

Sponsorship Policy

Applicable to:
Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation

EXTERNAL POLICY

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Related policies/documents:	Independent Commission Against Corruption's (ICAC) Sponsorship in the Public Sector Code of Ethics and Conduct

APPROVED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, 21 FEBRUARY 2023

1. Policy statement

1.1 Introduction

Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation (**HCCDC**)'s operations extend to the Central Coast Local Government Area (LGA), and the Hunter region's ten LGA's including Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Mid-Coast, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton and the Upper Hunter.

We support social and community initiatives through this sponsorship policy, with a priority focus on the following key HCCDC project precincts:

- Newcastle city centre: The Station, Honeysuckle and Museum Park
- Central Coast: Mount Penang and Leagues Club Park Gosford
- Lake Macquarie: Cockle Creek precinct

HCCDC actively grants sponsorships through a commercial arrangement where HCCDC provides a contribution in money and/or value-in-kind to support a diverse range of activities, events, programs, research or thought leadership initiatives that:

- contribute to the delivery of HCCDC's strategic objectives (see clause 3)
- provide lasting benefits to HCCDC and the community
- meet eligibility criteria
- are deemed to be an appropriate use of HCCDC sponsorship fund allocation.

1.2 Sponsorship

Sponsorship is a commercial arrangement in which a sponsor provides a contribution in money or in-kind to support an activity in return for certain specified benefits. Sponsorship can be provided:

- by the corporate sector or private individuals, in support of a public sector activity; or
- by the public sector in support of related and worthwhile private or public sector activities.

Sponsorship **does** not include:

- the selling of advertising space
- joint ventures
- consultancies
- grants (in regard to received sponsorship)
- unconditional gifts, donations, bequests or endowments.

Sponsorship is **not** philanthropic. A sponsor expects to receive a reciprocal benefit beyond a modest acknowledgement. HCCDC does **not** engage in sponsorship for purely charitable or philanthropic purposes.

This Policy will be published on the HCCDC website (<https://www.hccdc.nsw.gov.au/sponsorship>) to provide guidance to those considering approaching HCCDC for sponsorship. A summary of HCCDC sponsorships is recorded in the HCCDC Annual Report.

1.3 Objectives

This policy sets a framework for HCCDC to grant, manage and review sponsorships to external organisations for its place activation, programs and events. It aims to ensure that sponsorships are delivered in accordance with the terms of Government sector-wide guidelines as outlined in the Independent Commission Against Corruption's (ICAC) Sponsorship in the Public Sector publication (<https://www.icac.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/232/Sponsorship%20in%20the%20public%20sector.pdf.aspx>), as well as complying with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) Code of Ethics and Conduct (https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/348992/Code-of-Ethics-and-Conduct.pdf) and relevant departmental policies and procedures.

1.4 Scope

This applies to all HCCDC employees and any external entity seeking sponsorship from HCCDC.

1.5 Ethical conduct

All activities must be conducted in an ethical and transparent manner and comply with the values and principles in the Code of Ethics and Conduct (refer to documents in clause 1.3).

1.6 Alignment with NSW Government policy and priorities

HCCDC is part of the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)'s Homes, Property and Development group. This policy has been developed to ensure alignment with DPE objectives (<https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/about-us/our-outcomes>) and policies which are fundamental in delivering the NSW Premier's Priorities (<https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/premiers-priorities>).

2. Policy components

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Each of the following parties has specific assigned responsibilities under this policy:

- Chief Executive, HCCDC
- Senior Communications Manager, HCCDC
- Marketing Coordinator, HCCDC
- All staff involved in dealing with sponsorship matters, including project team members of HCCDC.

2.1.1 Chief Executive, HCCDC

The Chief Executive is responsible for providing final approval of sponsorships valued up to \$100,000.

2.1.2 Senior Communications Manager, HCCDC

The Senior Communications Manager is responsible for managing the implementation, compliance and review of the policy, including the formal recommendation for endorsement.

