

## Grants and Sponsorship - Economic 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:

- Business Sector Support Grant program; and
- Innovation and Ideas Grant program.

For the Business Sector Support Grant program, 24 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 19 grants to a total value of \$685,362 in cash in the 2024/25 financial year.

For the Innovation and Ideas Grant program, 61 eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 14 grants to a total value of \$491,891 in cash and \$600 value-in-kind 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 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 Business Sector Support Grant 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 Business Sector Support Grant 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) 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
- (G) 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 - Business Sector Support Grant Program
- Attachment B.** Not Recommended For Funding - Business Sector Support Grant Program
- 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 6 February 2024, the City announced the Grants and Sponsorship program as being open for application on the City's website, with grant applications closing on 5 March 2024.
3. The two economic programs promoted were:
  - (a) Business Sector Support Grant; and
  - (b) Innovation and Ideas Grant 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, 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.
5. As per the Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines, the Business Sector Support Grant program is open to not-for-profit organisations and members based organisations with an economic focus.
6. 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.
7. A total of 40 eligible applications were received from for-profit organisations through the Innovation and Ideas Grant program and the following seven for-profit organisations are recommended in this report:
  - (a) Australian School of Entrepreneurship Pty Ltd;
  - (b) Finding Infinity Pty Ltd;
  - (c) Footpath AI Pty Ltd;
  - (d) Noizend Pty Ltd;
  - (e) Revolve Recycling Pty Ltd;
  - (f) Tipiac Pty Ltd; and
  - (g) Velocity Empowerment Pty Ltd.

## Grants assessment process

8. 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.

9. 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.
10. The assessment criteria for the Business Sector Support 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.
11. The assessment meeting for the Business Sector Support Grant program was held on 11 April 2024 to ensure grant applicants were assessed against the relevant assessment criteria.
12. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the City Business and Safety and Strategy and Urban Analytics Teams, with specialist input from staff from the City Business and Safety, Indigenous Leadership and Engagement, People and Culture and Social City Teams.
13. 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.
14. The assessment meeting for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program was held on 8 April 2024 to ensure grant applicants were assessed against the relevant assessment criteria.
15. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Strategy and Urban Analytics, City Business and Safety and Sustainability Programs Teams Team, with specialist input from staff from the City Access and Transport, Cleansing and Waste, Indigenous Leadership and Engagement, Strategic Planning and Urban Design, Technology and Digital Services, and Social City 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.

### **Business Sector Support Grant program**

#### Business Sector Support Grant program

19. The applications recommended for the Business Sector Support Grant program are outlined in Attachment A to this report.
20. The Business Sector Support Grant program budget is set out below:

Total budget for 2024/25	\$845,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$47,698
Total cash available	\$797,302
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	24
Total cash value requested from applications	\$1,067,039
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$9,000
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value in-kind support	19
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2024/25 (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2025/26 - \$80,000) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2026/27 - \$40,000)	\$685,362
Total amount of value in-kind support recommended for 2024/25 (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2025/26 - \$0) (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2026/27 - \$0)	\$0
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2024/25	\$111,940

**Innovation and Ideas Grant program**

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

Total budget for 2024/25	\$1,175,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$140,000
Total cash available	\$1,035,000
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	61
Total cash value requested from applications	\$2,546,563
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$600
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value in-kind support	14
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2024/25 (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2025/26 - \$136,550) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2026/27 - \$23,275)	\$491,891
Total amount of value in-kind support recommended for 2024/25 (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2025/26 - \$0) (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2026/27 - \$0)	\$600
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2024/25	\$543,109

## 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 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.
  - (d) 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.

### Social / Cultural / Economic / 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 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

27. 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.
28. 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) Business Sector Support Grant program; and
    - (ii) Innovation and Ideas Grant program;
  - (b) the details of the programs have been included in the Council's draft operational plan for financial year 2024/25;
  - (c) the program's proposed budgets do not exceed five per cent of Council's proposed income from ordinary rates for financial year 2024/25; and
  - (d) these programs apply to a significant group of persons within the local government area.

### Critical Dates / Time Frames

29. The funding period for the Business Sector Support Grant program and Innovation and Ideas 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

30. 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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