

MAJOR EVENTS SPONSORSHIP POLICY

Intent: This document defines the Cairns Regional Council (Council) policy for investment in attracting and supporting Major Events, and the required assessment, procurement, and contracting activities to be undertaken by Council officers.

Objective: To assess, negotiate and approve Council's Major Event sponsorships – creating a range of partnered events across each financial year with the highest possible regional benefit from the investment of Council funds.

Strategic

Alignment: The Policy ensures that the assessment, contracting, and collating of results for Council's sponsorship of Major Events aligns with the regional goals outlined in the current "Cairns and Great Barrier Reef Event Strategy".

Definition: A 'Major Event' is defined as large-scale event activities that provide significant economic and regional benefits, through a commercial partnership between the external event owner/operator and Council. The Sponsorship Agreement can be for a single event or a calendar of event activity across a financial year or multiple financial years that together create the targeted outcomes. For the avoidance of doubt, business events, conferences and incentive programs are not included under this policy.

Required Outcomes:

1. Attracting and partnering with a range of events that provide the following benefits to the Cairns Local Government Area (LGA):
 - Drive regional direct economic benefits;
 - Increase external visitation to the region;
 - Enhance the profile and appeal of the Cairns region;
 - Build local business opportunities, profile, and experience;
 - Create and build community pride; and
 - Provide links and promotional opportunities for Council's broader strategic goals.
2. Consistency of assessment and approval processes for Council investment in Major Events.
3. Clearly outline assessment models and approval systems related to Major Event opportunities, sponsorship applications, and negotiation of agreements and contracts.
4. Increase efficiency and speed of decision making relevant to Major Events to minimise loss of opportunities and cost to Council, while retaining an elevated approval process for more significant financial investments and those of a significant duration.

Eligibility Criteria:

Applications for Major Event funding from Council are based on a proposal for sponsorship from an external entity that owns or operates a 'Major Event.' The applicant must be:

- A legal entity (either an incorporated entity or an individual) with the rights and resources to deliver and control the specific Major Event noted within the application;
- Able to commit to all negotiated contract clauses should an agreement be approved; and
- Able to provide an Australian address and contact details (or Council-approved alternative), ABN, and legal entity; and

- Able to provide Public Liability Insurance noting Council as an interested party, and Workers Compensation Insurance.

The proposed event/events (and/or the Major Event owner/operator) must:

- Completely or partially take place within Cairns Regional Council Local Government Area (LGA) boundaries;
- Demonstrate the scale of the event/s and predicted visitor numbers and visitor nights within the Cairns region resulting from the hosting of the event;
- Demonstrate the audience type and promotional reach for Cairns through the hosting of the event;
- Demonstrate the 'uniqueness' of the event/s for the Cairns region. How does the event differ from similar events held in other locations?;
- Comply with all contractual terms relating to the representation of Council and the Cairns and Great Barrier Reef destination as a significant partner of the event;
- Outline existing and potential partnerships with local businesses, accommodation, and service providers to deliver services related to the delivery of the event;
- Advise Council's Major Events team of any sponsorship or grant funding through any other Council funding program secured prior to, or being requested after, any sponsorship proposal for Major Event funding; and
- Advise Council's Major Events team of any sponsorship or grant funding being sought, or currently secured, through other Government grant or sponsorship programs.

While not mandatory, committed partnership support for the event from Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and/or Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) will be considered favourably.

Ineligible applicants:

To be eligible, applicants must not:

- Have outstanding Council grants or funding that has not been acquitted within required timeframes, or grants/funding that have previously not been satisfactorily acquitted;
- Have overdue outstanding payments to Council (e.g. rents, rates, fees, Council guarantor loan repayments); or
- Be a political party or discriminatory group.

Ineligible event/ activities

- Events or activities that attract less than 1,500 attendees or participants, and/or create less than 1,000 visitor nights within the Cairns LGA from Primary Purpose Event Visitors (Primary Purpose Event Visitors are those visitors whose primary purpose for visiting the Cairns LGA is to participate in or spectate at the Major Event);
- Local or community events, or any event/s that cannot demonstrate clear and achievable outcomes aligned with the Major Events definition and/or eligibility criteria outlined in this Policy; and/or
- Events or projects with a sole religious, discriminatory group, or political purpose.

Furthermore, applications must not be:

- Requesting sponsorship or support for a project, event, or activity that has already occurred;
- Requesting sponsorship or support for seasonal or regular bookings of council-managed facilities;
- For projects, events or activities that are the subject of litigation;
- For projects that duplicate existing services or programs;
- For projects, events or activities entirely outside the boundaries of Cairns Regional Council; and/or
- Requesting sponsorship for any project or event that cannot provide solid evidence that the activity can adequately meet the Major Events eligibility or assessment criteria.

Assessment Criteria:

The following criteria will be applied in assessing applications for Major Event funding from Council and in the assessment of actual event performance should Council funding be provided:

1. **Economic Impact** – The total direct economic impact based on event-related, short-term, financial inflow into the region (including visitation and local business benefits);
2. **Return on Investment (ROI)** – Economic impact achieved relative to Council's investment;
3. **Raising the profile of Cairns** – The ability to 'tell the story' of the region's strengths, opportunities, and community connections through targeted and significant scale audiences (i.e. media/ broadcast); and
4. **Uniqueness** – Using the content of events to attract wider attention, displaying Cairns as a destination for tourism and broader engagement, developing links to key Cairns regional priorities (environmental, cultural, etc.), and enhance community pride.

