

The Hon. James Griffin MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage
ICOMOS Re-Launch Strategic Partner and Corporate Patron Program
15 March 2022

I also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Gadigal people of Eora Nation, and pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Professor Tracy Ireland, President of Australia ICOMOS, Friends of heritage, all;

Thank you for inviting me to join you this evening. It is always a pleasure to be in this magnificent heritage building ... And it is my privilege on behalf of the government of New South Wales to extend my full support for this re-launch the 2023 International Council on Monuments and Sites – ICOMOS – General Assembly and Scientific Symposium.

The city of Sydney, with its optimistic outlook and hospitable heart, has always been a favourite among visitors to Australia.

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a genuine sense of joy in the city as we welcome back visitors from overseas, and a keen sense of anticipation as we look forward to hosting international conferences and symposia once again.

I'm told that around 1,500 heritage professionals are expected to attend the 2023 ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium. We look forward to showcasing to them all the rich heritage of New South Wales, drawing together the strands of our Indigenous heritage, British foundation and multicultural character.

I understand this is the first time this event has been held in the Pacific Region. Protecting and preserving heritage in this land of drought and flooding rains is very challenging. And extreme weather events are becoming more frequent as the climate changes.

The state of New South Wales is justifiably proud of our leadership in heritage protection, and mindful of our responsibilities as the custodians of World, National, State and locally significant cultural heritage.

That's why I'm proud to say that the New South Wales Government is providing \$820,000 dollars in direct financial support for the ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium in 2023. Plus a further \$700,000 dollars through in-kind support.

This is in addition to the support provided by the Australian Government; Heritage New South Wales; Sydney Living Museums; the Sydney Opera House; and the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, who are all backing this landmark Symposium.

The 2023 ICOMOS General Assembly will highlight some of the most important and challenging issues in heritage conservation today, including: Indigenous heritage; the culture-nature journey; heritage for climate; heritage as sustainability; and digital heritage.

Every conference we host in Sydney has a ripple effect, as the focussed debate and dialogue radiates outward to the wider community.

I hope this conference will generate renewed engagement with our heritage from business and industry.

Heritage shapes our understanding of the places we live, and their place in the world.

It is my hope that this Conference, with its theme of "Heritage Changes: Resilience – Responsibilities – Rights-Relationships" will help to showcase Australian heritage and practice to the world. And that the discussion and dialogue you have here in 2023 will help advance the global ICOMOS mission to promote conservation and protection of humanity's heritage.

Thank you.