

Grants and Sponsorship – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund and Innovation and Ideas 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 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:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund
- Innovation and Ideas Grant program

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund is open all year for applications until the annual budget is exhausted.

For the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund five eligible applications were received meeting the November Committee timeframes. This report recommends three grants to a value of \$108,600 in cash for payment in the 2023/24 financial year.

For the Innovation and Ideas Grant program, 89 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 20 grants to a total value of \$559,447 in cash for payment and \$17,307 in value-in-kind 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.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the cash recommendations for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program as shown at Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council approve the cash and value-in-kind recommendations for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program as shown at Attachment C to the subject report;
- (D) Council note the applicants who were not recommended in obtaining a cash grant or value-in-kind for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program as shown at Attachment D to the subject report;
- (E) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST;
- (F) Council note additional funding of \$87,111 for the Innovation and Ideas grant program has been made available in the 2023/24 financial year as a result of an underspend in the Business Sector Support and Green Building grant programs and an approved Creative grant not being accepted by the grant applicant;
- (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 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund
- Attachment B.** Not Recommended For Funding - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund
- Attachment C.** Recommended For Funding - Innovation and Ideas Grant Program
- Attachment D.** Not Recommended For Funding - Innovation and Ideas 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 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.
3. On 25 July 2023, the City announced the Innovation and Ideas Grant program as being open for application on the City's website, with grant applications closing on 22 August 2023.
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 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.
6. Three eligible applications meeting the November Committee timeframes were received from sole traders through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund and the following sole trader is recommended in this report:
 - (a) Jodie Ann Choolburra.
7. One oral application was received for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund meeting the November Committee timeframes and is recommended in this report:
 - (a) Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council as auspice for Dan Munro.
8. As per the Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines, the Innovation and Ideas Grant program is open to not-for-profit organisations and for-profit organisations.

9. A total of 41 eligible applications were received from for-profit organisations through the Innovation and Ideas Grant program and the following six for-profit organisations are recommended in this report:
 - (a) Blax Capital Pty Ltd;
 - (b) Cicada innovations Pty Ltd;
 - (c) Climate Salad Pty Ltd;
 - (d) Creative Plus Business Group Pty Ltd;
 - (e) Innovillage Pty Ltd; and
 - (f) Startup Muster Pty Ltd.

Grants assessment process

10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. The assessment meeting for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund was held on 10 October 2023. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Indigenous Leadership and Engagement, City Business and Safety, People and Culture and Cultural Space and Sector Development Teams.
14. The assessment criteria for the Innovation and Ideas 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;

- evidence of diversity, inclusion and equity in the planning and delivery of the project; and
 - how the project delivers against the funding priorities.
15. The assessment meeting for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program was held on 19 September 2023 to ensure grant applicants were assessed against the relevant assessment criteria. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Strategy and Urban Analytics Team, with specialist input from the City Access and Transport, City Business and Safety, City Communications, City Design, City Green and Leisure, Cleansing and Waste, Creative City, Indigenous Leadership and Engagement, Social City and Sustainability Programs Teams.
 16. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed which includes conditions that must be adhered to and acquitted against.
 17. It is expected that all successful applicants will work cooperatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding.
 18. All grants and sponsorships are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits and development consents are obtained by the applicant.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund

19. The applications recommended for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program is outlined in Attachment A to this report.
20. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund budget is set out below:

Total budget for 2023/24	\$500,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	(\$180,690)
Total cash available	\$319,310
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	5
Total cash value requested from applications	\$197,971
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$13,000
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value in-kind support	3
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2023/24	\$108,600
Total amount of value in-kind support recommended for 2023/24	\$0
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2023/24	\$210,710

Innovation and Ideas Grant program

21. The application recommended for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program is outlined in Attachment C to this report.
22. The Innovation and Ideas Grant program budget is set out below:

Total budget for 2023/24	\$1,175,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	(\$702,664)
Plus: Total cash available from Business Sector Support, Creative Grants and Green Building Grants underspend	\$87,111
Total cash available	\$559,447
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	89
Total cash value requested from applications	\$3,871,598
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$31,341
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value in-kind support	20
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2023/24 (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2024/25 - \$148,018) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2025/26 - \$100,000)	\$559,447
Total amount of value in-kind support recommended for 2023/24 (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2024/25 - \$0) (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2025/26 - \$0)	\$17,307
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2023/24	\$0

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

23. 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 2 - A leading environmental performer - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to the City's endeavours in improving environmental performance of our residents and businesses by supporting new and innovative approaches to delivering sustainability outcomes and strengthening community resilience.
 - (b) 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.
 - (c) Direction 7 - Resilient and diverse communities - the recommended grant projects in this report contributes to improved wellbeing, well located, inclusive and affordable services that improve social connections and embrace a safe city.
 - (d) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - the recommended grant projects in this report will 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.
 - (e) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to helping stimulate business and promote economic activity. They encourage partnerships with other organisations on business development and assist groups of businesses to work together for the collective benefit.

Organisational Impact

24. 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 / Economic / Social / Environmental

25. 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

26. There are sufficient funds allocated in the 2023/24 grants and sponsorship budget, included in the City's operating budget for 2023/24 to support the recommended grants. Details and total values are provided in the table above.
27. All expenditure that exceeds the nominated budgets for the 2023/24 financial year outlined in the City's operating budget will be offset in full from within the overall Grants and Sponsorship Program budget.
28. Additional funding for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program has been made available from an underspend in the 2023/24 Business Sector Support and Green Building grant programs and an approved Creative grant from the 2023 Summer Round grant program not being accepted by the grant applicant.

Relevant Legislation

29. 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.
30. 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) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund; and
 - (ii) Innovation and Ideas Grant program
 - (b) the details of the program were included in the Council's 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

31. The funding period for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund for financial year 2023/24 is for activities taking place 12 months from the project start date. Contracts will be developed for all successful applications after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for projects starting.
32. The funding period for the Innovation and Ideas Grant 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

33. 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 grant enquires was held on 26 July 2023. A total of 122 attendees participated in the session.
 - (b) An in-person information 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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