

Minutes



Cultural and Creative Arts Advisory Committee

Monday 01 July 2024
3:00-4:30pm

Location:	Online (Microsoft Teams)
Chair:	Paul McDonald
Attendees:	Members: Richard Bennett; Annette Brown; Rod Herbert; Steve Lockwood; Paul McDonald; Meredith Melville-Jones; Debra Player WCC Staff: Juliet Rosser (Arts and Culture Manager); Bushra Salam (Governance) Guests: Councillor Robert Samuel
Apologies/absent:	Members (apologies): Jing Han; Sarah Penicka-Smith Guest (apologies): Mayor Tanya Taylor; Councillor Anna Greco
Guests:	Councillor Robert Samuel
Attachments:	a) Grants Art and Culture b) Achievements of the Committee for the End of Term Report

Agenda items

Item	Topic / Discussion	Action
1	Welcome: The meeting was declared opened at 3:00 pm.	
	Acknowledgement of Country Governance Officer acknowledged Country on behalf of Council.	
	Apologies Members Jing Han; Sarah Penicka-Smith sent their apologies.	
	Declarations of interest A link to the Disclosure of interest by Committee Members form was circulated with the Agenda. Meredith Melville-Jones declared that she attended a community engagement at North Sydney Council for their	

Creative and Cultural Policy.

2 Confirmation of Minutes – 11 March 2024

Moved by Paul McDonald and Seconded by Richard Bennett the draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2024 were unanimously adopted by the Committee.

3 Actions from Previous Minutes

See the notes below.

4 Business to be discussed

4.1 Update on Grants

The Committee created a working document with their overall objectives and recommendations for how to make Council grants program more suitable for the cultural and creative arts industries (See attachment 1a).

Paul McDonald to share the final document with the Governance.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

- Some artists would already have supplies and materials but need an Artists Fee to complete the work.
- Juliet Rosser (Arts and Culture Manager), advised the Community Grants program is under review and it is being considered to have the grants available up to \$10,000, not the current \$7,500.
- Councillor Robert Samuel stated that Council would not approve the process to administer a fast turnaround \$2,000 grant but would trust that officers would find an appropriate process.
- The language used to promote the grants program needs to be considered. Using words like support, opportunities will make more enticing to young and diverse artists.
- Consider developing a marketing and communications plan for the grants programs.
- Council can consider how to reach the community to advise about the grants program e.g. be proactive and approach organizations and artists to provide

information e.g. library drop in sessions, at art exhibitions and concerts.

- Council could consider different submission formats e.g. video submission.
- Councillor Robert Samuel noted the grants program is under subscribed and if it were oversubscribed Council might increase the grant funding.
- Councillor Samuel also noted that Council currently sees the grant recipients but does not receive any report about the impact of the grants in the community. This would be beneficial to be able to celebrate the impact of the grants. There is an audit process for the grants but that is not clear, nor is there any report to the ARIC or Council.
- Sharing success stories will be useful for marketing and promotion.

4.2 Agreed achievements of the Committee to report back to Council for the End of Council Term

See attachment 1b

5 Other Business

Formation of Visual Arts Sub- Committee:

Arts & Culture Manager proposed formation of an informal working group prior to Council caretaker period to assess Visual Arts submissions for the Emergeural project to be rolled out during September/October 2024 to assess the submissions and provide their recommendations. Paul McDonald, Richard Bennett, Debra Player, Annette Brown and Meredith Melville-Jones expressed their interest. Assessors will be required to assess during the week of 5-9 August 2024. A scoring form will be supplied to the assessors and ultimately the building owner will make the final decision about which mural is installed on their wall.

6 Meeting Conclusion

The Meeting concluded at 4:00 pm.

Willoughby City Council Grants for the Community

Recommendations from the Cultural & Creative Arts Committee:

1. Divide grant categories into 'Minor Project Grants' and 'Major Project Grants'

'Minor Project Grants'

A 'quick response'-style grant category for small/one-off projects.

