https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/visitor-s-guide-to-the-new-powerhouse-parramatta-20261103-p618jb.html
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
3 November, 2026

Visitor's guide to the new Powerhouse Parramatta

Ellie Busby

NOVEMBER 3, 2026



The new Powerhouse Museum in Parramatta opens on November 7. STEVEN SIEWERT

The Herald charts the ups and downs of the creation of Sydney's newest cultural institution. See all stories.

The opening of the Powerhouse Parramatta marks a significant moment in western Sydney's history, becoming the region's first state-significant cultural institution. The $1 billion project, which has not been without controversy, aims to redraw Sydney's cultural geography and provide world-class exhibitions.

What is it?

Situated on the banks of the Parramatta River, the new Powerhouse Parramatta – dubbed the milk crate by locals due to its distinctive steel-lattice exoskeleton – is the largest cultural infrastructure project in Australia since the Sydney Opera House.



The steel exoskeleton of the Powerhouse Parramatta. STEVEN SIEWERT

Spanning 30,000 square metres and reaching up to six storeys, the cultural institution features multiple exhibition spaces across the two wings.

For the opening, the museum will have about 3000 objects on display including 1600 from the Powerhouse's collection.

When does it open?

Since mid-August, a clock on the Powerhouse Parramatta website has been counting down the days, hours, minutes and seconds to the opening of the museum on November 7.

To mark the occasion, the museum will hold a $4.5 million, 23-day festival program featuring 179 events. During this time, the museum will stay open until 9pm from Thursday to Sunday, and 10am to 5pm from Monday to Wednesday. The program will feature talks, workshops, food, music and performances.



The museum at night. STEVEN SIEWERT

General admission tickets for the opening weekend have sold out, but patrons can still experience the museum by booking a ticket to opening festival events. Each festival ticket includes entry to the museum and access to four out of five exhibitions; one, *Task Eternal*, will be ticketed.

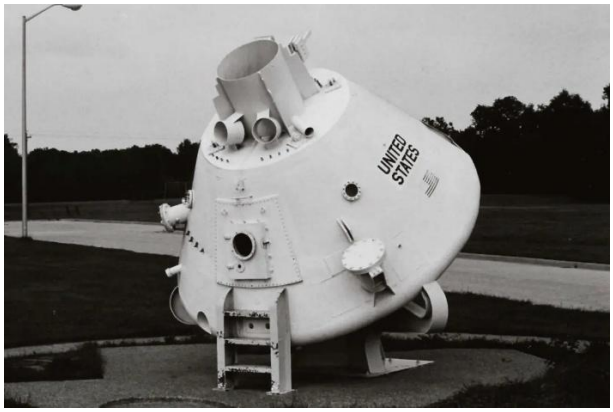
What will be there?

The first five exhibitions will run for between 18 months and three years. They include *The Dark*, an immersive exhibition created for children aged four to 12 years old, and *Es Devlin: The Turning*, where visitors can explore five immersive installations.

Overflow, a First Nations-led exhibition grounded in the living principles of Water Country, shares practices that extend care to water systems. Aerospace exhibition *Task Eternal* will serve as the museum's flagship exhibition, while *The Mall* will examine the cultural significance of the shopping mall.

When visitors arrive, they'll enter the taller west wing, where there is a movable concierge stand, information displays and a gift shop. The ground floor also features food options and the entrance to the largest exhibition space. Large escalators and lifts take visitors through the space, and both buildings are linked through bridges.

Powerhouse Parramatta launch exhibitions



Task Eternal: Pitched as the world's most ambitious aerospace exhibition tracing humanity's enduring quest to defy gravity, take flight and journey to space, this is the largest of the five exhibitions and features a historic Qantas Avro 504k aircraft, Leonardo Da Vinci's late 15th to early 16th Century drawings of a "flight machine" and this 4.5-tonne 1967 Apollo boilerplate test module on loan from the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. Apollo Command Module designed by NASA. Courtesy of Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum

The rooftop of the shorter east wing holds a productive garden, while level four in the other building is a 200-seat demonstration kitchen and event space. Level five features a library and co-working space, while the sixth floor houses 30 apartments, which will be used for creative residencies.

How much does it cost?

While all five of the exhibitions will be free to visitors aged 16 and under, those over 16 will have to pay an entry fee to *Task Eternal*. Costs will range from $20 for a concession ticket to $30 for a standard ticket.

For an extra $10, visitors can experience James Turrell's colour and sensory-distorting installation *Shangri La (Over the Hump)*.

General admission to the museum is free for patrons of all ages.

What are the food and drink options?

If you want to sip a martini while eating Nashua washed rind cow's milk cheese produced in Nimbin, in northern New South Wales, you'll be able to do it at Powerhouse Parramatta's headline waterfront restaurant, Simara. You could follow it with grilled prawns from Yamba served with crispy chilli oil, or Wollemi duck leg with slow-cooked blackberries and endive.

Like the art institute itself, local producers and the diverse food cultures of western Sydney is a focus of Simara, as is its other two food venues – all overseen by chef-restaurateur Simon Sandall, who you might know from Gladesville's Boronia Kitchen. The George Livissianis-designed Simara has almost 300 tables inside and out, with lots of natural light.

House-baked bread is the specialty of all-day garden cafe Folded – think puffy, stone-baked flatbread, folded focaccia and jaffles – and visitors' first stop for coffee. There's brekkie bowls and croissants in the morning, and at dinner, snacks like salt

and vinegar waffle chips and tins of Ortiz anchovies.

