

Item 3.

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 Innovation and Ideas Grant program in the annual Grants and Sponsorship Programs.

A total of 74 eligible applications were received. This report recommends 17 grants with a total value of \$655,049 in cash and \$556 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 and value in kind recommendations for the Innovation and Ideas 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 Innovation and Ideas Grant 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 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 - Innovation and Ideas Grant Program

Attachment B. 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 23 July 2024, the City announced that the Grants and Sponsorship Programs Winter round was open for application on its website, with grant applications closing on 20 August 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 Program Guidelines, the Innovation and Ideas Grant program is open to not-for-profit organisations and for-profit organisations (incorporated association, corporation, co-operative, and trustee of a trust).
5. A total of 32 eligible applications were received from for-profit organisations through the Innovation and Ideas Grant program and the following nine for-profit organisations are recommended in this report:
 - (a) BCMP Pty Ltd;
 - (b) Creative Plus Business Group Pty. Ltd;
 - (c) Edge Environment Pty Ltd;
 - (d) Forward Thinking Design Pty Ltd;
 - (e) Haymarket HQ Pty Ltd;
 - (f) Innovillage Pty Ltd;
 - (g) Owners Corporation Network of Australia Ltd;
 - (h) Remix Summits Pty Ltd; and
 - (i) Rocket Seeder 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 Innovation and Ideas Grant program requesting up to \$20,000 cash per year are:
 - evidence of the need for the project and proposed outcomes;
 - capacity and experience of the applicant to deliver the project; and
 - evidence of diversity, inclusion and equity in the planning and delivery of the project.
9. Applicants who requested more than \$20,000 in cash per year are also assessed against the following additional assessment criteria:
 - how the project delivers against the funding priorities.
10. The assessment meeting for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program was held on 16 September 2024 to ensure grant applicants were assessed against the relevant assessment criteria.
11. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Strategy and Urban Analytics, City Business and Safety and Sustainability Programs Teams, with specialist input from staff from the City Access and Transport, City Cleansing and Resource Recovery, City Greening and Leisure, City Infrastructure and Traffic Operations, Creative City, Indigenous Leadership and Engagement, Strategic Planning and Urban Design and Social City Teams.
12. Once recommended applications are approved by Council, a contract is developed which includes conditions that must be adhered to and acquitted against.
13. It is expected that all successful applicants will work cooperatively with relevant City staff throughout the project for which they have received funding.
14. All grants and sponsorships are recommended on the condition that any required approvals, permits and development consents are obtained by the applicant.

Innovation and Ideas Grant program

- 15. The applications recommended for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program are outlined in Attachment C to this report.
- 16. Additional funds for the Innovation and Ideas Grant program were made available due to an underspend in the Business Sector Support Grant program.
- 17. 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	\$631,891
Plus: Funds reallocated from Business Sector Support Grant program 2024/25 underspend	\$111,940
Total cash available	\$655,049
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	74
Total cash value requested from applications	\$3,068,829
Total value-in-kind support requested from applications	\$10,271
Total number of applications recommended for cash and/or value in-kind support	17
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2024/25 (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2025/26 - \$224,744) (Future-year funding recommended for payment in 2026/27 - \$69,994)	\$655,049
Total amount of value in-kind support recommended for 2024/25 (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2025/26 - \$579) (Future-year value in-kind support recommended in 2026/27 - \$602)	\$556
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2024/25	\$0

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

18. 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

19. 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

20. 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

21. There are sufficient funds allocated in the 2024/25 grants and sponsorship budget to support the recommended grants. Details and total values are provided in the table above.

Relevant Legislation

22. 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.
23. 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 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 5% 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

24. The funding period for the Innovation and Ideas grant program for financial year 2024/25 is from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. Contracts will be developed for all successful applications after Council approval to ensure their funding is released in time for projects starting in January 2025.

Public Consultation

25. During July 2024, online and in person briefing sessions took place where potential applicants were notified about the grants and how to apply. For this Winter round of grants, separate online briefing sessions were introduced for each program, to enable people who were interested in more than one program to attend each:
 - (a) An online briefing session for Innovation and Ideas grants program was held on 24 July 2024. A total of 88 attendees participated in the session.
 - (b) An in-person briefing session for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community was held at 119 Redfern St Community Centre on 23 July 2024. A total of 6 attendees participated in the session.
 - (c) An in-person briefing session for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community was held at Juanita Nielsen Community Centre, Woolloomooloo on 29 July 2024. A total of one attendee participated in the session.

26. The combined number of people engaged in online and in person briefing sessions for Winter round is 205, which is an increase of 17 compared to the summer round grant sessions earlier in the year.

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