

10.18.Don Bank Studio - Selection of Writer in Residence for 2023

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ATTACHMENTS	1. CONFIDENTIAL - Don Bank 2023 Writer in Residence Councillor Briefing Note [10.18.1 - 2 pages]
CSP LINK	4. Our Social Vitality 4.1 North Sydney is connected, inclusive, healthy and safe 4.2 A centre for creativity and learning 4.3 North Sydney's history is preserved and recognised

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is the selection of the Don Bank Writer in Residence for 2023.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Expressions of interest for the 2023 Writer in Residence at the Don Bank Studio have been processed and reviewed by the selection panel. For the 2023 residency there were two applications received, and both are of very high quality.
- Submissions are assessed on the quality and style of the applicants writing as well as originality and creativity. Applicants must demonstrate how the residency will benefit their career and creative development.
- Applicants must also propose a series of public programs to be delivered during the residency, that will engage and add value to the Library community.
- In 2022, outgoing writer Kate Austin-Raffan delivered two successful writing workshops at Stanton Library which were well attended and received positive feedback.
- The selection panel seeks the support of Council in offering the 2023 residency to the recommended applicant, with details provided in the attached confidential briefing note.
- Should Council wish to discuss this report, it is noted that the Confidential Attachment includes personnel matters that relate to the employment conditions of specific individuals. It is noted that this item does not deal with personnel matters of a group but is specific to individuals and as such should be considered in closed session.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council resolves that the identified attachment to this report is to be treated as confidential in accordance with section 11(3) of the Local Government Act for the following reason under section 10A (2) of the Local Government Act:

- (a) *personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors)*

2. THAT Council supports the selection of Applicant 2 for the Don Bank Program commencing 8 May 2023.

Background

Through the Don Bank Writer in Residence program, Council offers writers a unique opportunity to pursue their inspiration in the tranquil and historic Don Bank Museum, a heritage building in a garden setting located in the heart of North Sydney CBD.

The Residency seeks to serve the writer in their creative development, while enhancing the cultural enrichment and vitality of the North Sydney community. Council invites writers of poetry, fiction, non-fiction, memoirs, playwrights, songwriters and musical composers to apply for the opportunity to complete a creative project in the peaceful writer's studio, whilst contributing to the Library's public programs by delivering workshops and other activities to engage the community.

Successful residencies have previously been completed by playwright Justin Fleming, crime writer P.M Newton, and children's author Yvette Poshoglian. In December 2022, Kate Austin-Raffan's term was completed with the successful delivery of writing programs drawing on inspiration from historic items in the Museum collection.

Report

In February 2023 applications opened for the Don Bank Writer in Residence program. The program was promoted through the Stanton Library e-newsletter, and Council's website and social media channels. Two applications were received and were assessed by the judging committee - Amanda Hudson, Community Development Librarian and Ian Hoskins, Council Historian. Despite the low number of submissions, the two applicants are of high quality.

Applications were assessed on how the residency might directly benefit the author's writing, as well as enriching and enlivening the cultural and literary life in North Sydney. Applicants were invited to present ideas for workshops and activities that will engage and stimulate conversation, prompt action like joining writing or literature groups, and provide the opportunity for creatives to connect.

Applications were assessed on the quality and style of their writing as well as originality and creativity. They also had to demonstrate how the residency would benefit their career and creative development.

In December 2022, Kate Austin-Raffan completed a very successful residency with the delivery of two community workshops at Stanton Library. The first workshop was part of the Winter Writing Festival where she delivered a workshop entitled *Place as Character*. The second workshop, *Everyday Stories at Don Bank*, was part of the 2022 Heritage Festival with a selection of historic objects from the museum's collection used to show how everyday items can function as creative prompts for writing.

The two applications for the 2023 program are discussed in detail in the attached confidential briefing note.

Considering the small number of applicants, Stanton Library staff are currently reviewing the program for 2024.

Consultation requirements

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

Financial/Resource Implications

The Resident Writer pays a peppercorn rent of \$1 for 12 months.

Utilities are provided under the Don Bank operation budget.

A bond of \$500 is paid by the writer and refunded upon exit.

Legislation

A lease agreement between North Sydney Council and the successful applicant is signed for the duration of the residency.