

Grants and Sponsorship – Cultural 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. 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:

- Festivals and Events Sponsorship Tier 1 General Festivals and Events; and
- Festivals and Events Sponsorship Tier 2 Major Festivals and Events.

For the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program (Tier 1 and Tier 2), 135 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 45 grants to a total value of \$1,337,500 in cash and \$757,537 value-in-kind for payment in 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 Program 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.

This report also requests Council approve the amendment of a previously approved Creative Grant. On 19 June 2023, a Creative Grant of \$25,000 in cash funding was approved to Elizabeth Margaret Muldoon however the applicant has since requested the grant include Auspicious Arts Projects Inc as the auspicing organisation.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the cash and value-in-kind recommendations for the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council note the applicants who were not recommended in obtaining a cash grant or value-in-kind for the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program as shown at Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council approve the amendment to the Creative Grant to Elizabeth Margaret Muldoon for \$25,000 in cash funding, which was approved by Council on 19 June 2023 to include Auspicious Arts Projects Inc as the auspicing organisation;
- (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 - Festivals and Events Sponsorship Program

Attachment B. Not Recommended For Funding - Festivals and Events Sponsorship 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 July 2023, the City announced the grants program as being open for application on the City's website, with grant applications closing on 22 August 2023.
3. This cultural program was promoted:
 - (a) Festivals and Events Sponsorship program.
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, content marketing, e-newsletters, paid and organic social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) and AdWords. 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 Festivals and Events Sponsorship program is open to not-for-profit organisations, for-profit organisations, government departments, sole traders and individuals or unincorporated community groups auspiced by a not-for-profit or for-profit organisation that is eligible to apply in their own right.
6. A total of 52 eligible applications were received from for-profit organisations and sole traders through the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program and the following 11 for-profit organisations and sole traders are recommended in this report:
 - (a) Anne Warr;
 - (b) Be SEEDsational;
 - (c) Electronic Music Conference Pty Ltd;
 - (d) Geetha Balakrishnan;
 - (e) Just Gold Digital Agency Pty Ltd;
 - (f) Live at Yours;
 - (g) Graeme McColgan;
 - (h) News Life Media Pty Limited;
 - (i) Red Bull Australia Pty Ltd;
 - (j) The East Sydney Hotel; and
 - (k) USM Events Pty Ltd.

Grants assessment process

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. The assessment criteria for the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program are:
 - evidence of the need for the festival or event and proposed outcomes;
 - capacity and experience of the applicant to deliver the festival or event;
 - demonstrated connection and benefit to the local area and community;
 - evidence of diversity, inclusion and equity in the planning and delivery of the project; and
 - how the project delivers against the funding priorities.
10. Applicants to the Festival and Events Sponsorship - Tier 2 program are also assessed against the following additional assessment criteria:
 - evidence of track record, organisational viability for multi-year funding, large scale audience or market reach and national or international brand awareness.
11. The assessment meetings for the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program were held on 18 and 20 September 2023. Separate assessment meetings were held for Tier 1 - General festival and events and Tier 2 - Major festivals and events to ensure grant applicants were assessed against the relevant assessment criteria. The assessment panels consisted of City staff from the City Business and Safety, Creative City, Social City, Strategy and Urban Analytics Teams, with specialist input from the City Access & Transport, City Business & Safety, City Greening & Leisure, Cleansing & Waste, Creative City, Indigenous Leadership and Engagement, Social City, Strategy and Urban Analytics and Venue Management Teams.
12. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed which includes conditions that must be adhered to and acquitted against.
13. It is expected that all successful applicants will work cooperatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding.
14. All grants and sponsorships are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits and development consents are obtained by the applicant.

Festivals and Events Sponsorship

15. The applications recommended for the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program are outlined in Attachment A to this report.

16. The Festivals and Events Sponsorship program budget is set out below:

Total budget for 2023/24	\$5,405,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	(\$4,067,500)
Total cash available	\$1,337,500
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	135
Total cash value requested from applications	\$6,865,502
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$1,840,851
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value-in-kind support	45
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2023/24 (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2024/25 - \$1,995,000) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2025/26 - \$1,979,000) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2026/27 - \$1,910,000) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2027/28 - \$1,400,000)	\$1,337,500
Total amount of value-in-kind support recommended for 2023/24 (Future-year funding recommended for 2024/25 - \$1,443,809) (Future-year funding recommended for 2025/26 - \$1,526,751) (Future-year funding recommended for 2026/27 - \$1,535,533) (Future-year funding recommended for 2027/28 - \$840,000)	\$757,537
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2023/24	\$0

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

17. 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 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to supporting artistic and creative endeavours in our city, helping foster initiative, experimentation and enterprise by creative workers and providing new opportunities for audiences to engage in the city's cultural life.

Organisational Impact

18. 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.

Cultural / Environmental / Economic / Social

19. 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 business, within the local area.

Financial Implications

20. There are sufficient funds allocated in the 2023/24 grants and sponsorship budget, included in the City's operational plan for 2023/24 to support the recommended grants. Details and total values are provided in the tables above.

Relevant Legislation

21. 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.
22. 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 program:
 - (i) Festivals and Events Sponsorship;
 - (b) the details of the program 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) this program applies to a significant group of persons within the local government area.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

23. The funding period for the Festivals and Events Sponsorship program for financial year 2023/24 is for activity taking place from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024. Contracts will be developed for all successful applications after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for projects starting in January 2024.

Public Consultation

24. During July 2023, briefing sessions took place where stakeholders were notified about the grants and how to apply.
- (a) An online briefing session for general grants enquires was held on 26 July 2023. A total of 122 attendees participated in the session.
 - (b) An in-person briefing session for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community was held at Redfern Community Centre on 27 July 2023. A total of 19 attendees participated in the session.
 - (c) An in-person information session was held at the Pitt Street Training Centre on 8 June 2023, for participants at the Connect Sydney workshop. This session was specifically held for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and people. 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 29 attendees participated in the session.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

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