

<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/sydney-arts/powerhouse-and-university-of-technology-sydney-in-partnership-talks-20171110-gzilrd.html>

## **Powerhouse and University of Technology Sydney in partnership talks**

**Linda Morris,**

*Sydney Morning Herald*, NOVEMBER 14 2017

The Powerhouse Museum could strike a partnership with the University of Technology Sydney to allow the museum to retain a presence in Ultimo. The two institutions are holding talks and have canvassed the expansion of the university's presence at the museum's Harris Street site, including involvement in events, programs, exhibitions, joint appointments and the use of space for classrooms or studios.

The NSW government is pushing ahead with plans to relocate the museum from Ultimo, but questions remain over what it will cost.

This could ultimately see the Powerhouse Museum's curatorial expertise in science, technology, transport and engineering moved to its planned Parramatta site but decorative arts, fashion, design and architecture remain in some form at Ultimo.

A UTS spokesman denied there were negotiations to purchase or lease the Harwood building, which houses the museum's collection, to be redeveloped for classes, studios or student accommodation. But she confirmed the university was developing a memorandum of understanding to "facilitate further opportunities to work together closely" with the museum.

"As is commonly the case when organisations enter into MOUs, this is not a legally binding document but rather a statement of our shared commitment to working together in areas of common interest," the spokeswoman said.

"UTS has always stated the critical need for a thriving cultural heart in Ultimo and as such we welcome the NSW government's commitment to retaining an arts and culture presence here, and we will support that outcome in any way that we can."



The Powerhouse Museum may yet retain a presence in Ultimo.

Photo: Louise Kennerley

It remains unclear if the UTS partnership would be enough to keep the museum's priceless heavy-object engineering collection, including the Boulton & Watt steam engine and the Catalina flying boat, at Ultimo. The Powerhouse's founding director, Lindsay Sharp, said all collections areas had a compelling inter-relationship and any attempt to break up the collection would be "contrary to reason".



The proposed new location for the Powerhouse is along the Parramatta River. Photo: Louise Kennerley

"UTS is one of the leading research institutions in science and digital technology and the whole area of Ultimo is known to be an innovation hub," he said. "Why would you send science (and) technology to a smaller site where it can't hold as many exhibits? The government is dismembering the collection without a cogent rationale and without a complete business case and supporting reports."



It remains unclear if the UTS partnership would be enough to keep the museum's priceless heavy-object engineering collection. Photo: Dallas Kilponen

Meanwhile, an upper house inquiry, chaired by Robert Borsak of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, has been extended until March to hear evidence from Premier Gladys Berejiklian, who has been called as witness. It is understood she

has not yet agreed to appear. Arts Minister Don Harwin said in a statement that the Powerhouse's final business case was due to be completed by the end of the year and no decision had yet been made by government.

The business case would "investigate, test and analyse all options to deliver the new museum in western Sydney and a thriving arts and cultural space in Ultimo", he said.

UTS currently leases the museum's lecture theatre for classes while its main campus building is refurbished. The Dr Chau Chak Wing Building, a flagship project of UTS's billion-dollar City Campus Master Plan, is opposite the Harwood building. The university and museum have worked together on exhibitions, events and programs including National Science Week and the Ultimo Science Festival alongside student internships and research projects.

Museum-university collaborations are already embraced in the United States.

---

## RELATED ARTICLES

- [Powerhouse flying machines make way for architectural commission](#)
- [Whose idea was it to move the Powerhouse Museum in the first place?](#)



- [Powerhouse Museum to go west](#)