

ORDINARY MEETING	6
5 JUNE 2024	

## **2023/2024 INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND (IEDF) APPLICATION – BABINDA DISTRICT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC**

58/1/2 | #7407555

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Council:**

- 1. Approves the award of grant funding of \$5,000 (ex GST) to Babinda District Community Association Inc, through Council's Industry and Economic Development Fund to support the development of a Business Plan for the Babinda Museum; and**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to this project-based funding.**

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### **INTERESTED PARTIES:**

Babinda District Community Association Inc (Babinda Taskforce) Management Committee:

- Sandy Taylor-Crane (President)
- Dalitta Wright (Vice-President)
- Christine Norman (Vice-President)
- Joanne Nucifora (Secretary)
- Stuart Lawson (Treasurer)

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Cairns Regional Council's Industry and Economic Development Fund (IEDF) aims to support local organisations with the development and delivery of projects that will have industry and economic benefits to the Cairns Regional Council area.

An IEDF application has been submitted to Council by Babinda District Community Association Inc (trading as the Babinda Taskforce) who manage the Babinda Museum (the Museum). Babinda Taskforce are seeking funding to cover the full cost of developing a five-year business plan for Babinda Museum to support the organisation's planning and development, assist in identifying a sustainable business model, and bring benefits to the Babinda economy and community. These benefits include increasing tourism visitation, preserving and protecting local history and culture, place-making, local business support, and upskilling of volunteers.

Council Officers have reviewed the application and are satisfied that the project meets the IEDF policy requirements and aligns with the economic objectives within Council's

Corporate Plan 2021-2026 and Council's Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026.

The funding requested from Cairns Regional Council is \$5,000 (ex GST), which Council Officers recommend funding in full.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Industry and Economic Development Fund (IEDF) is one of the grant streams within the Community Grants Policy which Council originally adopted on 23 September 2009. The objective of the IEDF is to support the economic goal included in the Cairns Regional Council Corporate Plan, specifically: *Robust economy: Supporting a diversified and resilient economy that backs business innovation, growth, and jobs*. The IEDF also supports the delivery of Council's Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026.

IEDF applicants can seek up to \$15,000 (ex GST) financial or in-kind assistance or a combination of the two. All successful IEDF applications are required to acquit their projects against agreed key performance indicators. The authority for IEDF grant approval rests with Council.

The Babinda District Community Association Inc (trading as the Babinda Taskforce) has been in operation for twenty-five years, working to build a strong, sustainable and connected community. The Babinda Museum was established in January 2023, the governance of the museum is managed by an eight-person volunteer committee and the Babinda Taskforce oversee the daily operations of the museum. The Babinda Museum is housed in the shop at 49 Munro St, adjacent to the Babinda Taskforce community centre.

Babinda Taskforce have made an application to Council's IEDF seeking funding of \$5,000 (ex GST) to prepare a business plan for the Babinda Museum. This report provides an overview of Council Officers' assessment of the application and associated recommendations.

### **COMMENT:**

A high-level summary of the project can be found below in Table 1.

This proposal aims to fully cover the cost of engaging local firm Engage Creative Communication Solutions Pty Ltd to develop a business plan for the Babinda Museum.

The Business Plan's aim is to support the organisation's planning and development, assist in identifying a sustainable business model, and bring benefits to the Babinda economy and community. These benefits include increasing tourism visitation, preserving and protecting local history and culture, place-making, local business support, and upskilling of volunteers.

The project is expected to commence in July 2024, pending the outcome of Council's decision regarding this report, and conclude in December 2024.

