

NYE 2023 Activities and Events Fund for Businesses Program Overview

Tuesday, 5 March 2024
City Community Services and Culture Committee

Strategic Alignment – Our Economy

Public

Program Contact:
Greg Ratsch, General Manager
Adelaide Economic Development Agency

Approving Officer:
Anthony Spartalis, Acting Chief Operating Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2023 Council resolved that the Lord Mayor's New Year's Eve (NYE) event would return to Elder Park / Tartanya Wama. The reinstatement of the event to a single location did not include scope for the delivery of other events including the former 'Midnight Moments.'

At its meeting on 13 June 2023, Council resolved in part to: '*request AEDA to submit to Council the grant funding framework and assessment criteria for the New Year's Eve activities within a budget of no more than \$100,000*'.

The Adelaide Economic Development Agency (AEDA) proposed a grant program to incentivise the private sector and community groups to run events around the city. The NYE grants were well received by a small number of operators.

Compared to other grant programs administered by AEDA, Council's investment of \$77,355 is unlikely to yield a comparable return in terms of economic impact. As such the allocation of funds to this activity does not yield the highest and best use.

The CBD continues to be a focal point for NYE in South Australia. Council is currently in the process of considering delivery of the Elder Park event in 2024. Given the event's success in 2023, AEDA's efforts can be better placed in promoting opportunities for people to arrive earlier in the city before heading to Elder Park or the Adelaide Oval, or to extend their stay. Therefore, it is not proposed to deliver this program in 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on Tuesday 12 March 2024 for consideration

THAT THE CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the overview of the New Years Eve 2023 Activities and Events Fund for Businesses Program.
-

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2020-2024 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Economy
Policy	Not as a result of this report
Consultation	As a requirement of the grant, all recipients were required to complete an acquittal report detailing the successes or opportunities of their New Years Eve activities and events due six weeks post event. At the time of this report five acquittals have been received from grant recipients. Internal stakeholders, the City Experience team including Place and Event Experience were consulted.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	Not as a result of this report
23/24 Budget Allocation	\$100,000
Proposed 24/25 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
23/24 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

1. The CBD is a focal point for New Year's Eve activities in South Australia. While Council has traditionally delivered a family focused event in Elder Park, during COVID-19 a decentralized approach was adopted spreading activity across the City under the Midnight Moments banner. In 2022 Council spent approximately \$96,000 on the delivery of that program.
2. With the relaxation of public health restrictions related to COVID-19, Council resolved to recommence its Elder Park event on 31 December 2023. The reinstatement of the event to a single location did not include scope for the delivery of other events within that budget.
3. At its meeting on 13 June 2023, Council resolved to:
 1. *Approves the event model for returning the City of Adelaide's NYE event to Elder Park / Tarntanya Wama in 2023, with a \$550,000 budget to be endorsed through the 2023/24 Annual Business Plan and Budget.*
 2. *Approves an AEDA administered \$100,000 grant program, to provide support for business-led NYE activity across the city, with budget to be endorsed through the 2023/24 Annual Business Plan and Budget*
4. Given the timeframes AEDA proposed a grant program to support venues and organisations that had an interest in delivering events on NYE that activated a part of the city or expand what they might otherwise have offered to attract additional patrons or enhance the liveliness of an area.
5. Up to \$20,000 of the total budget of \$100,000 was allocated to each of the five city areas (South West, South East, East End, West End, North Adelaide). Multiple events can be funded from the allocation in each precinct.
6. The fund opened 23 August 2023 and applications closed 12 September 2023. It was promoted via the City of Adelaide (CoA) website, AEDA website, AEDA Linked In, AEDA's City Business eDM (8700+ subscribers) and emailed direct to City Precinct Groups.
7. Ten applications were received and assessed by representatives from AEDA and the CoA in September 2023. Two applications were withdrawn after the assessment process. Two applications were for completely new events, with the other six either expanding or continuing their established activity/event.
8. All applications received their full funding request with the exception of one, which received half of their funding request. A total of \$77,355 was allocated from the \$100,000 budget.
9. The opportunity to receive funding allowed businesses to trial and test new ideas without taking on the full financial risk. Those businesses executing successful NYE events in 2023 are in a better position to deliver financially viable events in the future without Council's continued support.
10. As part of the grant agreement all applicants are required to complete an acquittal report due six weeks post event (11 February 2024) detailing the successes and opportunities of their activities and events. Applicants receive reminder emails regarding the overdue acquittals and are ineligible to apply for any other funding from CoA or AEDA until the acquittal is complete.
11. Data from the acquittals received to date can be found below, noting three applicants are yet to submit their acquittal report.

