



Proposal for Additional Funding: Ord Valley Muster 2025 and 2026

September 2024

Context

The Ord Valley Muster is a long-standing feature of the Western Australian events calendar, held in the spectacular East Kimberley. The nine-day award-winning festival is a celebration of the region through a diverse program of exciting events showcasing music, arts, and the vibrant local community.

In 2024, the Ord Valley Muster experienced a significant decline in ticket sales compared to previous years. Ord Valley Events Inc. (OVEI) understands this is due to a variety of factors.

- **Australia has seen an unprecedented wave of festival cancellations due to rising costs and poor ticket sales.** No event is immune to the threats currently facing the festival industry, and the 2024 Ord Valley Muster was no exception.
- **Rising household expenses and economic pressures are affecting consumer behaviour.** This is impacting the arts and cultural sector as well as the tourism sector, where many are reducing discretionary spending on festival tickets and travel.
- **Tourism operators are reporting a slower than usual start to the 2024 season.** We expect this is due to cost of living factors combined with uncertainty surrounding road openings following an exceptionally wet season, making travel plans precarious for many potential attendees. This resulted in delayed arrivals into Kununurra and significantly fewer travelling festival-goers. Historically, we expect a 50/50 split between locals and tourists for the Kimberley Moon Experience; however, this year, only 30% of ticket sales were from travelling attendees.
- **We believe the lineup for the signature event, the Kimberley Moon, was not compelling enough to attract and retain travellers and locals in our usual numbers.** Due to significantly increased event delivery costs, budget restrictions limited our ability to secure higher-profile artists. In the current climate, the power of a lineup is a crucial factor for ticket sales.

While our influence over broader issues may be limited, we are committed to responding as best we can to the current challenges and securing the Ord Valley Muster for the future.

Enhancing the event

OVEI are dedicated to ensuring the Ord Valley Muster continues to be a highlight on the Western Australian Events calendar, drawing visitors to our remote and beautiful part of the state, and fostering resilience and pride from our local community. We understand the challenges we face and are proactively working to ensure the sustainability of the iconic Kimberley festival.

We have conducted a series of focus groups to better understand the needs of our audiences in order to evaluate our current program structure and shape a program for 2025 that will resonate in the market. These discussions are across diverse demographics of locals, visitors and partners, and complement the insights provided through the post-event surveys and Metrix reports.

Proposed use of funds

To meet current challenges and continue delivering a high-quality event offering, **OVEI is seeking an additional \$50,000 for the 2025 event and 2026 events, respectively.**

An increase in funds is crucial to ensure the security and ongoing sustainability of the Ord Valley Muster. The requested funds will be targeted to leverage the economic, media and social impact of the event:

Economic Impact	Media Impact	Social Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing the appeal of the event to drive visitation and length of stay Deepening our strong local business connections to contribute to the number of local businesses engaged through events, which drives increased investment into the local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying areas for improvement and leveraging of media opportunities Higher-profile headline to draw additional attention – these also provide media and content opportunities to showcase the event, the region and the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create vibrancy, generate a sense of pride and provide opportunities for locals, including jobs creation Activation of shoulder season to extend the positive impacts of tourism Build capacity, opportunity and legacy for the East Kimberley community

Specifically, OVEI intends to allocate the funding across three key areas, each leading to the event's ongoing viability, enhancing the appeal of the event, and boosting ticket sales.

1. Programming / Artists:

Artist performance fees have increased by 20% over the last two years. By increasing our investment in artists and program delivery, we will enhance the appeal of the event which we anticipate will result in higher ticket sales and strengthen this revenue stream.

2. PR and Marketing:

Significant effort has gone into rebranding and visual marketing to make the event more appealing and familiar to the East Coast market. Maintaining and growing this market presence is important to support brand awareness and conversion.

3. Production & Operations:

Production and operations costs have increased significantly over the last four years. To maintain the budget at its current level, we have made considerable compromises and concessions and have reached a critical point where further reductions will significantly impact the event's delivery and user experience. Supporting a quality event experience is vital to the appeal and overall consumer satisfaction throughout the festival

We sincerely appreciate the ongoing support of the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley, and look forward to working with you to ensure the Ord Valley Muster continues to be a highlight on the Western Australian events calendar.

If you require further information to consider our request, please do not hesitate to contact Margot McTaggart at the details below.



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