

Purpose

This Policy underpins the Major Festival and Event Attraction Strategy 2019-2023 (the Strategy) which is focussed on the attraction and establishment of new Major events, and support of existing events with the potential to further develop, grow and extend. Major events, as defined within the Strategy have the potential to deliver significant economic, socio-cultural and market development impacts.

Festivals and Events (events) are an important driver in further developing the Whitsunday Region economy, playing a key role in fostering tourism through the attraction of visitors, spectators and participants. Events have the ability to increase tourism through creating experiences that encourage purposeful travel, increased length of stay, increased spend and repeat visitation.

Council welcomes enquiries from organisations seeking to host Major Festivals and Events in the Whitsunday Region to further contribute to the growth of the Visitor Economy.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Define the framework and parameters under which Council may provide support to organisations seeking to host Major Festivals and Events in the Whitsunday region;
- b) Ensure that the level of commitment made by Council does not exceed annual budgetary limits;
- c) Ensure that risks are assessed and managed as part of the funding approval and reporting process;
- d) Protect Council's reputation; and
- e) Ensure that all festivals and events supported, align with Council's Corporate Plan, Major Festivals and

Events Attraction Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, budget and financial policies.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all enquiries made by organisations seeking Council's support to host new events, as well as continued support of existing events in the Whitsunday Region. This policy applies to Councillors; and employees and contractors of Council and of those organisations seeking event or conference support.

This policy does not apply to Community groups who are applying for grants under Council's Community Grants Policy. It also does not apply to events with an existing sponsorship agreement in place with Council, as required under the Sponsorship Policy managed by Whitsunday Regional Council's Community and Environment Department. However, events that may have received funding in the past from Council that are focused on attracting visitors to the region that contribute to overnight stays may be assessed for sponsorship under this policy in the future.

Policy Statement

1. Objectives

- 1.1. While recognising that individual events may have unique characteristics, Council primarily seeks to support those events that achieve the following objectives:

- a) Promote the capabilities of the Whitsunday Region as a viable, competitive host location for major events nationally and internationally;
- b) Increase awareness of the Whitsunday region and contribute to the image and destination appeal;
- c) Attract and encourage overnight visitation, increase length-of-stay and expenditure from outside the region;
- d) Display the capacity for businesses in the hospitality, retail, tourism and other event supporting sectors to benefit from and leverage event attendance or participation;
- e) Enhance, grow and contribute to the regional economy, developing business and industry and generating new investment; and
- f) Promote the diversity of the region to visitors and disburse the benefits of increased visitation to our emerging tourism locations

2. Funding, Support & Eligibility

2.1. Funding & Support allocation is awarded under three categories. Regardless of categorisation, the clear intent is appeal, draw and increase in out of region visitation, stay, spend and exposure. To be eligible to receive Council support, the event must align with the Whitsunday Regional Council's Corporate Plan, the Major Festival and Event Attraction Strategy 2019-2023; and must fall under one of the following categories. The purpose of categorisation is to allow flexibility in budgetary cycles to alter the funding pool between Tiers, in response to local market conditions.

The categories are described as:

a) Grow and Extend (Tier 1)

Existing events that have a demonstrated ability for generating high levels of attendance and visitation. These events have established a profile of success typically are already viewed as being successful, and Council's support is intended to support extended reach (either by extending the length of the event or adding an additional element to grow and extend, allowing the events to reach greater levels of success, sustainability and contribution to the visitor economy.

b) Develop (Tier 2)

Existing events that may be newer additions to the event calendar or have typically been viewed as more locally / regional inclusive, but have the capacity, with support, to develop into larger events that appeal to a wider audience and attract a higher level of visitation, stay and spend from outside the region.

c) New (Tier 3)

New events encompass those that may be either newly conceived 'first time' events, or existing, successful, out of region events that display the potential for relocation or replication. Regardless of status, new events must demonstrate the potential for fulfilling an identified market gap, capitalise on the uniqueness of the region, or leverage an existing event to increase and/or extend visitation, stay and spend.

- 2.2. Events that are considered primarily community-focused events, only attracting local attendees and participants and generating local and regional media coverage are not considered eligible to apply for support under this Policy.

Requests for community-focused event support should be referred to the Community Grants Policy.

3. Evaluation

- 3.1. Council's support for each event will be decided via an application process, measuring against the aims and objectives of this policy. Successful applicants will also need to:
- demonstrate the future growth and sustainability of the event;
 - demonstrate their support of local operators through the procurement of local goods and services; and
 - provide a detailed acquittal to Council within 90 days of the event.