Rationale: Because of the onerous nature of the application process, applicants are likely to find ways to justify requesting the full amount currently available. A faster process for smaller amounts may allow for a greater diversity of applications requesting smaller funding amounts.

Examples:

<https://sydneyeastdfod.com.au/helping-hand-grant/>

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/small-projects-grants-quick-response-individuals-and-groups-2023/24>

<https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-support-funding/quick-response-grants>

Recommendations:

- a lower amount for requests (e.g. maximum \$2,000)
- PLI as a condition of application instead of already in place (for individuals or new organizations only seeking to run a one-off project; PLI can be purchased for single events/short periods)
- a project budget is required but audited accounts are not
- assessment process: applications are assessed by specialist Council officers against the eligibility and selection criteria outlined in the guidelines.

'Major Project Grants'

Rationale: Increasing the incentive for applicants to request smaller amounts in the Minor Grant Project scheme through reducing paperwork could allow for a few larger grants to be made available for organizations with significant projects in mind.

Recommendations:

- create a Major Project Grant scheme with a more detailed application process, for amounts between \$3,000-\$10,000.
- PLI and audited accounts required, as well as a detailed project budget

- Assessment process: after review by specialist Council officers, applications are assessed by an expert panel that includes one or more external community representatives with expertise relevant to the grant stream.
- May only open 2 - 4 times a year to allow a broader assessment panel to be assembled

2. Respond to the flexible nature of arts work by permitting a greater variety of permissible funding models

Rationale: Individual artists may have a relevant creative practice but no single project for which to apply. Groups of artists may not be incorporated bodies, even if they are working towards a show together. It may be difficult for artists to commit in advance to a particular volume of work (e.g. specific number of paintings, sculptural works etc).

Recommendations:

- consider an artist-in-residence model where artists can apply to create a body of work across a designated timeframe rather than an individual project.
- set appropriate acquittal targets, based on qualitative outcomes rather than quantitative outcomes (for example, the body of work pushes the art form, strongly reflects or comments upon the LGA, as opposed to assessment based on number of people who see/engage with the artwork, or even volume of artworks produced).

3. Simplify the grants process by using plain language where possible.

Rationale: To make the process user-friendly, we recommend edits for plain language and a review of required documentation and presentation.

Recommendations: make the following clarifying edits in the Grants for the Community Guidelines Review (Grants for the Community Guidelines (PDF, 11MB)):

p.2: 'It is expected that recipients will make some financial contribution to the overall cost of their project'

- Replace with 'Project budgets must include a contribution from the applicant'
- Give examples: 'e.g. ticket sales/workshop fees, annual insurances, rental, hiring costs etc'
- Could the contribution be exclusively in-kind, e.g. volunteer labour? The sample budget on p. 19 indicates this is possible (Example A); it should be made explicit at this point.
- If exclusively in-kind contributions aren't possible, specify a percentage. E.g. if Council wouldn't fund a project to the tune of 90%, that should be stated.
- Alternately, if the Minor/Major Project scheme is adopted, Minor Projects could have exclusively in kind contributions and/or a higher percentage of Council support. Major Projects could have a requirement to demonstrate some degree of own financial contribution.

p. 8 'A city that is connected and inclusive'

- Under 'eligible applicants' for this category, add 'local creative arts groups and individuals'. Arts applicants are currently limited in this grant process to the 'liveable' and 'prosperous' categories, whereas many artists see ourselves as contributing predominantly to connection and inclusivity. This can also tap into the burgeoning field of arts and health.

p. 12: 'Please upload 2 x copies of quotes for each item valued at \$500 or over.'

