

Grants and Sponsorship - Environmental 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 Green Building Grant in the annual Grants and Sponsorship Program.

For the Green Building Grant program, 13 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 13 grants to a total value of \$95,087 in cash for payment in the 2024/25 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 recommendations for the Green Building Grant program as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST;
- (C) 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
- (D) 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 - Green Building 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 6 February 2024, the City announced that the Green Building Grant program was open for application on its website, with grant applications closing on 5 March 2024.
3. 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, advertising through paid social ads, paid LinkedIn, AdWords, Radio and an ArtsHub partnership. 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. As per the Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines the Green Building Grant program is open to not-for-profit organisations, for-profit organisations and owners' corporations. The application must be for works on a residential strata or accommodation (hotel, hostel and serviced apartment) building.
5. Out of a total of 13 applications received, six applications were from five for-profit organisations (in the accommodation sector) and are recommended for support in this report:
 - (a) Laudet Pty Limited;
 - (b) Pearl Hotels D 1993 Pty Limited;
 - (c) The Trustee for Darling Harbour Hotel Trust;
 - (d) The Trustee for Schwartz Family Trust; and
 - (e) Winadell 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 Green Building 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.
9. The assessment meeting for the Green Building Grant program was held on 2 April 2024. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Sustainability Programs and Sustainability & Resilience Teams.
 10. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed, which includes conditions that must be adhered to, and acquitted against.
 11. All successful applicants are expected to cooperate with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding.
 12. All grants and sponsorships are recommended provided the applicant obtains any required approvals, permits, and development consents.

Green Building Grant Program

13. The applications recommended for the Green Building Grant program are outlined in Attachment A to this report.
14. The Green Building Grant program budget is set out below; note that a second round for the Green Building Grant program will open in July 2024:

Total budget for 2024/25	\$400,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$0
Total cash available	\$400,000
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	13
Total cash value requested from applications	\$95,087
Total number of applications recommended for cash support	13
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2024/25	\$95,087
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2024/25	\$304,913

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 2 - A leading environmental performer - the recommended grant projects in this report contribute to 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.

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.

Environmental

17. The City's Grants and Sponsorship Program provides the City with a platform to support environmental initiatives from the communities and business, within the local area.

Financial Implications

18. There are sufficient funds allocated in the 2024/25 grants and sponsorship budget, included in the City's draft operating budget for 2024/25 which is seeking approval as part a separate council report in the current reporting cycle, to support the recommended grants. Details and total values are provided in the table 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 following program Green Building grant program;
 - (b) the details of the program has been included in the Council's draft operational plan for financial year 2024/25;
 - (c) the program's proposed budget does not exceed five per cent of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates for financial year 2024/25; 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 Green Building Grant program for financial year 2024/25 is for activity taking place from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. Contracts will be developed for all successful applications after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for projects starting in July 2024.

Public Consultation

22. During February 2024, briefing sessions and Connect Sydney training 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 7 February 2024. A total of 168 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 8 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 13 February 2024, 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 23 attendees participated in the session.
 - (d) An in-person information session was held at the at Redfern Community centre on 15 February 2024, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 11 attendees participated in the session.

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