A scoring system is utilised in the application of the above Assessment Criteria to individual events. performance against the Assessment Criteria will be a key consideration when determining the amount of Council's investment (if any) in the event.

Event proposals that either do not meet the eligibility criteria, or are not offered Council investment due to performance against the assessment criteria, may (where appropriate) be directed to other potential funding sources within Council or to alternate external funding sources.

Investment Amount:

There is no set minimum or maximum amount of Major Event investment that an event owner/operator can request from Council in its application for funding. The amount of Council's sponsorship investment in individual Major Events is determined having regard to the event's performance against the Assessment Criteria outlined above, together with any budgetary constraints that may be applicable from time to time. Council may approve the amount of investment requested by the applicant, approve investment at a level different to that requested by the applicant or chose not to approve any investment in the event at all. The provision of any Council investment into a Major Event is subject to a Sponsorship Agreement being entered into with the event owner/operator in accordance with this policy. Decisions relating to the amount of any Council investment will be made in accordance with the Assessment and Approval Responsibilities section of this policy.

Provisions:

The *Local Government Regulation 2012* includes exemptions or exceptions for certain types of agreements, including sponsorships. These exemptions might be based on the nature of the sponsorship, the purpose of the agreement, or other factors. If an exemption applies, Council will maintain transparency and accountability in their financial dealings including reporting and disclosure requirements. This policy is compliant with the *Local Government Regulation 2012* to the extent the legislation is applicable.

Investment Type:

Investment in Major Event sponsorships can be made as direct cash investment in the event, or in assistance in providing Council supported venues or services (in-kind). The combined amount of cash investment plus in-kind support value will be considered the total investment in an event sponsorship.

Sponsorship Period:

The sponsorship period will be determined having regard to the request from the applicant and performance of the event against the Assessment Criteria outlined in this policy. Decisions relating to the Sponsorship Period will be made in accordance with the Assessment and Approval Responsibilities section of this policy. The Sponsorship Period would be specified in the Sponsorship Agreement (refer below) and may include an initial term and subsequent option periods. Whilst this policy does not specify a maximum Sponsorship Period, that period would generally not exceed five years (inclusive of options) after which time the applicant may reapply.

Sponsorship Agreements:

Should an event owner's/operator's sponsorship application be successful, the event owner/operator must enter into a formal Sponsorship Agreement with Council. Based on the event proposal and further negotiation with Council officers, the Agreement will contain clauses committing the event owner/operator to deliver all negotiated outcomes and benefits related to Council's investment. The benefits may include:

- Recognition of Council support
- Hospitality
- Branding and imagery use
- Advertising
- Onsite activations
- Direct marketing
- Broadcast media
- Event signage
- Supply of event images and video
- Community activities and activations
- Contract performance targets

Council retains the right to consider failure to deliver the agreed benefits as a breach of contract. The terms agreed in any Sponsorship Agreement shall prevail over this Policy to the extent of any inconsistency.

Applications:

Applications can be lodged at any time during the financial year and will be assessed through the Council Major Event assessment process. The applications must be lodged at least six months before the event start date (unless otherwise agreed with Council). Before applying for sponsorship, applicants are encouraged to contact Council's Major Event Partnerships team to discuss the proposed event, its alignment with this policy, and what information should be submitted as part of the application. Contact and lodgement details can be found on the Council website, or by emailing Council officers at events@ Cairns.qld.gov.au.

Assessment and Approval Responsibilities:

All applications will be assessed by a panel of two Council officers using the established event economic impact assessment process which assesses the performance of an event against the Assessment Criteria outlined in this policy. Any Council officer with a perceived or determined Conflict of Interest will be required to declare this and may be removed from the assessment process.

Decisions and approvals on funding applications (for any investment amounts and/or sponsorship period) will be made by the full Council at a Council Meeting.

Where a funding application does not meet the eligibility requirements, the application will be deemed 'ineligible' by Council Officers and will not progress through the assessment and approval process.

Reporting Obligations/ Acquittal:

A Council Major Events Sponsorship Agreement will require a detailed acquittal report to be submitted generally within three months of the completion of the event/s. It must include all necessary data for the Council's event assessment processes and a full summary report on the delivery and outcomes related to the Event/s.

Event Sponsorship Agreements will outline the amount of Council's sponsorship funding (if any) to be withheld until a full acquittal document is received. The Agreement also retains the right to reduce or cancel final milestone payments should the event fail to reach the agreed targets (visitation or other) for the event.

Potential event applicants are encouraged to supply realistic and achievable predicted event outcomes within their application to avoid the reduction or cancellation of payments. Contract targets and milestone payment terms will be fully aligned with predictions made by the operator during the event assessment phase of any contracted partnership. Changes to the sponsored event model, scale, or measurable target outcomes linked to contract milestone payments (e.g. visitation, marketing value, etc.) can only be made in consultation with Council officers under the delegation of the Chief Executive Officer. Changes will only be open for amendment where event outcomes have been disrupted by factors outside the Event organiser's control.

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This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.

Director Responsible for Review:

Director - Economic Development & Advocacy

ORIGINALLY ADOPTED: 22/11/2023
CURRENTLY ADOPTED: 22/11/2023
DUE FOR REVISION: 22/11/2027
REVOKED/SUPERSEDED: NA



Mica Martin
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER