

Post Exhibition - Grants and Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines

File No: 2024/311908

Summary

The City of Sydney's grants and sponsorship programs support initiatives and projects that build the social, cultural, environmental and economic life of the city. The current Policy was adopted by Council in August 2022 and Council approved the public exhibition of revised Guidelines in May 2024.

These documents align with the strategic directions and actions of Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision. The delivery of support through cash and value-in-kind (VIK) are part of the many ways in which the City partners with the community.

As part of the commitment to review the Grants and Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines, a review was undertaken to ensure that the policy and programs continue to deliver against Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision and to meet best practice in grants management.

After review, it was recommended that no changes are made to the Policy as it still reflects the principles by which the grants and sponsorship programs should be governed and aligns with current strategies.

There were recommended changes to the guidelines which will support stronger outcomes for the communities of the City.

At its meeting on 13 May 2024, Council resolved to exhibit the draft Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines. The draft guidelines (inclusive of the recommended changes) were put on exhibition from 14 May to 11 June 2024.

A total of 11 submissions for the draft grants and sponsorship guidelines were received. All were assessed through internal review. The details of the issues raised in the submissions, together with responses and staff recommendations, are included in the Engagement Report at Attachment A.

Following the exhibition period, no further changes to the Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines are proposed.

This report recommends Council adopt the revised Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note the submissions received from the community on the draft Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council adopt the Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines as shown at Attachment B to the subject report; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make minor amendments to Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines in order to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and accessible formats for publication.

Attachments

Attachment A. Engagement Report

Attachment B. Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines

Background

1. A review of the Grants and Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines was conducted in 2023/24 to ensure that the programs continue to align with the strategic outcomes of Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision.
2. Consultation was delivered through the following mechanisms:
 - (a) 700 applicants consulted on their user experience of the City's Grants and Sponsorship application process and support;
 - (b) A Councillor workshop on key themes raised about diversity, eligibility, grassroots access and grants management processes;
 - (c) Workshops with the Indigenous Leadership Engagement Team to review the impact of the Collaboration Fund and the programs as a whole and how we are engaging with community;
 - (d) Workshops with City staff from across teams on each funding program considering outcomes from the first year of current guidelines; and
 - (e) Input from the City's legal team on adjustments to application requirements and the City's communication team on simplifying language and process.
3. City staff also considered the grant practices of other major city's grant programs and the NSW Grants Administration Guide to benchmark the City's grants management processes.
4. It was concluded that the Policy (adopted by Council in August 2022 following public exhibition) would not change, however the Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines would be updated with simplified language, seven key program changes and greater clarity on eligibility requirements.
5. At its meeting on 13 May 2024, Council resolved to exhibit the draft Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines. The draft guidelines (inclusive of the recommended changes) were put on exhibition from 14 May to 11 June 2024.
6. Feedback from community has been collated and reviewed by City staff and no further updates to the Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines are recommended.
7. Note the new Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines will take effect from 1 July 2024.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

8. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision is a vision for the sustainable development of the City into the future. Building on our community's vision for the future, there are 10 directions for 2050, 10 targets to measure progress and 10 ambitious project ideas that bring the vision to life. The provision of grants and sponsorships is a key mechanism for the City to further the aims identified in its social, economic, environmental, and cultural policies.

9. All applications are considered against the 10 strategic directions and how they can directly deliver or encourage the further development of the aims and objectives identified in Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision.
10. The program is aligned to the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 2 - A leading environmental performer - Grants and sponsorships 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 3 - Public places for all - Grants and sponsorships contribute to the safe and responsible use of public spaces for community access and enjoyment of city residents, workers and visitors.
 - (c) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - Grants and sponsorships 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.
 - (d) Direction 7 - Resilient and diverse communities - Grants and sponsorships contributes to improved wellbeing, well located, inclusive and affordable services that improve social connections and embrace a safe city.
 - (e) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - Grants and sponsorships 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.
 - (f) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy - Grants and sponsorships 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.
 - (g) Direction 10 - Housing for all - Grants and sponsorships aligns with the City's position on affordable housing, homelessness and social sustainability, as set out in A City For All, the social sustainability strategy, as well as Housing for All, the City's housing strategy.

Organisational Impact

11. As part of the review, it was identified that the Grants Management team required additional resources. This has been put forward as part of the establishment structure and budget process for 2024/25 and ongoing.

Risks

12. The City has a responsibility to manage the distribution of public money to community through an open and transparent process. The need for a Grants and Sponsorship Policy and Guidelines document provides this transparency and allows for public input.

Social / Cultural / Community/ Environmental

13. The grants and sponsorship program provides the City with a platform to support social, cultural, economic and environmental initiatives from communities, community organisations and businesses within the local area.

Financial Implications

14. There are no additional financial implications beyond the grant budgets submitted as part of the draft 2024/25 budget and future years' forward estimates.

Relevant Legislation

15. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 regulates how financial assistance can be given by local councils.
16. As part of the Local Government Act 1993 and Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements, the City is required to exhibit changes to its grants program.
17. The grants and sponsorship policy (the Policy) provides the governance framework for how the Program is managed, and how decisions about funding are made. The Policy ensures that the City meets the governance requirements of Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 in relation to grant giving.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

18. The proposed revision to the Guidelines will be implemented for the 2024/25 financial year immediately following adoption by Council.

Public Consultation

19. No further consultation is required however the Grants and Sponsorship program will continue to seek formal and informal feedback as part of continuous improvement.

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