2.1.3 Marketing Coordinator

The Marketing Coordinator is responsible for processing applications, and providing operational support to the process and applicants.

2.1.4 All staff

All staff dealing with sponsorship matters must implement this policy.

2.2 Delegation

The following delegates are responsible for managing the area of the policy relating to the granting of sponsorship for the following values:

Delegate	Maximum Amount	Conditions
Chief Executive, HCCDC	\$100,000	Chief Executive may approve amounts up to \$100,000

3. Sponsorship policy

HCCDC will grant sponsorships using a broad-based, open process that is appropriate for the activity under consideration. The NSW Government has identified 38 state outcomes for the eight public service clusters. These outcomes are assigned to different clusters to provide direction, accountability and clear goals for our activities. DPE is responsible for delivering:

- a strong and liveable New South Wales
- maximum community benefit from government land and property
- resilient and sustainable environment and energy
- sustainable and productive regional industries and communities
- sustainable and secure water resources.

These outcomes are reflected in the sponsorship criteria outlined in clause 3.2.

3.1 Sponsorship criteria

HCCDC considers the following criteria when granting sponsorships:

Alignment with HCCDC's strategic objectives to:

- deliver strategic outcomes to grow economic capacity and enhance communities
- drive industry diversification to grow more jobs to attract and retain talent to the regions
- create engaging, sustainable and attractive public places, connected to better transport options
- unlock opportunities and realise the full potential of Government land and assets
- respect existing character, culture and heritage
- work in collaboration and partnership with community and stakeholders.

If the proposed activity, event, program, research or thought leadership initiative:

- aligns with the works of HCCDC as an economic and urban development leader
- contributes to creating great places in the key HCCDC project areas
- brings significant economic activity in the key areas where HCCDC operates
- creates goodwill and benefit for the community
- provides lasting and ongoing benefit to HCCDC, the community and key project areas – beyond a single event
- increases the profile of HCCDC across the Hunter and Central Coast in a lasting way
- involves revitalisation or community education programs
- undertakes research that relates to or complements HCCDC's strategic objectives or projects undertaken in the areas that HCCDC operates in
- is of local, state or national significance as determined by HCCDC
- provides benefits consistent with the value of sponsorship.

3.2 Ineligibility

The corporate values of sponsors and organisations sponsored by HCCDC must align with those of HCCDC and not compromise HCCDC's reputation, public image or probity.

Subject to other clauses of this policy, HCCDC will not accept sponsorships from or grant sponsorship to organisations that:

- conflict with HCCDC values and strategic goals or those of the NSW Government for example those that are aligned with religious or political groups, tobacco or illegal substances, offensive or discriminatory organisations which may bring HCCDC into disrepute
- conflict with existing agreements or arrangements
- could be detrimental to public health and safety
- could limit or appear to limit HCCDC in carrying out its functions fully and impartially
- could compromise HCCDC's ability to exercise its role impartially on behalf of the community
- could diminish public confidence.

In addition, HCCDC will **not** grant sponsorships that:

- are the purchase or sale of advertising space
- are donations to charities where there are no contracted benefits in exchange for funds
- are events or activities outside NSW and/or do not relate to HCCDC project areas of impact, or are outside the regional reach of HCCDC
- provide a personal benefit to a HCCDC employee
- provide explicit endorsement of the sponsor or the sponsor's products
- is otherwise contradict to this policy.

HCCDC reserves the right to refuse an application for sponsorship from any party, even if it meets all the assessment criteria.

3.3 Applying for Sponsorship

To apply for sponsorship, an applicant must:

1. complete all sections of the Sponsorship Application Form (application form) at Attachment A
2. ensure that the request meets the sponsorship criteria detailed in clause 3.1
3. ensure there is sufficient time between submitting the application and when the activity is planned to occur, to allow HCCDC to complete the review and evaluation process
4. email the completed application form to sponsorship@hccdc.nsw.gov.au.