Applicant	Funding awarded	Change in revenue	Expected attendance	Reported attendance
The Lion Hotel	\$20,000	69%	1,000	1,000
Bai Long Store	\$4,355	-	156	63
Queen's Head Hotel	\$10,000	60%	200	280
The Howling Owl	\$4,000	42%	300	150
Eleven ADL	\$8,000	20%	200	159
Prompt Creative Centre*	\$6,000	-	250	-
299 Rundle Street*	\$5,000	-	500	-
The Austral Hostel*	\$20,000	-	800	-
TOTAL	\$46,355		1,856	1,652

**These recipients have not returned their acquittal and therefore the data on revenue and attendance is unavailable.*

12. In addition to the above metrics, grant recipients reported that the funding provided them with additional opportunities to:
 - 12.1 showcase local musicians and digital artists whilst providing a fun, family friendly location for people to safely celebrate NYE.
 - 12.2. develop increased awareness of their venue and close proximity to Adelaide Oval, increased activity of community involvement especially for families who could access free face painting and live DJ creating a festive atmosphere.
 - 12.3. offer a friendly and welcoming venue for patrons over 18+, free to attend a multicultural, high energy live music event in a safe environment.
13. There were a number of challenges with the program and elements of program intent that were not achieved. These included:
 - 13.1. An inability to achieve a spread of activities across the City (50% of events were held in the East End and none in the South West corner). Link 1 [view [here](#)] provides a map that indicates the locations of the successful applicants across the city;
 - 13.2. The number of applications received were insufficient to disburse the entire funding pool;
 - 13.3. Many of the applicants had limited experience in applying for grants thus requiring additional support from staff to complete their applications, additional information needing to be sought during the assessment process, and work through the process of approvals required for permits, etc.
 - 13.4. The nature of the events meant it was difficult for applicants to quantify the additional measurable economic benefit and social benefit created for the area as a result of the event/activity.
 - 13.5. Three out of the eight applications activated the public realm, which included streets and a car park, the remaining applications took place within private venues. The program therefore did not fully achieve the goal of increased activity in the public realm as intended.
 - 13.6. Events that propose use of public realm spaces are required to seek approvals such as permits, public consultation, road closure management, event configuration etc through Council. Business operators aren't necessarily familiar with these requirements and consequently, this created an inefficient and resource intensive process as approvals were sought very late. Additionally, it resulted in applicants having to revise their event plans during the assessment period and/or after grant funding had been approved.

Conclusion

14. The NYE grants were well received by a small number of operators.
15. Compared to other grant programs administered by AEDA, Council's investment of \$77,355 is unlikely to yield a comparable return in terms of economic impact. As such the allocation of funds to this activity does not represent the highest and best use.
16. The CBD continues to be a focal point for NYE in South Australia. Council is currently in the process of considering delivery of the Elder Park event in 2024. Given the event's success in 2023, AEDA's efforts can be better placed in promoting opportunities for people to arrive earlier in the City before heading to Elder Park or the Adelaide Oval, or to extend their stay.
17. The AEDA Board received a report providing an overview of the program at its 13 February 2024 meeting and noted Administration's intention not to deliver the program in 2024/25.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – 2023 New Year's Eve Activities and Events Fund – Map of Recipients' Location

ATTACHMENTS

Nil