

Media Release



State Library launches \$25 million campaign to revitalise its iconic Mitchell building

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The State Library of NSW today announced its largest renewal project in 50 years, with the unveiling of a \$25 million capital campaign to raise funds to revitalise the iconic Mitchell Library building.

Three new galleries, specialised research and learning spaces and ultimately a rooftop restaurant are all part of the State Library's grand plans.

According to Alex Byrne, NSW State Librarian and Chief Executive: "Our vision is to build a Global Library for a Global City by opening up the world-renowned Mitchell Library to the public on a scale never experienced before."

Dr Byrne believes the renewal will help revitalise the eastern CBD and double visitor numbers.

The MITCHELL Campaign was launched at a special event to mark the 25th anniversary of the State Library of NSW Foundation which is spearheading the campaign, reaching out to the corporates, philanthropists and individuals to support the \$25 million campaign over five years.

The first stages of the revitalisation of the Mitchell Library building includes:

Stage 1: enhancing the Mitchell Library Reading Room as a public space with free WiFi and increased seating for informal study

Stage 2: restoring and opening up heritage rooms to the public and establishing dedicated spaces for research and scholarship and for Library volunteers

Stage 3: establishing a children's learning centre and new galleries on the first floor of the Mitchell building

Later stages of the overall vision for the Mitchell will see the realisation of a rooftop restaurant, a 500-seat auditorium and state-of-the-art conservation laboratories to ensure the long-term preservation of our collections.

"The Mitchell Library is a much loved 103 year-old Sydney landmark with an extraordinary and unrivalled Australian collection – including 9 and of the 11 known First Fleet journals – used by scholars, students and lifelong learners," says Dr Byrne.

"We're adding to our collections of books, manuscripts, maps, photographs, artworks, architectural plans and objects on a daily basis. The renewal will enhance our capacity to provide access to these rich resources in imaginative and innovative ways to as many people as possible."

Dr Byrne says Library supporters have the unique opportunity to contribute to and become part of the continuing history of the Mitchell by putting their name to a chair or study table in the Mitchell Library Reading Room.

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“There are also opportunities for leading donors and corporates to sponsor key architectural spaces and new facilities in the Mitchell building, including the new galleries and learning centre.”

The Mitchell building renewal follows the major transformation of the Library’s Macquarie Street building, including the State Reference Library, which concluded last year. In April this year the State Library successfully launched AMAZE: The Michael Crouch Gallery, the first completely new gallery to open at the Library since 1929.

“This is an exciting chapter in the life of the State Library – one of the great libraries of the world – as we open up more of the inspirational Mitchell to the community and improve facilities for scholars. We invite everyone to share in this vision and become part of the history of this great Library,” said Dr Byrne.

For more information about The MITCHELL Campaign, please contact State Library of NSW Foundation Executive Director Susan Hunt on her direct line (02) 9273 1529.

Dr Alex Byrne is available for interviews.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact:

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