

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 Winter round. Twelve eligible applications were received. This report recommends a total of 10 grants to a total value of \$91,487 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 Policy, the 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 the applicants who were not recommended in obtaining a cash for the Green Building 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 - Green Building Grant Program

Attachment B. Not 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 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 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) buildings.
5. Out of a total of 12 applications received, no applications were from for-profit organisations. All applications received were for works on a residential strata building.

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; and
 - demonstrated connection and benefit to the local diverse community, including evidence of diversity, inclusion and equity in the planning and delivery of the project.
9. The assessment meeting for the Green Building Grant program was held on 23 September 2024. The assessment panel consisted of City staff from the Sustainability Programs and Property Services 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:

Total budget for 2024/25	\$400,000
Less: Total cash committed to previously approved applications	\$95,077
Plus: Total cash withdrawn from previously approved application	\$15,000
Total cash available	\$319,923
Total number of eligible applications this allocation	12
Total cash value requested from applications	\$134,043
Total number of applications recommended for cash support	10
Total amount of cash funding recommended for payment in 2024/25	\$91,487
Cash amount remaining for payment in 2024/25	\$228,436*
*Remaining funds have been allocated to the Festival and Events Winter Round	

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 communities and businesses 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 operating budget for 2024/25 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 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 5% 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 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

22. 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 Green Building grants was held on 25 July 2024. A total of 12 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 six 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.
23. 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.

EMMA RIGNEY

Executive Director City Life

Alana Goodwin, Grants Coordinator