

President's Report 2015

2015 has been a very good year. We successfully acquitted our 2014/2015 Business Support Grant from the City of Sydney. This grant was inherited from the previous board of the then-named 2010 Partnership. After they unanimously stepped down at the end of 2013, I took over, invited great new people to join the current board and took care of all compliance issues and renamed the 2010 Partnership back to the Darlinghurst Business Partnership (its original name from 2004 through 2009).

This inherited grant and its 4 projects was for the value of \$40,700.00 and delivered by the city in three instalments. An initial lot of \$17,600 inc GST on signing of the contract in July 2014, a second of \$17,600 on completion of a half yearly report in March 2015, and a final \$5500 August 2015.

The grant consisted of four projects. Project 1 was 'Project Coordinator' and the board effectively waived these fees by contributing all time and work voluntarily. In doing so we have left the partnership in the black for over \$15,000; these funds are considered a strategic reserve by the board and are used judiciously to seed fund future projects and for local tactical initiatives like the safety cards we created for business and the window stickers we created for #DoDarlo.

It also enables us to keep the General Membership fees nominal which we consider vital as small businesses in Darlinghurst struggle with the impacts of the Lockout Laws. These hastily conceived laws, while achieving the very narrow policy aim of curtailing violence in Kings Cross, have had a raft of unintended consequences, not the least of which is the complete undermining of the City of Sydney's OPEN late night diversification strategy.

Project 2 was quarterly networking events and membership building. We hit our 1st year membership target of 50 members within the first couple of months and have had four very successful and well-attended member's nights the most surprisingly popular of which was the Rent and Lease negotiating seminar put on with the help of the State Chamber of Commerce's lease lawyer, Warwick Lahood. Never have we seen so many people hanging joyfully off the words of a lawyer

Project 3 was communications. The previous board had outsourced this task and by taking over the responsibility for this area we saved the partnership another \$3000. This also has the benefit of the comms being more authentic, frequent and timely. We sent over 100 emails last year all on relevant issues to members and local businesses. Our open rates are over 50% for members and over 30% for the general local business and stakeholder email. Both these figures are FAR above the industry standards.

Project 4 was b2b precinct marketing and for a long time we had not intended to be a marketing group. But at the last minute, committee member James Winter stuck upon the idea of using the funding for grants to encourage local businesses and creative to create collaborative events together, an idea based on one of the core DBP philosophies of empowering the local community by fostering relationship between local businesses in the form of cooperative marketing through collaborative events.

So was DoDarlo born and executed in June 2015. This distributed calendar of local diverse events

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was a good success and received over 20 media mentions, articles and even a local front page. While almost all participants registered an upturn in trade during and leading up to their events, by far the most important aspect of the program was the fostering of relationships between locals businesses. I understand the council needs to measure the economic impact of their grant dollars spent, but they must also endeavour in future to put a value on the community building that these events encourage.

Project 4, now #DoDarlo, had a budget of \$5000, turns out that this is not enough to run an effective grass roots local campaign. See breakdown below

who	how much	what
Grand Days	\$500.00	participant
Makery	\$500.00	participant
Radio Alive Gig	\$500.00	participant
Dr Egg Digital	\$500.00	participant
The Doorlist/Spunky Bruiser	\$500.00	participant
Playmade	\$500.00	participant
Liquorice Pizza	\$500.00	participant
South Dowling	\$500.00	participant
Desighn Residency	\$500.00	participant
APA fliers	\$1,499.30	printing and distro, 20k
APA fliers	\$218.90	wrap party fliers
oriental bowerbird	\$500.00	design
BRAG	\$308.00	Street Press
SX	\$770.00	Street Press
Emma Jones PR	\$500.00	PR
BRAG	\$924.00	Advertising
Aiden	\$800.00	Videographer

\$10,020.20

Even with NFP discounts from all suppliers and a very judicious and broad spend, the budget came in at double projected. This is another area in which the waived Project Management fees came in very helpful.

We wish we had known this before signing off on our new grant, but due to the timing of the application we had already signed on for 3 more DoDarlos in 2015/2016 at a budget of \$5000 each. The XMAS DoDarlo has already gone to \$7500 and will probably his around \$10,000. But it is worth it doing these things properly and the board is satisfied that this is a judicious and correct expenditure of DBP's funds.

Our 2015/2016 grant was signed September 2015 and we have received the first payment of

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\$29,700.00 all four project are well underway and ahead of schedule.

Project 1, VESPA (Villages of East Sydney Partnership Alliance), an alliance with the Potts Point Partnership and Surry Hills Creative Precinct, has already engaged Barry Barton's "Right Angle" to move us towards and East Sydney Destination Marketing Strategy. This is the idea to position East Sydney as Sydney's Soho or Brooklyn, and leverage the fact that the big end of town in Sydney is so blinded by events and landmarks that they are missing out on 20% of the potential tourism market and failing to increase length of stay before of the lack on fine grain tourism offer in Sydney.

Project 2, NOTS (Nerd On The Street) is advancing and in the prototype phase.

Project 3 – Networking with local businesses with a view to implementing our 3 year operational plans is also underway, as is the creation of a CRM system.

Project 4 – DoDarlo Xmas is about to be in full swing and received by great feedback and interest from the local business community even before its launch. Engaging and paying well a local artist for the artwork has proven to be a great idea and really is setting Darlinghurst apart from all the other suburbs. Grumpy Santa Rules. Also, we seriously need to make note to apply for \$10,000 for each DoDarlo from now on.

Financially we are in a great position with over \$30,000 in the bank and all projects coming in on budget and ahead of time.

Membership stands at 80 and we would like to increase this organically with passionate new businesses to 100 over the coming months.

Stephan Gyory
President.

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