

Report to the Future Melbourne (Marketing) Committee

Agenda item 6.2

Melbourne Spring Fashion Week 2016

3 May 2016

Presenter: Lucan Creamer, Acting Manager Events Melbourne

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to present the producing phase of the events management cycle for Melbourne Spring Fashion Week (MSFW) 2016.
2. MSFW is owned and produced by Council and will be held from Friday 26 August to Friday 2 September 2016. MSFW is a seven day program of events designed to position Melbourne as Australia's leading fashion capital. MSFW provides a launching pad for emerging and established designers, models and brands which drives visitation, retail sales and economic development within the city.
3. The 2015 MSFW attracted 60,200 attendees to free and ticketed events with an overall attendance increase of 20 per cent on the previous year. In addition \$8.07 million economic impact was injected into the municipality as a direct result of the event being staged.

Key issues

4. MSFW 2016 will have an overarching theme which will deliver an integrated and compelling customer experience by providing a consistent direction for all areas of the event design including marketing, commercial partnerships and programming.
5. In 2016, MSFW will engage an ambassador to amplify and leverage marketing and publicity opportunities that will raise event awareness whilst positively profiling the City of Melbourne.
6. The program will include a range of free and ticketed events that will draw a variety of audiences into the city to explore its unique and iconic fashion, retail, hospitality and cultural hubs.
7. Year 3 of the retail connection strategy will be implemented including a major retail event in Vogue Fashion's Night Out on the MSFW Opening Night, linking several retail precincts through retail activations, offers and exclusive experiences designed specifically to drive retail visitation and economic stimulus within the municipality.
8. Management will again seek to engage external organisations as commercial partners in line with Events Melbourne's commercial framework. Partners will be sought to relieve core programming costs (i.e. hair and make-up) and to enhance MSFW program elements through tailored activations.
9. The community will be engaged and invited to participate in the official event program via consultation and an Expression of Interest process. Community consultation has already begun with designers, precinct groups, retailers, fashion institutions, businesses, as well as other internal and external stakeholders who may be involved or impacted by the event. Details of key objectives, the program, the brand and marketing strategy, communication channels and the commercial strategy are set out in Attachment 2.

Recommendation from management

10. That the Future Melbourne Committee endorses the Melbourne Spring Fashion Week 2016 program.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 4)
2. MSFW 2016 Highlights (Page 3 of 4)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation from management.

Finance

2. All proposed expenditure would be contained within approved budgets, assuming a similar Melbourne Spring Fashion Week budget to that of 2015–16, and subject to the outcome of Council's 2016–17 Annual Budget process.
3. The current 2016–17 draft budget stands at \$2,272,759 excluding net commercial revenue.

Conflict of interest

4. 'No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.'

Stakeholder consultation

5. Consultation has occurred within the City Business Division, Councillors, Governance Services, City precinct groups and with industry stakeholders, contractors and key service suppliers in establishing the MSFW 2016 program and event concept.

Relation to Council policy

6. This report is consistent with overall strategies contained in the Council Plan. Melbourne Spring Fashion Week is aligned to Goal 3 of the Council Plan 2013–17: A Prosperous City.

Environmental sustainability

7. As part of the Council Plan, action 9.1, a pilot study of the environmental impact of our Premier Events is being undertaken with Moomba Festival 2015. A selection of findings from the study will be applicable across our Premier Events, allowing Council to identify opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of MSFW in future years. Additionally, a study to measure the environmental impact of MSFW is planned for 2016–17.

MSFW 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

Key priorities:

1. Increase overall event attendance by 10 per cent.
2. Strengthen the brand strategy - reinforcing CoM ownership and build on the 2015 creative direction.
3. Develop the retail connection strategy - build on success of 2015 opening night; drive direct retail economic impact; strengthen partnerships with key retail precincts.
4. Consolidate the week - review the schedule; refine MSFW Designer; enrich City Square venue and program; redevelop MSFW Industry; strengthen MSFW Curated; grow MSFW Mr.
5. Enhance the customer experience - ensuring it is seamless; led by the creative direction; digitally driven.
6. Showcase the MSFW Hub - the core entertainment precinct of City Square and Town Hall.
7. Leverage the MSFW community - showcase Melbourne's industry; engage local talent.
8. Evolve MSFW Designer – ensure production and content is aspirational.

Core programming areas:

1. MSFW Hub: The key free entertainment destination located at City Square, open to the public and includes a morning to evening program of activity from Sunday, 28 August to Friday, 2 September 2016. The program will include fashion runways and activation workshops, Emerging Designer Market (Sunday), commercial partner activations and live entertainment.
2. MSFW Designer: Innovative state of the art runway shows presented at the Melbourne Town Hall. Across four evenings a mix of unique and aspirational shows will take place opening the week of designer showcases on Tuesday 30 August to Friday 2 September 2016. Each runway will include a unique theme in line with the event's creative vision. Hospitality options will be available for public purchase to extend their entertainment experience, including premium seat and corporate hospitality packages. Fashion and talent content will include 70 per cent Melbourne talent, interstate designers and some international brands. All designer and brand content will be available for retail in Melbourne.
3. MSFW Industry: A series of seminars, discussions, workshops and networking opportunities presented by industry leaders and leading Melbourne retail and design experts designed to educate and enhance business skills and outcomes. The event will take place on Tuesday 30 August and Wednesday 31 August 2016 in retail locations across the city.
4. MSFW Emerging: Runway productions to showcase the collections belonging to the final year fashion students from six of Melbourne's top fashion schools. Presented at Melbourne Town Hall on Sunday 28 August 2016, these shows will feature student designers from RMIT, Holmesglen, Box Hill Institute, Kangan Institute, Melbourne School of Fashion and Whitehouse Institute of Design Australia.
5. MSFW Curated: A platform for designers, retailers, artists, businesses and individuals to participate in MSFW by hosting their own fashion or retail event in the city throughout the official event week. Collaborating with 50 stakeholders who will produce their own events across a range of genres such as exhibitions, workshops and runways will participate in this year's program.
6. MSFW Retail Connection: The program, introduced in 2014 as an initiative to drive retail visitation and direct economic impact will feature again in 2016 including opening the event on Friday 26 August with a city wide retail shopping night. Other features of this program will include capsule collections at the MSFW Hub and participating retailers with linked MSFW offers.

Brand and marketing communications plan:

1. Digital: MSFW website, social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram).
2. Media partnerships: Channel 7, News Life Media, oOh! Media, Fashion Journal and others currently being confirmed.
3. Print, ambient, and online advertising.
4. Publicity including key messages reinforcing City of Melbourne event ownership and MSFW as a Uniquely Melbourne fashion event.
5. Brand activation and experiential activity.

Commercial plan:

1. Acquire and implement sustainable commercial partnerships with tailored activation programs to support and add value to the MSFW event and audience experience.

Key dates:

1. Media Launch: Wednesday 13 July 2016 (TBC); and
2. MSFW 2016 Event: Friday 26 August to Friday 2 September 2016.