

Resolution of Council

8 April 2024

Item 13.6

Supporting Access to Low Cost or Free Rehearsal Spaces for Musicians

Moved by Councillor Ellsmore, seconded by Councillor Kok –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) included in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 City of Sydney Council budgets was a provision for 100 per cent free hire of community spaces for local community groups whose events, activities and services are predominantly for residents in the City of Sydney area;
- (ii) the City of Sydney also extended coverage by the City of Sydney's public liability insurance free of charge with the waiver, on application;
- (iii) the free fee waiver for local community groups and coverage for public liability insurance is available for community halls, community centres, meeting rooms and other in-door community spaces;
- (iv) musicians are generally currently not eligible for the 100 per cent fee waiver for hire of community spaces, unless they fit the definition of a local community group. Examples of low or free hire of Council spaces offered by the Council for music rehearsal includes:
 - (a) free music rehearsal space for students and school groups in 17 Council community venues;
 - (b) community and student rates of hire at the rehearsal and recording space in Green Square Library music room; and
 - (c) individual and group rates of hire for recording, rehearsal and practice rooms at the City of Sydney Creative Studios in Bathurst Street; and

- (v) Council is currently considering the inclusion of reduced rates for artists and creative practitioners to hire Council operated venues for the 2024/5 budget;
- (B) Council also note:
- (i) Sydney is losing artists and musicians to other cities. The cost of living and housing costs is a key part of this. Many creative workers have very low hourly and weekly earnings. Space is also an issue. Particularly for renters and those living in small or shared housing, it can be difficult to get access to space for regular music practice as an individual or a group;
 - (ii) a lack of access to cheap or free rehearsal space has been identified by the City of Sydney as a key barrier for maintaining and growing a creative city;
 - (iii) even a small hire fee can be a big barrier for someone, especially someone who wants to practice a few times a week and doesn't have a lot of money; and
 - (iv) the Office of Councillor Ellsmore has received requests for Council to consider extending the free hire for musicians, for rehearsal or practice spaces; and
- (C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to provide advice to Council in relation to the draft 2024/5 budget and schedule of fees about:
- (i) opportunities and costs to make Council's community spaces available for hire for free to musicians and other creatives for rehearsal or practice space; and
 - (ii) appropriate management strategies to ensure equitable access to space, where there may be competing demands with other community uses.

Carried unanimously.

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