Green Bar invites visitors to the rooftop garden for afternoon cocktails, including a signature smoked olive and toum martini and spritzes made with house-grown botanicals.

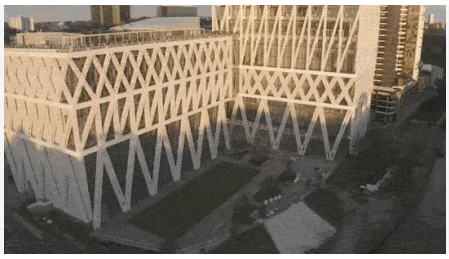
Explore the new Powerhouse

Click around the museum to see what exhibitions and spaces have been planned. ***[Plan not accessible; check on-line]*** Source: NSW Government; Planning, Industry & Environment CREDIT: NATHAN PERRI

How to get there?

Located at 34 Phillip Street, Parramatta, the museum can be reached through a range of public transport options. For those planning to commute via train, Powerhouse Parramatta is a 10-minute walk from Parramatta station, while the closest bus stop is located 250 metres from the site on Smith Street.

RELATED ARTICLE



Revealed: The five exhibitions to open the Parramatta Powerhouse

It can also be reached by light rail, with both the Church Street and Parramatta Square stops positioned a short walk from the Powerhouse Parramatta. The ferry will take visitors close to the museum as well, with the Parramatta Wharf located 400 metres from the site.

Visitors opting to drive won't be able to park at the museum – there's no on-site parking. However, there is a pick-up and drop-off zone on Phillip Street and paid car parks nearby.

Visitor's guide to new Powerhouse in Parramatta

Ellie Buxby
Parramatta reporter

The opening of the Powerhouse Parramatta marks a significant moment in western Sydney's history, becoming the region's first state-significant cultural institution.

The $1 billion project, which has not been without controversy, aims to redraw Sydney's cultural geography and provide world-class exhibitions.

What is it?

Situated on the banks of the Parramatta River, the new Powerhouse Parramatta – dubbed the milk crate by locals due to its steel-lattice exoskeleton – is the largest cultural infrastructure project in Australia since the Sydney Opera House.

Spanning 30,000 square metres and reaching up to six storeys, the cultural institution features multiple exhibition spaces across the two wings.

For the opening, the museum will have about 3000 objects on display including 1600 from the Powerhouse's collection.

When does it open?

A clock on the Powerhouse Parramatta website has been counting down the days, hours, minutes and seconds to the opening of the museum on November 7.

To mark the occasion, the museum will hold a $4.5 million, 23-day festival program featuring 179 events. During this time, the museum will stay open until 9pm from Thursday to Sunday, and 10am to 5pm from Monday to Wednesday. The program will feature talks, workshops, food, music and performances.

General admission tickets for the opening weekend have sold out; however, patrons can still experience the museum by booking a ticket to opening festival events. Each festival ticket includes entry to the museum and access to four out of five exhibitions; one, *Task Eternal*, will be ticketed.

What will be there?

The first five exhibitions will run for between 18 months and three years. They include *The Dark*, an immersive exhibition created for children aged four to 12 years old, and *Es Devlin: The Turning*, where visitors can explore five immersive installations.

Overflow, a First Nations-led exhibition grounded in the living principles of Water Country, shares practices that extend care to water systems. Aerospace exhibition *Task Eternal* will serve as the museum's flagship exhibition, while *The Mall* will examine the cultural significance of the shopping mall.

When visitors arrive, they'll enter the taller west wing where there is a movable concierge stand, information displays and a gift shop. The ground floor also features food options and the entrance to the largest exhibition space. Large escalators and lifts take visitors through the space, and both buildings are linked through bridges.

The rooftop of the shorter east wing holds a productive garden, while level four in the other building is a 200-seat demonstration kitchen and event space. Level five features a library and co-working space, while the sixth floor houses 30 apartments, which will be used for creative residencies.





The Powerhouse Museum has been dubbed 'the milk crate' by locals in Parramatta due to its distinctive design. Photos: Steven Siewert

There will, of course, be gift shops.

How much does it cost?

While all five of the exhibitions will be free to visitors aged 16 and under, those over 16 will have to pay an entry fee to *Task Eternal*. Costs will range from $20 for a concession ticket to $30 for a standard ticket.

For an extra $10, visitors can experience James Turrell's colour and sensory-distorting installation *Skygrid Le (Over the Hump)*.

General admission to the museum is free for all patrons.

Food and drink options

The Powerhouse includes three food and drink venues: Folded, Green Bar and Simara. Folded, an all-day cafe on the ground floor, acts as a first stop for visitors after a coffee or lunch, while Green Bar is tucked away near the museum's rooftop garden.

Simara, also on the ground floor, is a contemporary Australian restaurant with seating for over 290 patrons, spanning almost 600 square metres across indoor and outdoor dining areas.

The menu intends to "celebrate the diverse food cultures of Australia and western Sydney", with bookings recommended.

How to get there?

Located at 84 Phillip Street, Parramatta, the museum can be reached through a range of public transport options. For those planning to commute via train, Powerhouse Parramatta is a 10-minute walk from Parramatta station, while the closest bus stop is located 250 metres from the site on Smith Street.

It can also be reached by light rail, with both the Church Street and Parramatta Square stops positioned a short walk from the Powerhouse Parramatta. The ferry will take visitors close to the museum as well, with Parramatta Wharf located 400 metres from the site.

Visitors opting to drive won't be able to park at the museum – there's no on-site parking. However, there is a pick-up and drop-off zone on Phillip Street and paid car parks nearby.