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Sent: Thursday 27 August 2026

Subject: A message from the Secretary – Powerhouse leadership update

A message from the Secretary – Powerhouse leadership update



Dear colleagues,

I am writing on behalf of myself and David Borger, President of the Powerhouse Trust, to share an update about the leadership of the Powerhouse.

As you would be aware from recent media reports, there is an ongoing investigation into matters relating to governance and procurement practices at the Powerhouse.

After speaking with the Chief Executive earlier today, Lisa Havilah will be standing aside while the investigation is completed.

I recognise that this news comes at a significant time for the organisation, as we prepare for the opening of Powerhouse Parramatta. I know how much work, commitment and personal energy all of you have invested in reaching this milestone, and I want to assure you that there will be no impact to the existing programs of work, or the opening on 7 November.

In the interim, Abbie Galvin will be appointed to act as an Interim Chief Executive.

Abbie brings deep experience in leading organisations, governance, stakeholder management and major project delivery. Her understanding of major public institutions and commitment to the cultural sector make her exceptionally well placed to take on this interim role.

Abbie will commence on 1 September and work with the Executive team, the Trust and DCITHS to continue our momentum as we head towards the opening of Powerhouse Parramatta. Between now and 1 September, I will work directly with the Powerhouse Executive team to ensure they are supported during their transition.

Former Sydney Opera House CEO Louise Herron AM has also been engaged to provide strategic advice and support to the Powerhouse Executive leadership team, the Trust and DCITHS.

Louise brings a unique depth of skill in leading a major cultural institution, having spent 14 years at the helm of the Sydney Opera House overseeing its operations, renewal and engagement with millions of visitors. That experience managing an iconic institution of significant scale, complexity and public interest will be invaluable as she helps guide and support Powerhouse as we head towards the exciting opening.

If you have any immediate questions about operational issues, please speak to your line manager.

Support is available through the Employee Assistance Program for anyone who may find this news difficult.

Please join me in supporting the Executive team, Abbie, Louise, and one another, as the organisation moves through this period.

Yours sincerely
Mel



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