3.4 Assessment of Applications

3.4.1 Selection Criteria

HCCDC will undertake a rigorous review and evaluation of applications which may take up to six weeks to complete. Applications that do not follow the process outlined above will not be considered.

HCCDC may at its discretion allocate sponsorship funding towards scholarship programs. Funding allocations for scholarships will be assessed against the same selection and eligibility criteria as sponsorship applications.

Applications will be evaluated considering:

- alignment with HCCDC business priorities, strategic objectives and priority precincts
- if the requested support and funding will be used in a manner deemed as appropriate to HCCDC
- if the sponsorship will provide lasting and/or capacity-building benefits consistent with the level of support requested
- availability of funding.

To be considered for sponsorship, an applicant may be:

- reputable individuals or organisations
- individuals or organisations whose objectives and products do not conflict with the values and objectives of HCCDC
- individuals or organisations that may have been sponsored before by HCCDC or other agencies, and whose prior sponsorship record is acceptable by HCCDC
- individuals or organisations whose objectives and mission, or those of their parent company or subsidiaries do not conflict with those of HCCDC.

3.4.2 Assessment

HCCDC Marketing Coordinator will assess each application following the below procedures:

- identify whether the proposed application meets HCCDC's mission and objectives
- research the applicant's past and current commercial connections
- ask the applicant to identify any actual, potential and/or perceived conflicts of interest they are aware of
- check any conflicts of interest to identify any potential conflicts

- require HCCDC staffs involved in granting sponsorships to declare any conflicts as soon as possible after HCCDC signals its interest in a sponsorship arrangement with the applicant.

3.4.3 Approval

HCCDC Marketing Coordinator facilitates the following evaluation and approval process:

- Marketing Coordinator reviews all applications, and prepares an evaluation report for those that meet the assessment criteria
- Senior Communications Manager reviews the evaluation report, and makes recommendation to either approve or decline the sponsorship request
- Sponsorships recommended for approval are forwarded to the Chief Executive for final review, and approval or decline
- Chief Executive may approve sponsorships up to the value of \$100,000.

3.4.4 Monitor

HCCDC Marketing Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring and recording the progress of the sponsorship grant against this policy.

3.5 Benefits of Sponsorship

All sponsorship agreements must contain benefits offered to HCCDC in return for the sponsorship. Benefits are required to be consistent with the value of the sponsorship and deliver good value for government and its stakeholders.

The guide below shows the types of benefits that may be applicable, however these will vary greatly depending on the type of activity, and must be consistent with the ICAC Sponsorship Policy.

This is an opportunity to be creative and develop bespoke benefits to maximise investment. Applicants are encouraged to propose additional benefits that align with HCCDC and the activity the sponsorship is being sought for.

Value	Benefits guide
\$50,001 and above	• Recognition as principal or presenting partner • Speaking or presenting opportunity at activity, eg. conference welcome address, subject matter expert session on conference agenda, or participant on expert panel • Speaking opportunity at media events in leadup to activity • Dedicated media releases, including quote from HCCDC spokesperson • Piece to camera opportunity in video content • Message from HCCDC leader in program and promotional materials • Activation of key HCCDC projects areas • Lasting placemaking enhancements in key HCCDC project areas • Access to data collection and reporting insights from sponsorship activity • Access to databases, digital channels or similar, to reach and engage with target audience • Dedicated social media posts tagging HCCDC channels - Partner shout-outs on social media - Facebook live with participants and HCCDC leader • Collaboration and involvement with HCCDC in activity plan • Innovative product placement, eg HCCDC ideas wall, curated images of transformation of a key precinct • Professional photo/video packages (including full usage rights) showcasing activation of HCCDC precincts associated with sponsorship activities • Brand exposure* on promotional materials including advertising, communications, website, digital assets, signage, and onsite at activity eg information stall, banners, signage etc. <i>*Standard branding benefits such as logo placement are considered a low-value benefit</i>
\$20,001 to \$50,000	Between 7 and 10 of the benefits outlined above
\$5,001 to \$20,000	Between 5 and 7 of the benefits outlined above
0 to \$5,000	Between 3 and 5 of the benefits outlined above

HCCDC can also authorise sponsorship in the form of **value-in-kind**. Typical value-in-kind sponsorships include provision of venues, equipment, staff support, publicity and marketing support. Value-in-kind support may be included with a sponsorship funding request.

