



Expression of Interest Guide: Chinese Garden of Friendship Advisory Committee

1. Overview of the Chinese Garden of Friendship at Darling Harbour

The Chinese Garden of Friendship is recognised as a unique cultural institution and landscape inspired by the historical philosophies and design principles of a learned gentleman's stroll garden from China.

The garden was initiated by the Chinese community of Sydney, the Chinese Garden of Friendship (CGOF) Guangzhou in the province of Guangdong. Guangzhou is Sydney's sister city and Guangdong is a sister state to New South Wales.

The garden was designed by the Guangdong Landscape Bureau in Guangzhou in China, and incorporates items manufactured in or salvaged from China, as well as elements sourced in NSW.

Located near Chinatown, at 1 Harbour Street, Darling Harbour, on the site of the former NSW Fresh Food and Ice Company, the CGOF was constructed as part of the redevelopment of the railway good yards which created the Darling Harbour precinct during the mid-1980s. The gardens were formally opened as part of Australia's Bicentennial Celebrations on 17 January 1988.

The CGOF is a traditionally designed, Southern Chinese ling nam style cultural landscape enclosed by a wave topped masonry wall, situated in the southern extent of Darling Harbour. The site covers a hectare approximately and comprises of a human-made undulating topography, extensive landscaped scenic zones with plants, symbolic rocks, a large central lake and smaller water bodies, and a variety of traditionally designed timber pavilions and covered walkways.

2. Overview of the Chinese Garden of Friendship Advisory Committee

The Chinese Garden of Friendship Advisory Committee (the Committee) was established in April 2017, as per endorsement of the Minister for Finance, Services and Property.

During the last seven years the appointed Committee provided outstanding support, advice and guidance to Place Management NSW (PMNSW) on matters including policy development, operational management, cultural issues, and heritage in relation to the Garden, which resulted in delivery of PMNSW's objectives and strategic goals for the Chinese Garden of Friendship.

New Advisory Committee structure

The Committee will be made up of seven members, four existing members and three new members nominated by existing members. The Committee will be responsible for providing independent advice and guidance to PMNSW on various aspects of the Garden's management, including:

- Heritage and conservation
- Business and commercial initiatives
- Art and culture
- Community access
- Tourism initiatives

The committee members will comprise of:

- Mr. Simon Chan will remain as the Chairperson, as per previous nomination.
- Ms. Karen Soo
- Mr. Julian Siu
- Ms. Oi Choong

The Committee aims to identify up to three new potential appointees who can contribute additional expertise and perspectives.



The Chinese Garden of Friendship Advisory Committee is proposed to be classified under Group C Level 1 of the Classification and Remuneration Framework for NSW Government Boards and Committees, with the following remuneration. As per previous arrangement, this classification and remuneration recommendation is based on the significant yet voluntary nature of the roles.

The new independent Committee will support ongoing efforts to provide strategic advice and foster a more proactive and integrated approach across policy development, operational management, cultural issues, and heritage concerning the Garden.

The Committee's role is to continue offering advice and guidance to Place Management NSW (PMNSW) on these critical matters.

The vision is to develop a 10-year plan for the Garden that ensures its ongoing management:

- is socially and commercially sustainable.
- conserves and protects the integrity of the Garden's cultural, heritage, and design values; and
- delivers an accessible and inclusive cultural visitor experience that balances community expectations with the requirements of an international precinct.

The Committee will also enhance PMNSW's ability to engage more formally with specialist industry groups and the Chinese community.

3. The Purpose and Mission of the Advisory Committee

Chinese Garden of Friendship Advisory Committee for Property NSW was established in July 2017 with the aim to provide independent and expert advice to PMNSW on the long term planning and strategic management of the Chinese Garden.

The following vision statement has been adopted by the Advisory Committee, PMNSW and other relevant stakeholders as the guiding vision for the CGOF:

The Chinese Garden of Friendship is a unique cultural institution within the diverse context of our city. Inspired by historical and contemporary gardens of China, it addresses the history of the Chinese community in Sydney, and particularly that of the Haymarket district, while representing a point of pride and identification for contemporary Chinese heritage. The garden's position in Darling Harbor similarly reflects the complex histories of Sydney, its land recording the overlapping stories of Indigenous, European, and Chinese occupation and use.

