

Grants and Sponsorship - Community Grants and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund

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 the Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision, 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 Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision.

The City advertised the following Programs in the annual Grants and Sponsorship Program:

- Community Services Grant
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund

For the Community Services Grant program, 56 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 21 grants to a total value of \$840,192 in cash and \$53,000 value-in-kind for payment in the 2023/24 financial year.

One eligible application for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund was received meeting the June Committee timeframes. This report recommends this grant to a total value of \$50,000 in cash for the 2023/24 financial year.

On 22 August 2022, Council adopted a Grants and Sponsorship Policy. 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 Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision 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 value in kind recommendations for the Community Services Grant program as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council note the applicants who were not recommended in obtaining a cash or value in kind grant for the Community Services Grant program as shown at Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council approve the cash recommendation for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program as shown at Attachment C to the subject report;
- (D) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST;
- (E) 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
- (F) 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 - Community Services Grant Program
- Attachment B.** Not Recommended For Funding - Community Services Grant Program
- Attachment C.** Recommended For Funding - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund 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 7 February 2023, the City announced the Community Services Grant program as being open for application on the City's website, with grant applications closing on 7 March 2023.
3. On 30 August 2022, the City announced the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund as being open for application on the City's website, with grant applications open all year round, until budget is exhausted.
4. Information about these grant programs (such as application dates, guidelines, and eligibility criteria) was made available on the City's website. The City actively promoted the grant programs through the corporate website, e-newsletters, paid and organic social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn) AdWords, ArtsHub, and Koori Radio. 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. As per the Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines, the Community Service Grants program is open to not-for-profit organisations, and individuals or unincorporated community groups auspiced by a not-for-profit that is eligible to apply in their own right. For profit organisations are not eligible for this program.
6. As per the Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program is dedicated to local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, groups and organisations and is open to not-for-profit organisations, for-profit organisations, sole traders and individuals or unincorporated community groups auspiced by a not-for-profit or for-profit organisation.
7. No eligible applications were received from for-profit organisations or sole traders through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund and no for-profit organisation is recommended in this report.
8. One eligible oral application was received for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund and it is recommended for funding in this report.

Grants assessment process

9. 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.
10. The assessment process includes advice and recommendations from a suitably qualified assessment panel. The applications are scored against defined assessment 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.

11. The assessment criteria for the Community Services Grant program are:
 - evidence of the need for the project and proposed outcomes;
 - capacity and experience of the applicant to deliver the project;
 - demonstrated connection and benefit to the local area and community;
 - how the project delivers against the funding priorities; and
 - evidence of the project or program having direct engagement with our diverse communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, young people, older people, people with disability, international students, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, women, LGBTIQ+ communities and low income earners.
12. The assessment meeting for the Community Services Grant program was held on 5 April 2023. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Safe City, Social Programs, Social Policy, Homelessness, Direct Services, Indigenous Leadership & Engagement, Education and Care Services, Cultural Spaces & Sector Development, Social Strategy, City Spaces, Cycling and Transport Planning Teams.
13. The assessment criteria for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund are:
 - evidence of the need for the project and proposed outcomes and relevance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
 - capacity and experience of the applicant to deliver the project;
 - demonstrated connection to and benefit for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and
 - how the project will deliver against the funding priorities.
14. The assessment meeting for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund was held on 8 May 2023. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Indigenous Leadership and Engagement and City Business and Safety Teams.
15. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed, which includes conditions that must be adhered to, and acquitted against.
16. It is expected that all successful applicants will work cooperatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding.
17. All grants and sponsorships are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits and development consents are obtained by the applicant.

Community Services Grant program

18. The applications recommended for the Community Services Grant program are outlined in Attachment A to this report.

19. The Community Services Grant program budget is set out below:

Total draft budget for 2023/24	\$1,695,00
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	-\$854,808
Total cash available	\$840,192
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	56
Total cash value requested from applications	\$2,267,141
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$67,160
Total number of applications recommended for cash support	21
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2023/24 (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2024/25 - \$180,000) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2025/26 - \$180,000)	\$840,192
Total amount of value-in-kind support recommended for 2023/24 (Future year funding recommended for 2024/25 - \$0) (Future year funding recommended for 2025/26 - \$0)	\$53,000
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2023/24	\$0

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program

20. The applications recommended for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program are outlined in Attachment C to this report.

21. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund budgets for 2023/24 is set out below:

Total draft budget for 2023/24	\$500,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	-\$130,690
Total cash available	\$369,310
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	1
Total cash value requested from applications	\$50,000

Total number of applications recommended for cash support	1
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2023/24	\$50,000
Total amount of value-in-kind support recommended for 2023/24	\$0
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2023/24	\$319,310

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

22. 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 grant is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to community development and support active participation in civic life. They empower the community to address issues that matter to them and drive projects to create a more inclusive and resilient city
 - (b) Direction 7 - Resilient and diverse communities - the recommended grant in this report contributes to improved wellbeing, well located, inclusive and affordable services that improve social connections and embrace a safe city.

Organisational Impact

23. 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

24. 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

25. There are sufficient funds allocated in the 2023/24 grants and sponsorship budget, included in the City's draft operational plan for 2023/24 which is seeking approval as part of a separate council report in the current reporting cycle, to support the recommended grants. Details and total values are provided in the tables above.

Relevant Legislation

26. 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.
27. Section 356(3)(a) to (d) is satisfied for the purpose of providing grant funding to not-for profit organisations because:
 - (a) the funding is part of the following programs:
 - (i) Community Services Grant;
 - (ii) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund
 - (b) the details of the programs have been included in the Council's draft operational plan for financial year 2023/24;
 - (c) the program's proposed budgets do not exceed five per cent of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates for financial year 2023/24; and
 - (d) these programs apply to a significant group of persons within the local government area.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

28. The funding period for the Community Services Grant program and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program for financial year 2023/24 is for activity taking place from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. Contracts will be developed for all successful applications after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for projects starting in July 2023.

Public Consultation

29. During February 2023, briefing sessions took place where potential applicants were notified about the grants and how to apply.
- (a) An online briefing session for general grants enquires was held on 15 February 2023. A total of 168 attendees participated in the session.
 - (b) An in-person information session for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community was held at Redfern Town Hall on 16 February 2023. A total of 20 attendees participated in the session.
 - (c) An in-person information session was held at the Pitt Street Training Centre on 20 February 2023, for participants at the Connect Sydney workshop. Connect Sydney aims to build the capacity of community and not-for-profit organisations through the provision of free grant writing skills and governance training. A total of 30 attendees participated in the session.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

Louise Robinson, Grants Officer