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Media release: 'Historic \$30 million commitment to Powerhouse Parramatta'

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Released by: Minister of State, Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education [Geoff Lee]

The NSW Government today announced a combined \$30 million dollar investment in Powerhouse Parramatta - one of the largest donations ever to an arts and cultural institution in Australia.

A \$20 million donation from the Walker Family Foundation – the second-largest donation to any Western Sydney institution in history – will deliver the Lang Walker Family Academy, a ground-breaking program to deliver world-class immersive science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education experiences for over 10,000 high school students from Western Sydney and regional NSW every year – including overnight stays at the museum for many of these students.

Western Sydney University has committed \$10 million to Powerhouse Parramatta confirming its place as the museum's Foundation University Partner. This significant investment reinforces the University's ongoing commitment to developing the next generation of Australian innovators, scientists and entrepreneurs.

Minister for the Arts Don Harwin says these investments will impact generations of young people from Western Sydney and regional NSW. "These commitments from The Walker Family Foundation and Western Sydney University are simply extraordinary. The learning opportunities that will come from these investments will inspire curiosity, creativity, and enlighten thousands of young people from Western Sydney and regional NSW every year about the endless career possibilities in a world led by STEM," said Mr Harwin. "I want to express my gratitude to The Walker Family Foundation and Western Sydney University for their generosity and commitment to the communities of Western Sydney and regional NSW."

Dr Geoff Lee, Member for Parramatta and Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education says the generous donations will lead to incredible opportunities for Western Sydney families. "The enduring dedication of the Lang Walker Family and Western Sydney University to our communities across Western Sydney is well known and without peer. I thank both organisations for this tremendous commitment to our region," said Dr Lee. "Powerhouse Parramatta will be so much more than a museum and the STEM programs and opportunities delivered by the Lang Walker Family Academy will prepare our children for the future and develop and inspire the scientists, engineers, and innovative thinkers the future needs – right here in Western Sydney."

The Lang Walker Family Academy programs will commence in 2022 in Western Sydney with in-school STEM education programming being planned for schools in the Blacktown, Campbelltown, Liverpool, Bankstown, Penrith, and Parramatta LGAs.

Western Sydney University will embed researchers in Powerhouse Parramatta including an annual Scholar in Residence, be a supporting partner for the Lang Walker Family Academy and utilise museum spaces for STEM-related education opportunities. The Walker Family Foundation has devoted \$50 million to Western Sydney over the last two years alone in education, culture, health, and medical research. The \$30 million contribution is a significant milestone in the Powerhouse's campaign to raise \$75 million towards Powerhouse Parramatta.