

# Museums Discovery Centre

Go behind the scenes of three unique museums



## GO BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE STATE'S GREAT COLLECTIONS

For the first time, the diverse and rich collections of three of Australia's leading museums will be housed in one facility and on permanent display to the public.

The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), the Australian Museum and Sydney Living Museums have collaborated to open the new Museums Discovery Centre (MDC) at Castle Hill. These museums care for millions of objects and specimens as part of the NSW's state collections, providing insights into engineering, architecture, science, art, transport, fashion, design, health, technology, natural history, domestic life, Indigenous and Pacific cultures and more.

To celebrate this historic collaboration, the Museums Discovery Centre will be **open free to the public on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 September**. Visitors on the weekend will be the first to experience the treasures from three of Sydney's favourite museum under the one roof, and learn about museum collecting, conservation and research practices.

Deputy Premier and Minister for the Arts, **Troy Grant**, said the Museums Discovery Centre was a unique collaboration.

"The Museums Discovery Centre is an Australian first collaboration, which brings together three of our state's major museums to increase public access and offer a completely unique museum experience."

Minister for Environment and Heritage, **Mark Speakman** said the Museums Discovery Centre was a state of the art cultural facility.

"The 9,000 square metre refurbished deep stores, shared by each of the museums, and upgraded public display stores provide NSW with facilities of an international standard, enhancing the public's access to these great collections and the museums' capacity to care for their collections for generations to come."

MAAS Director, **Dolla Merrillees**, said visitors would gain a new appreciation for the world of museums.

"Visiting the Museums Discovery Centre is an experience like no other offered in Australia. Many of the items in the display stores have never been exhibited before, and there are many more treasures to be seen by taking a booked tour through the deep stores where the museum staff work day to day."

Australian Museum Director and CEO, **Kim McKay AO**, said that the Museums Discovery Centre was unique in that it brings together the most significant objects from three much-loved museums.

"Together, we're giving the public unprecedented access to explore the diverse collections of three distinctly different museums, all of whom share the responsibility of safeguarding our shared history and helping to promote an understanding of the world around us."

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Sydney Living Museums Executive Director, **Mark Goggin**, said that the MDC would provide a unique opportunity for visitors to explore the connections between three of NSW's great cultural collections.

"The Museums Discovery Centre enables us to reveal the many stories of history and heritage interspersed through our combined collections and share this knowledge with visitors through collaborative displays, tours and education programs."

The MDC houses objects as large as the Ice Bird yacht from Dr David Lewis's exploration of Antarctica, and as small as rare butterflies; as ancient as a 20,000 year old Paleolithic artefact from Mossel Bay in South Africa, and as locally significant as furnishings from historic NSW homes.

Many objects at MDC will be on public display for the first time, along with hundreds of objects that would usually be in storage, offering unprecedented access to the collections of the three museums.

From 19 September the Museums Discover Centre will be open to the public from Monday to Friday every week, and four weekends per year for open weekends. A range of free and paid programs will also be on offer throughout the school holidays.

## Museums Discovery Centre

170 Showground Road, Castle Hill

- Opening hours: Monday – Friday: 10am to 5pm
- Admission: \$10 adult, \$8 concession, children 16 years and under free
- Opening weekend: 17-18 September, 10am-5pm, free admission

See [museumsdiscoverycentre.com](https://museumsdiscoverycentre.com) or further information.

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## Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences (MAAS)

The Powerhouse Museum, alongside Sydney Observatory and Museums Discovery Centre, is part of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), Australia's contemporary museum for excellence and innovation in applied arts and sciences. The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences has a vast and diverse collection of over 500,000 objects.

## Australian Museum (AM)

Australian Museum (AM), founded in 1827, is the nation's first museum, and is an internationally recognised natural science and culture institution focused on Australia and the Pacific. As custodian of more than 18 million objects, the AM is uniquely positioned to provide a greater understanding of the region through its scientific research, exhibitions and public and education programs. Through the Australian Museum Research Institute (AMRI), the AM also has a leading role in conserving Australia's biodiversity through understanding the environmental impacts of climate change, potential biosecurity threats and invasive species.

## Sydney Living Museums (SLM)

Sydney Living Museums manages and cares for a group of 12 of the most important historic houses, gardens and museums in NSW, from Elizabeth Farm and Vaucluse House to Susannah Place Museum

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and Museum of Sydney. SLM's purpose is to enrich and revitalise people's lives with Sydney's living history, and to hand the precious places in its care and their collections on to future generations to enjoy. Sydney Living Museums' collection comprises more than 45,000 objects with an additional 250,000 archaeological artefacts including material from two of Australia's most significant historic archaeological digs - Hyde Park Barracks and First Government House Sydney.

## FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

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