

Committee(s) Policy and Resources	Dated: 7 July 2016
Subject: Sponsorship of the Battle of Ideas Festival organised by the Institute of Ideas	Public
Report of: Director of Economic Development	For Decision
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Summary

The Institute of Ideas (IoI) was founded in 2000 to provide a forum committed to open and robust public debate. The IoI organises intelligent public debates, on 'controversial' topics. It is not associated with any particular political party.

The proposal is to sponsor the Battle of Ideas festival, organised by the IoI, which will take place on 22-23 October in the Barbican. The event has established itself as London's major intellectual festival. The IoI would seek £15,000 for the sponsorship status of *Debate Partner*.

The proposal is also to invite a number of students from the City Corporation's schools and academies. We would seek £1000 to cover the costs of 50 tickets.

Sponsorship of the event will provide the City Corporation with speaking opportunities and exposure. The City Corporation will have the chance to engage in debates and demonstrate a public commitment to thought-leadership. This will also be the occasion to raise the City Corporation's profile to a broader type of audience.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to agree to provide £16,000 from the Policy Initiatives Fund 2016/17 categorised under 'Events' and charged to 'City's Cash' to sponsor the Battle of Ideas Festival, taking place on 22-23 October 2016.

Main Report

Background

1. This is the first time the City Corporation would work with the IoI. However, the Barbican Centre has been hosting the event since 2012. The IOI provides a forum committed to open and robust public debate on 'controversial' topics. The Battle of Ideas is a major intellectual festival.

Proposals

2. The proposal is to sponsor the Battle of Ideas festival, organised by the IoI, which will take place on 22-23 October in the Barbican. The event has taken place for 11 years and is established as London's major intellectual festival. It brings into the City, for one weekend of debate, a diverse range of 400 international speakers and 3000 people from all walks of life and ages.

3. 2015 keynote speakers included Lesley Curwen (business, economics and finance journalist, BBC), Daniel Moylan (TfL Board Member and former London Mayoral adviser on aviation and Crossrail 2), Brendan O'Neill (Editor, Spiked and Contributor, Spectator), David Chandler (Professor of International Relations, University of Westminster).
4. This year's programme has over 90+ sessions covering the most topical ethical/social questions in politics (domestic & international), education, academia, business, STEM and arts/culture.
5. Key partners for this year's festival include Thames Water, Immunocore, NOTA/NSPCC, Transport Systems Catapult, Pagefield, School of Advanced Study, Association of British Bookmakers, CityAM and Hargrave Foundation.
6. As *Debate Partner* the City Corporation would programme two public debates, with two nominated speakers, on two key areas of interest for the City. This would demonstrate a commitment to thought-leadership in a public arena.
7. The City Corporation would be credited in all publicity materials: online, in the brochure, and in print. Sponsorship would include complimentary VIP tickets for the speakers and two representatives for the weekend, including the reception and speakers' and sponsors' supper.
8. The Festival attracts an audience the City Corporation does not regularly engage with: a mix of students, post-graduates and researchers, professionals, teachers and academics. It will be an excellent opportunity to raise the City Corporation's profile with the latter.
9. It is further proposed to invite 50 students from the City Corporation's schools and academies to provide them with the opportunity to hear new ideas and interesting speakers.

Implications

10. It is proposed that the required funding of £16,000 is drawn from the Policy Initiatives Fund 2016/17 and categorised under Events and charged to *City's Cash*. The current uncommitted balance in the 2016/17 Fund is £480,900 prior to any allowance being made for any other proposals on today's agenda.

Conclusion

11. The proposed sponsorship of the Battle of Ideas accords well with the role the City Corporation plays in promoting debates on issues that affect the City and linking its work to its schools and academies.

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