

SYDNEY MUSEUMS FREE FOR ONE WEEKEND ONLY

(Tuesday 12 June, 2018, Sydney, Australia): The Australian Museum (AM) and Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) will be offering free entry to all their venues for one weekend only, this 23 and 24 June.

For one weekend only there will be free entry to the Australian Museum, Powerhouse Museum, Museums Discovery Centre and Sydney Observatory – this year celebrating its 160th anniversary.

Now in its fourth year, the annual Free Museum Weekend has become a popular event for visitors of all ages from across NSW and Australia to experience the NSW state collections.

Minister for the Arts, **the Hon Donald Harwin** said “Over 100,000 visitors have enjoyed the Free Museum Weekend since it began 2014. This NSW government initiative was designed to encourage people from across NSW who may not be regular visitors to cultural institutions to enjoy a museum experience. With four venues participating in the annual event and everything from rare fossils to space suits on display there is something for everyone.”

MAAS Director and CEO **Dolla Merrillees** said “The Powerhouse Museum is a firm favourite with children of all ages. Generations have enjoyed the Transport, Space and Experimentations exhibitions, many of whom now return to share the experience with their own children. One of our most popular exhibitions is The Wiggles, which has seen over 500,000 tiny fans immerse themselves in the Wiggles world. We look forward to welcoming both regular and new museum visitors to MAAS over the Free Museum Weekend.”

“For the first time Sydney Observatory will be open free to the public at night over the Free Museum Weekend, giving visitors the opportunity to experience the Observatory at its finest hour, under the canopy of stars in the night sky. We look forward to celebrating the 160th anniversary of the Observatory with visitors across the weekend.” said Ms Merrillees

Director and CEO of the Australian Museum, **Kim McKay AO** said visitors over the free weekend will be able to see incredible exhibitions including *Gadi* – an exploration of the rich and intricate culture of Sydney’s Gadigal people told in their own language. “It is a first-hand story of the Gadi people. In addition, visitors will be able to see our wonderful *Wild Planet* and discover hidden gems in the *200 Treasures* exhibition in the Westpac Long Gallery. And for those who don’t mind paying a little more, they will be able to see our special exhibition, *Mammoths – Giants of the Ice Age* which features baby Lyuba – the most intact baby mammoth specimen ever found, from the Yamal-Nenets District Museum in Siberia.”

Across the weekend museum visitors can experience two exciting exhibitions at a discounted price for the weekend: 300 years of men’s fashion history in *Reigning Men* at the Powerhouse Museum and *Mammoths* at the Australian Museum.

The Museums Discovery Centre in Castle Hill stores the collections of MAAS, AM and Sydney Living Museums, housing millions of objects from three of Sydney’s favourite museums. During the Free Museum Weekend the Museums Discovery Centre will hold tours of the deep stores, collection-specific tours, performances, workshops and presentations by Australian Museum’s First Nations experts.

Visitors wishing to attend participating venues for **Free Museum Weekend** can register online to receive free entry. Registrations are limited. Visit <http://freemuseumweekend.eventbrite.com.au> to register.

The **Free Museum Weekend** runs daily Saturday 23 June and Sunday 24 June 2017, at the following locations:

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM (AM)

9.30am – 5pm daily, 1 William Street, Sydney, 02 9320 6000

<https://www.australianmuseum.net.au/>

Free access includes all the museum favourites such as Wild Planet, Minerals and Surviving Australia, as well as hands-on activities in Search & Discover and Kidspace. Entry to *Mammoths – Giants of the Ice Age* is at the special discounted price of \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids.

POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

10am – 5pm daily, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo. 02 9217 0111

maas.museum/powerhouse-museum/

EXHIBITION DETAILS

What: *Reigning Men: Fashion in Menswear 1715 – 2015*

When: 2 May – 14 October 2018

Where: Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo NSW 2007

Price: \$5 (Members and Children under 16 free)

Website maas.museum/event/reigning-men-fashion-in-menswear-1715-2015/

SYDNEY OBSERVATORY

10am – 8.30pm daily, 1003 Upper Fort Street, Millers Point. 02 9217 0111

<https://maas.museum/sydney-observatory>

MUSEUMS DISCOVERY CENTRE (MDC)

10AM – 5PM daily, 170 Showground Road, Castle Hill. 02 9217 0111

<https://maas.museum/museums-discovery-centre/>

For further information please contact

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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.

Museum of Applied Arts and 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.

Museums Discovery Centre

The Museums Discovery Centre (MDC) is a collaboration between the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), Australian Museum (AM) and Sydney Living Museums.

Inside the Museums Discovery Centre you will find millions of treasures, with hundreds on display for you to explore, and thousands more waiting to be discovered through booked tours of the deep collection stores. A visit to the MDC also provides you with a rare opportunity to learn about museum collecting, conservation and research practices.