment with our values and our events.

Social / Cultural / Community

29. The appointment of charity partners each year is intended to engender a favourable community sentiment for the selected charity, the City and the event.
30. Festivals and events add to a city's cultural layer, and they also bring economic benefits to businesses in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors. A charity partnership allows not-for-profit organisations to leverage community awareness from the cross-promotional possibilities associated with the City's major events and festivals.
31. As outlined in the City's Draft Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2021 - 2025, Direction 1: Positive community attitudes and behaviours, the City aims to increase the understanding of the importance of social inclusion through community programming at City events. The role of the charity partner provides an opportunity for charities to increase the ability of their clients to participate in events, and a forum to conduct community awareness programs.

Environmental

32. Any proposed activities provided by the Charity Partner would be guided by the City's Major Events sustainability guidelines and principles.

Economic

33. Only registered charities are able to respond to the Expression of Interest. Involvement of the charities in the program is directly related to fundraising and has no impact upon local businesses.

Financial Implications

34. To support the work of the Charity Partner, the City may produce a paid activity which would be operated by Charity volunteers. All income is paid directly to the Charity partner. The cost of the activity is provided for within the 2023/24 draft operating budget.
35. There is no payment made to a Charity Partner by the City as part of the arrangements, in line with the Support for Charities Policy.

Relevant Legislation

36. Any support is subject to the applicant meeting the definitions of charity and charitable purpose under the Charities Act 2013 (Cth).

Critical Dates / Time Frames

37. Signed Charity Participation Agreements with the appointed charity partners are required by mid-July 2023, to enable:
- (a) public announcement of the appointment as part of the first release of the event information;
 - (b) sufficient time to produce effective initiatives and attract sufficient numbers of volunteers to plan and implement such initiatives; and
 - (c) integration of partnership opportunities into event programming for the 2023/2024 event season.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

Stephen Gilby, Producer, Major Events and Festivals

Joanne Chan, Audience Manager, Major Events and Festivals