Criteria	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Event Economic Overview	Describe how the event or conference will generate direct and incremental expenditure by visitors and the event organiser in relation to the total spending generated for the region. Provide the following data for economic analysis: - Target market summary - Number of individual attendees - Origin of attendees - Whitsunday LGA - Intrastate - Interstate - International - Length of event (No. of days) Average stay (No. of nights)		
	20% weighting	25% weighting	30% weighting
Visitor Attraction	Events eligible for funding under the GROW & EXTEND category must achieve: - A 10-50% increase in visitors (inter/intra-state and/or international) - A 10-50% increase direct visitor spend in the region - A 10-50% increase direct jobs in the region	Events eligible for funding under the DEVELOP category must achieve: - A 10-25% increase in visitors (inter/intra-state and/or international) - Evidence of visitor attraction strategy and marketing plan	Events eligible for funding under the NEW category must: - Demonstrate that the event either identifies a market or calendar gap, displays uniqueness or enhances and extends an existing event - A minimum 10% increase in visitors (inter/intra-state and/or international)
	30% weighting	25% weighting	20% weighting

Criteria	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Development and Sustainability	Describe how the funding will assist the event grow and extend current levels of out of region attendance and attraction and into a significant and strategically important event for the region 20% weighting	Describe how the funding will assist the development of the event into a significant and strategically important event for the region 20% weighting	Evidence of event management plan including budget, schedule, program and marketing plan detailing the potential to become a strategically important event for the region 20% weighting
Financial Stability	Define the confirmed cash and in-kind support from community and corporate organisations, sponsors, etc. 20% weighting	20% weighting	20% weighting
Risk, Safety and Insurance	Demonstrate the extent to which risks have been reasonably minimised and/or mitigated. Provide evidence of insurance/s and safety plans, demonstrating that the insurance is commensurate with the level of risk for the event or conference and indemnifying Council. These documents are for information and to confirm that event organisers have addressed these issues. These documents are not for review or approval by Council 10% weighting	10% weighting	10% weighting

- 3.3. Assessment of each application will be completed by an evaluation panel considering the economic impact and potential to deliver economic and tourism profiling benefits aligned with Whitsunday Regional Council's Corporate Plan and Major Festivals and Events Strategy 2019-2023. The evaluation panel will consist of three members of the Executive Management Team (EMT).
- 3.4. A report, summarising the evaluation and offering a recommendation, will be provided to Council.
- 3.5. All applications require consideration by Council, with the decision to be formalised via resolution.

4. Support Streams

- 4.1. Event support may be provided as financial, in-kind, other support (such as marketing etc.) or a combination of those and will be provided via written agreement. Funding will be contestable, and subject to budget allocation per financial year, with each funding request assessed individually under one of the following Tiers:

a) Tier One

Available to existing events categorised as 'Grow and Extend'. (see Section 2.1) Tier One events will be considered for funding on a single year / once off / case by case basis for additions to the event deliverables to increase visitor attraction. The existing event should have a balanced budget, and not be reliant on this funding for "business as usual" event delivery.

b) Tier Two

Available to existing events categorised (see Section 2.1) as 'Develop'. The maximum term of funding support as a Tier Two event is two (2) years and is subject to annual evaluation to determine further funding for the remainder of the term.

c) Tier Three

Available to events categorised (see Section 2.1) as 'New'. The maximum term of funding support as a Tier Three event is three (3) years and is subject to annual evaluation to determine further funding for the remainder of the term.

Approval is dependent on available budget allocation. Where Council's budget for the funding period has been exhausted, no further applications will be accepted until the commencement of the next funding round.

- 4.2. The Event and Conference Support program has a long lead time to ensure applicants have notification of the funding outcome as well as access to the funds well in advance to allow for planning and promotional lead times. Funding round dates will commence as follows:

Funding Round	Eligible Event Dates	Applications Open	Applications Close
2019	1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020	1 July	1 March / or when funds are exhausted

- 4.3. Funding rounds will be open from 1 July to 30 June annually for events occurring after 1 July.

Applicable Legislation

Local Government Act 2009.

Definitions

CEO refers to the Chief Executive Officer of the Whitsunday Regional Council appointed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*.

Council refers to the Whitsunday Regional Council

Employee refers to any employee, contractor, volunteer etc. of the Council

Related Documents

Event and Conference Support Guidelines

Event and Conference Support Application

Event and Conference Support Assessment Procedure

Event and Conference Support Evaluation Template

Event and Conference Support Recommendation Report

Event and Conference Support Agreement

Human Rights Compatibility Statement

This Policy has been assessed as compatible with the Human Rights protected under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

COUNCIL POLICY			
Date Adopted by Council	11 September 2019	Council Resolution	2019/09/11.06
Effective Date	11 September 2019	Next Review Date	11 September 2022
Responsible Officer(s)	Executive Officer Economic Development	Revokes	N/A
Public Consultation: Yes / No			

Major Festival & Event Support Policy

Office of the Mayor & CEO

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