

NSW State Library launches new premier Learning Centre

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As many as 1.2 million school students across New South Wales could benefit from the State Library's new learning centre dedicated to inspiring new generations of young people.

According to State Librarian, Dr John Vallance: "Education is at the heart of the Library's purpose, and in our current developments we are making new opportunities for children and young people a priority."

"Almost 70% of the 3136 schools in NSW have already enjoyed our learning programs," said Dr Vallance.

"Now, thanks to the imaginative generosity of Mr John B Fairfax AO, we'll be able to provide even greater support for schools and communities as they explore the riches of their great Library.

"And for students and teachers who can't come to us, we'll be using the latest technologies to go to them."

Yesterday, nine students from Wanaaring Public School, the most remote school in NSW, joined us online to officially launch the new John B Fairfax Learning Centre and participate in a special program with students from Neutral Bay Public School and St Charles Primary School.

The State Library's Learning Services team consulted with students and teachers, who will be using the space, to inform the design.

"Consequently, we have created a light, bright, flexible, exciting, engaging, digitally rich, hands on learning environment for children and families, school students and young people," said Megan Perry, the State Library's Manager of Learning Services.

"Here, our Learning team will provide highly engaging and immersive experiences that can't be replicated in a classroom."

Located on the ground floor of the Library's historic Mitchell Building, which is in the final stages of a complete transformation, the centre has been cleverly designed to enable a whole suite of engaging programs to be delivered in person and online.

Media Release



Entry to the centre is through a hidden door and down a magical four metre tunnel. Within the space two towering curved windows face the Domain and the Botanic Gardens. There are writable wall surfaces, quirky break-out areas, an interactive floor and a lab called the Den (Digital Engagement Nest) which houses high-end technology including a 3D printer.

The John B Fairfax Learning Centre will allow the Library to expand its offering to students and teachers, children and families.

“It gives me immense pleasure to make this contribution to the Library’s re-development,” said Mr John B Fairfax. “It is especially gratifying to be associated with the Learning Centre where many children and others will be able to enjoy a hands-on experience in a modern and innovative facility.

“The Learning Centre will enhance the knowledge of many and contribute to the nation’s education skills. The State Library and Government are to be commended for their foresight and vision in creating a space that is wrapped around content of the past, but which will unwrap creative thinking for the future.”

The John B Fairfax Learning Centre will open for school programming in Term 4. For the first time, the Library will also offer a special drop-in space for families, from 6 October.

For more information about the State Library’s Learning services and programs, visit www.sl.nsw.gov.au/learning

For interviews and publicity images, please contact:

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