- Recommend that this is not required for Minor Project Grants
- For Major Project Grants, recommend that the threshold for this amount is increased to XXX

Under 'Ineligible Applicants': 'Individuals who are not endorsed by a recognised body'

- Give examples of a recognised body for artists. Ideally, reconsider this category; many artists cannot afford the fees to belong to professional bodies each year.
- If endorsement is required, request instead 2 letters of recommendation or referee phone numbers from professionals in the field.
- Consider creating a flow chart demonstrating the assessment timeline/process

Application form for Individuals, p. 6: 'Please explain how your project or event contributes to COVID-19 recovery and aligns with Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) priorities or a Council endorsed Sub-Plan. (Up to 250 words) *'

This question suggests all applicants/projects must address COVID recovery. However, the Guidelines Overview, p. 6, says this:

'Priority for funding will be given to projects that help the community achieve the following:

- Community recovery in relation to the COVID19 pandemic
- Increased community resilience to respond to shocks and stresses
- Enhanced community connectedness
- Access to high quality entertainment and event'

As an applicant, I'd read this as Covid being only one of four things the project should ideally address.

- Alternatively, to the online process, for consideration to be given for audio/visual applications.

4. Create equity by levelling the playing field for artists and arts organizations compared to athletes and sports organizations

Page 13, 'Eligible applicants' states that, 'To be eligible for funding, you must:

- Be a not for profit, incorporated group or group with an auspice by an incorporated body. Profit making organizations may apply within the Green or Prosperous and Vibrant grant streams.
- Be a community sporting group or individual athlete (Liveable grant stream only)'

Rationale: Individual artists and community arts groups (unincorporated/unauspiced) aren't

listed as eligible here. Community sports groups and individual athletes are. Why is there a difference? This is a glaring inequity which we strongly recommend Council addresses immediately.

Recommendations:

- include 'be a community arts organization or practicing artist who can demonstrate their body of work by provision of a CV' under 'eligible applicants'
- include space to upload referee letters/contacts and CV/portfolio in lieu of certificates of incorporation for artists

Language, marketing of Grants and simplify a stage 1 process.

Can we review language to market and attract new audiences that can be seen as scary, intimidating and 'Council language'.

Support - Opportunities - Development

If there was an initial campaign to attract interest, a simplified online tick box form

Stage 2 - A new role is created within Council - This person matches these forms to opportunities. Markets, events, other businesses or funding opportunities.

Stage 3 - A 'Development and opportunities strategy is created'

Funding - *Stage 1* - A conversation to a panel like us? We mark and assess against a criterion.

If successful support is given on completing an application.

These are then put to Council for approval or rejection or further information. This new role - They may need to go out and research and talk to artists, organizations, etc but it is Council driven. Understand what is needed and where.

Financial and Auditing

- Can we offer support and advice around how to create and manage a budget, if required?
- For larger grants do we need detailed budget information, which simply states the possible income and expenditure in total for the project to which the grant will be applied.
- In order to properly assess the financial viability and accuracy of the budget, I would request more detailed information including:
- The period over which the money will be spent, any expected income and the period of receipt, Information about the general financial viability of the organization seeking the funding.
- Follow up information on the impact the project and grant achieved for the community and or its objectives.

Achievements of the Committee:

As stated in the terms of reference, each advisory committee is required to submit a report on the achievements of the committee at the end of the term of Council. While support was provided to the Cultural and Creative Advisory Committee to assist them to develop the report, the committee has not had capacity and therefore has not submitted their achievement report. However, it is noted by officers that the Cultural and Creative Advisory Committee achieved the following during the term of Council:

The Committee provided their advice on the following key strategies and policies.

- In the context of creating a Cultural Strategy that addresses Our Future Willoughby 2032 (Community Strategic Plan – CSP), the Committee reviewed Cultural Strategies from different Council's and provided advice and recommendations on those documents.
- The Committee discussed the NSW Government *A New Look at Culture Discussion Paper*. The Committee was requested to give their input regarding the Willoughby Council area to inform a Willoughby City Council submission. The Committee advised connectivity between artist interest groups; more career's advice; mentoring; availability of spaces; Support for young emerging artists; more people to people connections; Financial support for new artists, for freelancers; Skills development; subsidised technical advice; Creating networks within LG area; Multimedia and website hubs, but not to replace face-to face mentoring; Some funding or subsidised available space & infrastructure for emerging young artists and to encourage everyone, organisations, and individuals on the North Shore to make separate submissions to the discussion paper.