**Table 1: Babinda District Community Association Inc IEDF application – overview**

<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Babinda District Community Association Inc</b>	
<b>Project Name</b>	Investing in cultural infrastructure; a Business Plan for Babinda Museum	
<b>Overview/purpose</b>	Engage local firm Engage. Creative Communication Solutions Pty Ltd to prepare a Business Plan for the Babinda Museum, to support the organisation’s planning and development, assist in identifying a sustainable business model, and bring benefits to the Babinda economy and community. These benefits include increasing tourism visitation, preserving and protecting local history and culture, place-making, local business support, and upskilling of volunteers. Proposed costs to be covered in full: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional services of Engage. Communication Solutions Pty Ltd - \$5,000 (ex GST)</li> </ul>	
<b>Total Project Costs (ex GST)</b>	\$7,950	
<b>Eligible Applicant (Y/N)*</b>	Yes	
<b>Eligible Project (Y/N)*</b>	Yes	
<b>Assistance sought from Cairns Regional Council (ex GST)</b>	<b>Financial</b>	\$5,000 ex GST
	<b>In-kind</b>	Nil
<b>Co-funding</b>	<b>Financial</b>	\$0
	<b>In-kind</b>	\$2,950 from Babinda Taskforce and Queensland Museum
<b>Has this application been assessed by CRC Finance team?</b>	Yes	
<b>Officer Recommendation (Approve/Decline)</b>	Approve in full to the value of \$5,000 (ex GST)	
<b>Rationale for Recommendation</b>	Babinda is a growing township that possess significant opportunities for economic development and is identified as a Geographical Area of Focus in Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026. Tourism, Arts and Culture are also identified as a priority industry sectors in Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026. The Babinda Museum makes important contributions to the local economy of Babinda through the Tourism, Arts and Culture industries. The Museum’s role in preserving the local history and culture and sharing it to visitors, positively impacts the local economy through increased visitor spend and dispersal. Additional benefits of the project include skills and training opportunities for volunteers and increasing the tourism profile of Babinda.	

\*Eligibility assessed against the provisions of Council’s Community Grant Policy - Industry and Economic Development Fund Stream

It is noted that Council has also provided financial support to Babinda Taskforce pursuant to various grant programs and through officer time. This has included:

- Resource and Performance Agreement through Economic Development team to the value of \$15,000 per annum for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.
- Community Partnerships Grants for Christmas in Babinda to the value of \$3,500 per annum for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.
- Australia Day Funding to the value of \$5,000 per annum for 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- Economic Development Geographical Areas of Focus Budget funding for Destination Signage and Museum Walk Extension to the value of \$7,985 in 2022/23.
- Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) funding to the value of \$5,723 in 2021/22.
- Community Partnerships Grant for 2021 NAIDOC Celebrations and Cultural Awareness Training to the value of \$2,200 in 2021/22.

Over the last three years the value of this support is approximately \$81,000 (ex GST).

### **OPTIONS:**

#### Option 1 (recommended)

That Council:

1. Approves the award of grant funding of \$5,000 (ex GST) to Babinda District Community Association Inc, through Council's Industry and Economic Development Fund to support the development of a Business Plan for the Babinda Museum; and
2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to this project-based funding.

#### Option 2

That Council **does not** approve the application for funding under Council's Industry and Economic Development Fund for the project referred to in this report or recommends an alternative level of funding to be provided.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### Risk Management:

The applicant is an established organisation and has operated the Babinda Museum since January 2023. Babinda Taskforce has a track record of successfully acquitting all grant submissions. The main risk to Council of approving the funding is that the outcomes sought from the project are not achieved. Performance in this regard will be managed through a formal acquittal process with input/review from Council Officers.

#### Council Finance and the Local Economy:

The allocation for the IEDF in Council's 2023/24 OPEX budget is \$20,000 (ex GST). This

report recommends the approval of funding totalling \$5,000 (ex GST). During 2023/24 funding round, Council has awarded \$5,000 (ex GST) for Mulgrave Shire Historical Society to undertake a Business Plan for Mulgrave Settlers Museum.

The project under consideration will support the continued preservation of the history of Babinda and the sharing of this history to visitors at the Babinda Museum, positively impacting the local economy through increased visitor spend and dispersal. The project will continue to contribute to the local Tourism and Arts and Culture Industries.

#### Corporate and Operational Plans:

Cairns Regional Council Corporate Plan 2021-2026

- Robust Economy
- Community and Culture

Cairns Regional Council Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026

- Priority Industries: Arts and Culture, and Tourism
- Geographical Areas of Focus: Babinda

#### Policy

This application has been assessed against the General Community Grant Policy which provides the general terms and assessment criteria for the Industry and Economic Development Fund.

#### **CONSULTATION:**

Representatives of the following have been consulted:

- Babinda District Community Association Inc



Nick Masasso  
Director – Economic Development and Advocacy