HCCDC will not explicitly endorse a grant recipient's organisation or products, or allow it to use the agency logo outside the terms of the sponsorship agreement.

3.6 Sponsorship agreement

When HCCDC approves an application for sponsorship, whether cash or value-in-kind, the sponsored party is required to enter into a written sponsorship agreement with HCCDC. All sponsorship agreements are to be in writing, outlining all the rights and responsibilities of both parties, clear objectives of the partnership, benefits, terms and conditions of the sponsorship including acquittal and reporting requirements.

Agreements for sponsorships:

- should not impose or imply conditions that would limit, or appear to limit, a public sector agency's ability to carry out its functions fully and impartially
- will be executed in accordance with the HCCDC delegation.

HCCDC will provide information to sponsorship recipients about HCCDC's expectations, objectives, ethical requirements, benefits, sponsorship guidelines and the criteria against which a proposal will be assessed.

Please refer to Attachment B for a sample sponsorship agreement with HCCDC.

3.7 Sponsorship management and evaluation

Management and evaluation of sponsorships granted is the responsibility of the Senior Communications Manager. All agreements include mandatory reporting requirements including a post-sponsorship evaluation report. Failure to meet the reporting requirements or the agreed conditions will result in HCCDC suspending or terminating the sponsorship.

Sponsored organisations may be required to participate in sponsorship management and activation meetings for the duration of the sponsorship period. These are usually held at the start of the agreement then at appropriate intervals throughout the sponsorship period.

3.8 Risk Management

All HCCDC staffs and the applicant must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest posed by the potential sponsorship arrangement. This may include but not be limited to personal relationships or financial arrangements of staff involved in sponsorship assessment, approval or administration.

If HCCDC decides to accept and manage an existing conflict of interest, HCCDC will record the decision-making process and the management strategies for managing the conflict.

3.9 Personal Benefits

No employee of HCCDC may seek or receive a personal benefit or be perceived to receive a personal benefit as a result of a sponsorship grant.

4. Privacy

4.1 GIPA

HCCDC uses information provided by applicants to assess and process sponsorship proposals. HCCDC may be required to release application information under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* or other lawful requirement.

Applicants should note that HCCDC might give some or all of their application information to:

- other government agencies
- an assessment panel responsible for assessing applications
- parliamentary committees
- members of parliament
- media who may help publicise the project.

The name of the applicant organisation and other details may be disclosed in documentation, such as media releases. These details may also be made publicly available on our website or in HCCDC or DPE annual reports. Any requirement for commercial and/or personal confidentiality should be addressed in your application.

4.2 Personal Information

Personal information may be collected by HCCDC in the process of application. HCCDC will collect any personal information in accordance with *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1998-133>) and the DPE Privacy Management Plan (https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/348501/DPE-Privacy-Management-Plan-2022.pdf)

4.3 Record Keeping

HCCDC will:

- maintain all information relating to a sponsorship grant in an agency file that is readily accessible for audit or inspection as required;
- maintain a database or register of all sponsorship grants; and
- report on all sponsorship grants in your agency's annual report.

The responsible officer for recording keeping will be HCCDC Marketing Coordinator.

5. Financial Administration

5.1 Audit

HCCDC will:

- include sponsorship grant activity in its annual audit program; and
- conduct regular and random financial and performance audit in relation to sponsorship grant arrangement.

