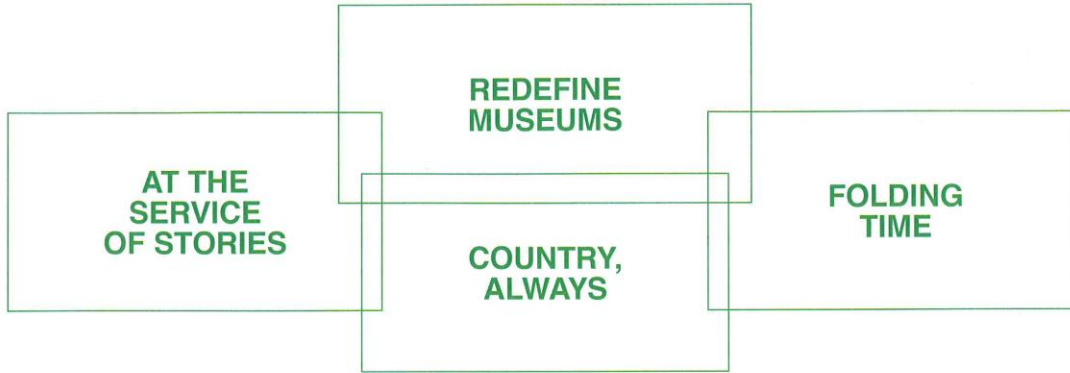


POWERHOUSE

IDENTITY AS PRACTICE



PROGRAM

STRATEGIC FOCUS

FIRST NATIONS

INDUSTRY

COLLECTION

COMMUNITY

PLATFORMS

WAYS OF WORKING

DISCIPLINE

RESPONSIBILITY

CARE

CLARITY

STAYING WITH THE TROUBLE

POETRY

HUSTLE

UNRELENTING

POWERHOUSE

A museum's role in the community should be a vitalising force.
Arthur Penfold, 1945

The Powerhouse, through its renewal and across its platforms, will redefine museums in the 21st century by renegotiating the terms of engagement with communities, radically returning to and reckoning with its legacy as a museum of industry and fortifying its vital role in the cultural and economic ecosystems of NSW, Australia and the world.

In 2022 the Powerhouse, one of Australia's oldest and most important cultural institutions, continues the delivery of its expansive renewal program across its five platforms:

- Powerhouse Parramatta – building our new flagship in the fastest growing and most culturally diverse communities in Australia
- Powerhouse Ultimo – transforming the much-loved Powerhouse to deliver international exhibitions within a dynamic creative industries and technology precinct
- Powerhouse Castle Hill – expanding Collection storage, creating new public exhibition spaces and establishing world-leading collection management capabilities
- Sydney Observatory – restoring and enhancing this national heritage icon
- Powerhouse Digital – creating space to tell stories and provide new levels of access to the Powerhouse Collection of over 500,000 objects.

The Powerhouse will acknowledge Country, Always, embedding First Nations ways of knowing and self-determination across the museum and building enduring relationships with traditional owners and communities.

The Powerhouse will define the renewal of each platform according to its location: sensing and responding to Country, respecting the cadence and context of place, reflecting the economies and industries of each precinct and recognising the unique cultural and social histories that make each platform distinct.

Since its inception, the Powerhouse has been intrinsically connected to community and industry. By folding time, reinforcing the *Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Act 1945* and reckoning with our history, we recognise the Powerhouse as "a vitalising force" (Arthur Penfold, 1945), "known for its unique reputation for the services it renders to industry" (Arthur Penfold, 1937) and "of interest and lasting service to the mass population" (The Technological, Industrial and Sanitary Museum Annual Report, 1881).

While the Powerhouse Collection and museum legacy concern the industrial revolution and processes of modernisation of the 20th century, our remit – as legislated in the Act of 1945 – is to the development of industry. In the 21st century, the industries that drive our society are completely different to those of the past. The Powerhouse is a contemporary museum of industry – one of doing and practice, "ready for use" (C.R. Buckland, acting secretary, 1880).

The Powerhouse Program (all activities of the museum – including but not limited to curatorial, conservation, registration, exhibition-making, learning, workshop, research, image-making, communications and marketing, design, visitor services, development, hospitality, and retail) is a network of relationships, connecting expertise, knowledge, and practice at the service of stories. The Powerhouse facilitates seamless collaboration. It is porous, making no distinction between internal and external collaborations.

The ambitious and unrelenting Powerhouse Program will create space for diverse and untold stories of the applied arts and applied sciences (and their contribution to industry) as they apply to those communities' histories, lives, and futures. These stories will intersect with and animate the Powerhouse Collection.

Through the reimagined Powerhouse Castle Hill, Powerhouse Digital, and the Powerhouse Program, the Powerhouse Collection will remain vital and relevant to the Program. Direct access, unprecedented engagement via research and residency and increased public circulation across expansive exhibition spaces make the Collection more accessible than ever to communities.

