

Grants and Sponsorship – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund

File No: S117676

Summary

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund (Collaboration Fund) is part of the City of Sydney's Grants and Sponsorship Program.

This program supports a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector to deliver projects that meet the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the local area. Funding supports increase self-determination and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through projects that connect people with community, Country and culture.

The Collaboration Fund is open all year for applications until the annual budget is exhausted.

Applications are assessed by Aboriginal and/or Torres Straits Islander members of staff with any conflicts of interest managed in accordance with the City of Sydney's Grants Policy.

In 2023/24 the total budget for the Collaboration Fund was \$500,000. To date, seven applications for a total of \$289,290 have been supported leaving a remaining budget of \$210,710 to be allocated this financial year.

Eight applications requesting a total of \$382,069 were received for assessment in this period. Assessment panel members individually assessed the grants and then met as a panel on Monday 15 January 2024 to make their final set of recommendations.

This report recommends five applications for a total of \$182,075 in cash and \$0 in value in kind. If these recommendations are approved the remaining budget for the Collaboration Fund for 2023/24 will be \$28,635.

Grant recipients will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the City, 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 for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program as shown at Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST;
- (D) 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
- (E) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to correct minor changes 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 Program

Attachment B. Not 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 30 August 2022, the City announced the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program as being open for application on the City's website, with grant applications open all year round, until budget is exhausted.
3. Information about this grant program (such as application dates, guidelines, and eligibility criteria) was made available on the City's website. The City actively promoted the grant program 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.
4. 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.
5. Two eligible applications were received from for-profit organisations or sole traders through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program and one for-profit organisation is recommended in this report.

(a) Indigenous Technology Pty Ltd.

Grants assessment process

6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

9. The assessment meeting for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program was held on 15 January 2024. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Indigenous Leadership and Engagement Team, City Spaces, People and Culture, Venue Management and City Engagement Teams.
10. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, the City will prepare grant agreements to be entered into with the successful applicants, which will include conditions that must be adhered to and acquitted against.
11. It is expected that all successful applicants will work cooperatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding.
12. 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

13. The applications recommended for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program are outlined in Attachment A to this report.
14. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund budget for 2023/24 is set out below:

Total budget for 2023/24	\$500,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	(\$289,290)
Total cash available	\$210,710
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	8
Total cash value requested from applications	\$382,069
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$0
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value in-kind support in this report	5
Total amount of cash funding for payment in this report (to be paid in 2023/24)	\$182,075
Total amount of value in-kind support recommended for 2023/24	\$0
Remaining cash amount available in 2023/24	\$28,635

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

15. 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 will contribute to strengthening partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and prioritise their cultural, social, environmental, spiritual and economic aspirations.
 - (b) 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.

Organisational Impact

16. 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

17. 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

18. 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 relevant amounts are included in the tables above.

Relevant Legislation

19. 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.
20. 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program;
 - (b) the details of the program were included in the Council's adopted operational plan for financial year 2023/24;
 - (c) the program's proposed budget does 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

21. The funding period for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program for 2023/24 is for activities taking place 12 months from the project start date. Grant agreements will be prepared for all successful applicants after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for the commencement of projects.

Public Consultation

22. During July 2023, a briefing session took place where stakeholders were notified about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collaboration Fund program and how to apply.
23. 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.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

Alana Goodwin, Grants Coordinator