6. Document control

6.1 Document approval

Date	Version	Approved by	Amendment Notes
05/12/2018	1.1	Michael Cassel	Policy reviewed and endorsed
02/04/2020	2.1	Valentina Misevska	Policy reviewed and endorsed
11/05/2020	2.2	Valentina Misevska	Policy reviewed and endorsed
17/02/2022	3.1	Anita Mitchell	Policy reviewed and standalone membership and sponsorship policies created. New sponsorship policy endorsed.
21/02/2023	3.2	Valentina Misevska	Policy reviewed and endorsed

Attachment A - Sponsorship Application Form

Application for Sponsorship	
Organisation information	
Application date	
Applicant / organisation Legal entity name and ABN	
Organisation type Charity, not for profit, private entity etc	
Website	
Contact details	
Contact name	
Title and responsibility	
Phone number	
Email	
Postal Address	
Sponsorship activity details	
Name of activity or event	
Activity date	
Venue or location	
Will your activity take place in any of the following priority HCCDC project areas? Please specify:	
Newcastle city centre: The Station, Honeysuckle or Museum Park	
Central Coast: Mount Penang or Leagues Club Park Gosford	
Lake Macquarie: Cockle Creek Precinct	
Summary of the activity	
Is this a one-off or annual activity?	
Who is the target audience?	
How many people see, attend or are involved?	

What is the activity's COVID-19 contingency plan? ie: For changes or cancellation due to Public Health Orders	
Requested sponsorship	
Type of sponsorship Cash or value-in-kind	
Sponsorship value \$ excluding GST	\$
Sponsorship / level Eg: Major Partner, Official Supplier, Supporting Sponsor Gold, Silver or Bronze Member	
How will the funds provided by HCCDC be used?	
How will the success of the sponsorship be measured?	
Alignment with HCCDC's strategic objectives: Describe which of the following objectives your activity aligns with, and how?	
Deliver strategic outcomes to grow economic capacity and enhance communities	
Drive industry diversification to grow more jobs to attract and retain talent to the regions	
Create engaging, sustainable and attractive public spaces, connected to better transport options	
Unlock opportunities and realise the full potential of government land and assets	
Respect existing character, culture and heritage	
Work in collaboration and partnership with community and stakeholders	
Our sponsorship focus is supporting activities that provide long term legacy or capacity-building benefits, extending beyond one-off activations or events. Describe the benefits for the community and HCCDC, and the alignment with DPE objectives.	
Will the sponsorship provide lasting and ongoing tangible benefit to the community, HCCDC and HCCDC's priority project precincts? How?	

Is the primary focus of the proposal within HCCDC's area of operations or key precincts? Please specify. <i>See clause 1 for more information</i>		
How will this sponsorship opportunity enhance the reputation and image of HCCDC and DPE?		
How will this sponsorship opportunity create tangible benefits to HCCDC and DPE such as: • speaking opportunities • data collection • opportunities for direct engagement, such as an exhibition stand or participation in a conference program • marketing campaigns • media and publicity • logo placement (<i>considered to be a low-value benefit</i>) <i>See clause 3.3 for more information</i>		
Is the financial value of the sponsorship and benefits perceived at a realistic value, meaning HCCDC and DPE will receive a perceived value for the sponsorship?		
Does this sponsorship opportunity align with HCCDC and DPE responsibilities in supporting the NSW Government's key priorities? <i>See clause 3 for more information</i>		
Will this sponsorship opportunity reach the right audience? Who and how?		
Can HCCDC and DPE use this opportunity to target consumers and promote our programs, activities and services?		
Additional information		
History of sponsorship with HCCDC or government	Event	Year

Please include contact information for sponsor, HCCDC may complete a reference check		
List any other partners or government departments providing sponsorship	Sponsor/Partner	Value/Level
Evaluation Report Post-event report must be submitted within 2 weeks of the completed sponsorship activity	Due Date:	

Attachment B – Sample Sponsorship Agreement

<https://www.hccdc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-02/Sponsorship%20Agreement%202022%20-%20Example.pdf>