Through its renewal, the Powerhouse will be essential to the communities it serves – a real cultural and economic asset. Those communities, including partners and industry, are more than stakeholders, audiences, or consumers – they are collaborators and co-creators in this renewal. The renewed Powerhouse will create ripples of economic and cultural prosperity for the community emanating from its multiple platforms and resonating for generations.

STRATEGIC FOCUS 22–23

PROGRAM

POSITION ALL ROLES AND RESOURCES AT THE SERVICE OF STORIES

- Create the conditions for the future dynamic Program at Powerhouse Parramatta, Powerhouse Castle Hill, and Sydney Observatory
- Deliver the 2023 Powerhouse Ultimo Program to begin to redefine the Powerhouse
- Through the Program amplify many diverse voices above any singular voice of the Powerhouse
- Define, communicate, and tell the stories of the applied arts, applied sciences and their role in industry development

COMMUNITY

CONTINUALLY RENEGOTIATE THE TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY

- Maximise opportunities to reinforce that Powerhouse Ultimo remains open with a changing program
- Promote communities as collaborators and dissolve any distinction between internal and external collaboration
- Scrutinise assumptions of hierarchies and establish delegation and accountability for individual and joint delivery
- Communicate, demonstrate, and embed expectations of new ways of working
- Build community (local, national, and international) affinity with the Powerhouse
- Develop real relationships with communities across Parramatta, Castle Hill, Greater Western Sydney and regional NSW
- Maintain enduring relationships with communities of Ultimo

FIRST NATIONS

INDIGENISE

- Establish a meaningful understanding of the Powerhouse as an Acknowledgement of Country in practice
- Continue resourcing First Nations self-determination and leadership
- Enable personal responsibility for cultural competency and maximise supported self-learning
- Continue to build authentic and enduring relationships with Traditional Custodians and community

COLLECTION

EXPAND HOW A 21ST CENTURY MUSEUM COLLECTS

- Expand community-specific collecting and custodianship including Indigenising collection and conservation management
- Prioritise building relationships with knowledge-holders and makers, alongside acquiring objects and cultural belongings

EXPAND UNMEDIATED ACCESS

- Be unrelenting in adopting new digital technologies to expand access
- Deliver unmediated collection access across all platforms with a focus on opportunities at Powerhouse Castle Hill and Powerhouse Digital

INDUSTRY

RECONNECT WITH INDUSTRY

- Establish agile industry consultation to ensure industry programs and stories are vital
- Promote the contribution of First Nations people in the development of industry
- Establish the Powerhouse as a leader in industry practice, design, and trades; a museum of practice
- Redefine industry development in the 21st century
- Reframe research priorities to applied research and development
- Promote and tell the stories of the applied sciences of museum practice such as conservation and workshop

PLATFORMS

CONNECT WITH PLATFORM-SPECIFIC CONTEXT

- Define, design with, and care for Country
- Leverage the platform-specific context to inform the stories we tell and how we tell them
- Ensure the context of each place is centred in design briefs and infrastructure delivery
- Streamline and create efficient systems for increased output across multiple sites

WAYS OF WORKING

The Powerhouse will be unrelenting in our:

CARE

Care for Country
Take care
Welcome all

RESPONSIBILITY

Give back
Meet the demands of the community
Deliver

POETRY

Collaborate
Communicate with images
Find meaning in detail

DISCIPLINE

Enabling governance
Embed transparency
Deliver consistently

HUSTLE

Leverage investment and maximise assets
Be entrepreneurial and enterprising
Create ripples of economic prosperity

CLARITY

Communicate economically
Make explicit the terms of engagement
Purpose and utility

STAYING WITH THE TROUBLE

Reckon with museums' legacies
Take risks
Accept change

THE MUSEUM OF APPLIED ARTS AND SCIENCES ACT 1945

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DEFINITIONS

PROGRAM describes all activities of the museum that are at the service of stories we tell and how we tell them.

COMMUNITY encapsulates the people with whom the Powerhouse is in relation at any given moment. Reciprocity, responsibility, and care will create the conditions for community.

FIRST NATIONS creates the conditions for museums to be redefined by and for Australian and international First Nations Peoples.

COLLECTION refers both to the legacy of the Powerhouse Collection and to expanded collecting practices and access.

INDUSTRY describes our role in industry development and how the applied arts and applied sciences are at the centre of our economic, social, and cultural wellbeing. From promoting the legacy and vitality of First Nations innovations to cataloguing the developments of the industrial revolution (represented in the Powerhouse Collection) to documenting and participating in the 4th industrial revolution as we redefine the industry in the 21st century.

PLATFORMS are the tangible and intangible sites the Powerhouse Program circulates, including but not limited to Powerhouse Parramatta, Powerhouse Castle Hill, Powerhouse Ultimo and Sydney Observatory, alongside the intangible sites including Powerhouse Digital, media, social media, advertising, and the community.

POWERHOUSE (Reformatted from document above)

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September 2022