Initiated by the Chinese community of Sydney, the garden was built as a symbol of the enduring friendship between Sydney and the city of Guangzhou, Guangdong Province China. Like the mutual understanding that this relationship between our two cities reflects, the garden presents a special opportunity for education and cultural engagement with Chinese culture and the diverse cultures of Sydney.

A testament to the past, present and future of Sydney, it stands as a unique destination and cultural hub in one of Sydney's most vibrant areas.

4. The Advisory Committee Recent Key Achievements:

- **30th Anniversary and Heritage Listing:** Celebrated the Garden's 30th anniversary, which coincided with its inclusion on the Heritage Listing, recognising its cultural and historical significance.
- **Shanghai Yu Garden Delegation:** Hosted a delegation from Shanghai Yu Garden, strengthening international cultural ties and fostering cooperation.



- **TripAdvisor Ranking:** Improved the Garden's ranking on TripAdvisor from 35th to 10th in the "Top Things to Do in Sydney" list and received the Certificate of Excellence for outstanding visitor reviews.
 - **40th Anniversary NSW-Guangdong Sister State/Province Relationship:** Celebrated this milestone with the launch of the "A Garden Through Friendship" exhibition and the "Hidden Pearl" book, highlighting the cultural bond and collaborative history between NSW and Guangdong.
 - **Digital Exhibition Opening:** Launched a new digital exhibition, integrating modern technology with the Garden's cultural narrative.
 - **New Food & Beverage Partner – One Dining:** Successfully secured One Dining as the new food and beverage partner, enhancing the culinary offerings within the Garden.
 - **Meandering Pathway of Tranquillity:** Supported the construction of the new Meandering Pathway of Tranquillity, enhancing the Garden's scenic and serene landscape.
 - **Lighting Strategy Development:** Contributed to the development a comprehensive Lighting Strategy to support the nighttime economy, making the Garden a more attractive evening destination.
 - **Signage Refresh:** Contributed to design and implementation a refresh of the Garden's permanent and interpretation signage, improving wayfinding and visitor information.
 - **Increased Visitation, Satisfaction, and Revenue:** Achieved steady annual increases in visitation, visitor satisfaction, and revenue, demonstrating the Garden's growing popularity and operational success.
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5. How to Apply: Join the Chinese Garden of Friendship Advisory Committee

Committee Meeting Details

- **Frequency:** Quarterly or as required.
 - **Duration:** Approximately 2 hours per meeting.
 - **Format:** In-person at Darling Harbour or online, as necessary.
 - **Term:** Members are appointed for a three-year term.
 - **Remuneration:** Voluntary role with no remuneration for members or the Chair.
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Eligibility Criteria

Applicants should demonstrate expertise in one or more of the following fields:

- **Chinese Arts, Culture, and Heritage:** Knowledge or practical experience in Chinese cultural practices, traditions, or creative arts.
 - **Chinese Horticulture and Garden Design:** Familiarity with the principles and techniques of traditional Chinese garden design or horticulture.
 - **Education, Tourism, and Hospitality:** Experience in education, event planning, tourism, or hospitality industries.
 - **Business and Commercial Strategy:** Strategic insights in business operations, planning, or community engagement.
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Expression of Interest Submission Process

To express your interest in becoming a member of the Advisory Committee:

1. Prepare Your Application:

- Submit a **current CV** detailing your professional experience and qualifications.
- Include a **statement of interest** (maximum 500 words) outlining:
 - Your relevant expertise and achievements.
 - Why you are passionate about contributing to the Chinese Garden of Friendship.
 - Any innovative ideas or goals you would bring to the committee.

2. Send Your Application:

- Email your completed application to **functions@property.nsw.gov.au**.
- Use the subject line: **APPLICATION: Chinese Garden of Friendship Advisory Committee**

3. Submission Deadline:

- Applications close on **20 February 2025**. Late submissions may not be considered.

Benefits of Joining the Committee

- Actively contribute to the preservation and promotion of an iconic cultural and historical site.
- Collaborate with a network of professionals from diverse industries.
- Play a critical role in shaping the future of one of Sydney's most significant cultural landmark.

Contact Information

For additional inquiries, please reach out to:

- **Email:** functions@property.nsw.gov.au