

Management report to Council

Agenda item 6.5

Melbourne Knowledge Week 2020 Planning Phase

10 December 2019

Presenter: Katrina McKenzie, General Manager, City Economy and Activation

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to present the concept and strategy for Melbourne Knowledge Week 2020 (MKW) as part of the planning phase of the events management cycle.
2. MKW is the City of Melbourne's unique annual festival, engaging all Melburnians to explore, discuss, and ideate the future together. It explores exciting opportunities, tackles urgent challenges, and shares skills through seven days of interactive events, workshops, dinners, and performances. 2020 will be the 11th Melbourne Knowledge Week.
3. The 2019 MKW attracted nearly 30,000 people, an increase of 31 per cent from 2018, and a total media reach of 2.1 million, an increase of 17 per cent from 2018.
4. In December 2018, Council endorsed three-year funding to incrementally grow MKW to premier event status by financial year 2020–21.

Key issues

5. MKW 2020 will continue to realise the event's ongoing vision of "Exploring Melbourne's future, together", with key programming principles of positivity, discovery, legacy and interactivity.
6. The event strategy is to deliver Year Two of the MKW Growth Plan 2019–21, by:
 - 6.1. increasing in-person festival attendance to 30,000 through program design, enhanced partnership model and a focused marketing strategy; and
 - 6.2. expanding the festival footprint to activate multiple city precincts.
7. MKW will take place from Monday 11 May – Sunday 17 May 2020. The Festival Hub and Prototype Street will be located at Meat Market, North Melbourne. Additional venues across the municipality will be activated, including Melbourne Museum, Queen Victoria Women's Centre, Melbourne University, RMIT, State Library of Victoria, Boyd Community Hub and Loop Project Space.
8. The program will comprise over 100 events that showcase innovation, share knowledge, build literacy, and teach skills, by engaging citizens in experiences that can test new ideas and the innovations of today to achieve a desired tomorrow. It will combine MKW-programmed events and industry-led events received via public Expressions of Interest (EOI) process. There has been a 40 per cent increase in EOIs received for 2020, a result of the ongoing relationship building with stakeholders across the sector.
9. Emergent themes for 2020 include sustainability and climate change, food and waste, future of retail, technology and innovation (including artificial intelligence, virtual reality, robotics and augmented reality), fintech, civics and democracy, and design. These will be explored via a curated series of keynote speeches, panels, workshops, dinners, interactive installations, design hacks, long table discussions, startup breakfasts, artistic performances, family-friendly events, and the Prototype Street activation.
10. The 2020 MKW brand identity will ask the questions that intrigue Melburnians and inspire thinking about the future of their city. Using the tagline prompt of "So, What If ...?", these questions will form the foundation of a comprehensive marketing and media campaign which will support the delivery of the MKW Growth Plan.
11. The commercial strategy is to maintain an offering of predominantly free and low cost events. Commercial partnerships are currently being explored.

Recommendation from management

12. That Council endorses the 2020 Melbourne Knowledge Week event model.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 2)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation from management. Legal advice will be provided as and when required.

Finance

2. Council's 2019–20 budget includes \$630,000 operating budget for the delivery of Melbourne Knowledge Week, and \$100,000 capital works budget for the Melbourne Knowledge Week Hub.

Conflict of interest

3. 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.

Health and Safety

4. The Occupational Health and Safety of the staff, contractors and event attendees is at the forefront of planning for MKW. A number of strategies are put in place to ensure the event environment is safe and enjoyable for all. CoM and the appointed Risk Manager are responsible for all safety and emergency management plans for this event.

Stakeholder consultation

5. During the planning phase of MKW, consultation has occurred with a range of external stakeholders including past event partners, Melbourne Innovation District partners, key contractors and other

Relation to Council policy

6. This report is consistent with overall strategies contained in the Council Plan 2017–21 (A knowledge city).
7. Council Plan 2019–20 Annual Plan Initiative 5.1: Deliver phase two of the Melbourne Knowledge Week Festival growth plan 2019–21.

Environmental sustainability

8. Planning is underway to achieve a carbon neutral event for the second consecutive year.
9. City of Melbourne will engage with internal and external sustainability leaders for feedback, collaboration and innovative approaches to sustainable event practice. It will also engage service suppliers that undertake environmental and social practices. Audiences to free and paid events can opt-in to provide a financial contribution to carbon offset costs at the time of event registration.