

WELLINGTON REGIONAL AMENITIES FUND JOINT COMMITTEE

24 April 2013

REPORT 1

FUND CRITERIA AND PRIORITIES FOR THE WELLINGTON REGIONAL AMENITIES FUND

1. Purpose of report

This paper outlines the criteria and priorities for the Wellington Regional Amenities Fund (the Fund). These have been updated following a meeting of the Joint Committee on 8 February 2013.

This paper seeks the Joint Committee's agreement to finalise the criteria and priorities for the Fund.

2. Executive summary

The Fund was established in 2012 by the Wellington City, Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, Kāpiti Coast District and Masterton District Councils. It is a new initiative to support entities of regional significance with day to day operational expenses and new innovative projects that will achieve identified priorities for the region.

The five councils have committed a total of \$910,000 towards the Fund in 2012/2013. However, funding from all five councils has not been confirmed beyond the 2012/2013 financial year. If the five councils agree to continued support for the Fund through their annual plans, then this amount will double to \$1,820,000 in the 2013/2014 financial year.

The Fund is focused on arts cultural and environmental attractions and events to support and add to the attractiveness and vitality of the Wellington Region.

The Fund was developed to ensure that regionally significant entities can be developed or sustained in the Wellington Region.

The Fund is intended to allow funded entities to:

- Focus more on their core business
- Reduce the amount of time spent on securing funding across the region
- Improve their ability to perform on a wider regional basis

- Improve accessibility to their services
- Ensure staffing requirements are met adequately for a fixed term.

The Fund is intended to compliment and not replace existing funding to the recipients from the participating councils.

The following draft criteria and priorities for the Fund have been developed by the cross-council Fund Officers Group and the Fund Manager and informed by the discussion had at the Joint Committee meeting on 8 February 2013.

Once the criteria and priorities have been confirmed they will be communicated to those entities that have been identified as broadly meeting the aims of the Fund.

Applications to the Fund will be made through the Wellington City Council online funding system.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Joint Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Agree with the priorities for the Fund.*
- 3. Agree with the criteria for the Fund.*

4. First year of the Fund

It is noted that, in its first year, the Fund will only be at 'half strength'. Therefore, it has been decided that applications will only be accepted from those organisations that the Colmar Brunton survey identified as having the highest region-wide support, and others that the Joint Committee has identified as meeting the aims of the Fund.

They will be approached directly, through the Chair of the Joint Committee. The application process and criteria will be presented and discussed with the organisations but no guarantee of funding will be provided. All applications will be processed and assessed by officers with the final decision to be made by the Joint Committee.

It is proposed that future funding rounds will be more widely publicised with a broader range of entities subsequently applying.

5. Draft Criteria and Priorities

The following criteria and priorities have been developed for both operational and project funding. They will form the basis of information given to applicants considering applying for funding.

It is proposed that the criteria and priorities will be evaluated and reviewed at the end of the first round to inform changes for any future rounds.

Purpose of scheme

The WRA Fund has been established to support:

- a. eligible entities of regional significance with day to day operational expenses and
- b. new innovative projects that will achieve identified priorities for the region.

The WRA Fund is focused on arts¹, cultural² and environmental attractions and events to support and add to the attractiveness and vitality of the Wellington region.

(This paragraph is taken directly from the Terms of Reference for the Wellington Regional Amenities Fund Joint Committee.)

It has been agreed that this means that the Fund is focused only on 'arts, cultural and environmental attractions' and 'arts, cultural and environmental events' rather than '*any event*' that meets subsequent criteria.

Regional Priorities

Applications will be assessed on how strongly they deliver to all of these priorities.

The application should strongly deliver to at least one regional priority and applications that can show how they deliver to more than one will have a stronger case for funding.

The organisation or project will:

1. Demonstrate a need for financial assistance to maintain its current operations or extend the reach of its operations across the Wellington region
2. Increase the entity's long-term contribution to the economy of the Wellington Region
3. Address gaps in, or extend, the current calendar of activities and events in the Wellington region

¹ Arts attractions and events can include the following artforms: *performing arts* (such as dance, theatre, music); *visual arts* (ceramics, drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, printmaking, photography, film, video, design and crafts); *literature* (fiction, non-fiction, essays, poetry); *inter-arts* (such as new-media and digital work); and *pan art-form festivals*.

² Cultural attractions and events can include the following groups: ethnic, community and specific interest groups.

