

7. The St Kilda Festival

The St Kilda Festival was started thirty years ago. An external consultant's review in 2010 stated that:

'What began as a two-day celebration of local culture designed to help shift the public perception of St Kilda, has since become a week-long event with multiple programmatic offerings culminating in Australia's largest outdoor cultural event.'

The Festival is a nine-day fiesta and the Festival Sunday involves over 60 musical acts. It attracts between 300,000 to 400,000 people. Independent market research indicates that 80% of attendees come from outside the City of Port Phillip.

Funding is a major problem. The Festival was cancelled in 2006 but relaunched in 2007 with private sponsorship and a significant contribution from the state government. However, the Festival was almost cancelled in 2013 after losing its main sponsors.

The Festival costs about \$2 million with revenues of around \$1 million. The economic benefit has been estimated at \$15.8 million to St Kilda and \$18.4 million to the State of Victoria.

The 2014 Festival cost the Council \$1.5 million. The Council is committed to reducing the costs to ratepayers by measures such as securing new sponsorships and considering affordable priced ticketing of the main stage. The state government can also help.

unChain believes that it is appropriate for the state government make a significant contribution in order to maintain an event of state significance. In 2014 the state government contributed \$100,000. unChain calls on the candidates and the parties to promise to raise this to \$500,000 for the future.