4. Display regional partnerships with Councils and other organisations in order to leverage mutual benefits
5. Build, maintain and retain organisations that contribute to Wellington's status as an internationally competitive region

At the meeting of the Joint Committee on 8 February 2013, it was agreed that, if a portion of the Fund was not distributed in a given financial year, it could be carried over to the following year for distribution.

Who is eligible for funding?

Arts, Cultural and Environmental organisations of regional significance are eligible for either Operational Funding or Project Funding for projects, activities or events of regional significance and benefit.

It is anticipated that most eligible organisations will be based in the Wellington Region but organisations from outside the region that can show how their project will bring significant benefit to the region, will be considered for funding.

At this stage applicants can only apply for funding for the 2013/2014 period. However, if the five councils agree to an ongoing financial commitment to the Fund funding for longer periods of time may be considered in the future.

Individuals cannot apply to the Fund.

Funding Criteria

General Criteria

- Your project makes a positive contribution to achieving the objectives of the Wellington Regional Amenities Fund. Namely to support entities of regional significance with **day to day operational expenses** or **new innovative projects**.
- The Fund is focused on arts, cultural and environmental attractions and events to support and add to the attractiveness and vitality of the Wellington Region for residents and visitors to the region.
- The project or organisation is based in, or delivering significant benefits to the Wellington region. Benefits should be focused on one or more of the regional authorities contributing to the Regional Amenities Fund (Wellington City, Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, Kāpiti Coast and Masterton District).
- The applicant is a legally constituted group or organisation, not an individual or individuals.
- The applicant provides evidence of: sound financial management, good employment practice, clear and detailed planning, clear performance measures, and demonstrated ability to report back on past funding as appropriate.

- Organisations with existing funding agreements for operational expenses with one or more of the five Councils contributing to the Fund are eligible to apply for additional operational expenses. They will need to demonstrate what additional benefit to the wider region funding from the WRA Fund will achieve.
- Failure to report adequately on past funding will result in a group not being eligible to apply for future funding until they have satisfactorily reported back on their past funding.
- The organisation or project should show evidence of community support, collaboration and building partnerships with other organisations (e.g. letters of support from other organisations / leaders).
- The principal intent of the organisation or project is not for private or commercial financial gain, though such gains may occur as a side effect of the project.
- Funding for Capital Projects will be considered by the Fund.

Operational Funding for Organisations of Regional Significance

1. The organisation will provide economic benefit to the region, and/or
2. The organisation will increase audiences and/or visitors across the Wellington region, and/or
3. The organisation will increase regional participation and collaboration in projects.

In addition organisations will:

- Be recognised as providing an existing regionally significant facility or service that contributes to the wellbeing and attractiveness of the Wellington Region as a place to live and visit.
- Provide evidence of the regional benefit of their project, service or facility to residents of and visitors to the Wellington region.
- Demonstrate that the facilities and services they provide are not otherwise generally available to residents and visitors to the region.
- Demonstrate good financial and administrative management and have good governance and an excellent track record. A copy of the organisation's strategic or business plan should be attached to the application.
- Provide evidence of structures to ensure that all regional funding provided will be used for facilities and services benefitting Wellington Region residents and visitors.
- Have audited financial accounts covering the previous three financial years.
- Show that the funding will be used for core business expenses and improve the applicant's ability to maintain its current operations or extend the reach of its operations across the Wellington region

Project Funding - for Projects of Regional Significance and Benefit

1. The project will provide economic benefit to the region, and/or
2. The project will increase audiences and/or visitors across the Wellington region, and/or
3. The project will increase regional participation and collaboration in projects.

In addition the project:

- Must show innovation.³
- Must show economic and / or other benefits to the community.
- Must show reach across the Wellington region.
- Must explain how it will highlight or enhance the uniqueness of the Wellington region.
- Will expand the capacity, range or level of similar types of services in the community
- Will have involved users in identifying the need for the project.

6. Conclusion

The terms of reference for the Fund were agreed by the five local authorities in 2012 and funding included in their 2012/2013 budgets.

The five councils have committed a total of \$910,000 towards the Fund in 2012/2013. If the five councils agree to continued support for the Fund through their annual plans then this amount will double to \$1,820,000 in the 2013/2014 financial year.

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³ Innovation involves the creation of value out of new ideas, products, experiences, services, or ways of doing things.

The project may not rely on established ideas, forms or ways of working, and may investigate new ways of working.

Actual innovation will depend on context (when and where the project is to happen). It may exist in the form of the project, the process of creation, the way the project is presented, and the ways the project engages with its audience.

Innovation may also be found through the refining of an existing project or the scaling up of a project.