



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Australia to host major global cultural heritage event

The Australian Government and NSW Government joined Australia ICOMOS today in announcing that Sydney will host heritage experts from around the world in 2023, at the next global General Assembly of the influential International Council on Monuments and Sites ('ICOMOS').

ICOMOS has more than 10,000 members globally – architects, historians, planners, archaeologists and other specialists – and officially advises the World Heritage Committee and national governments about heritage issues.

Australian Minister for the Environment, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, welcomed the announcement that Australia would host the ICOMOS General Assembly and related Scientific Symposium:

*“Australia is a global leader in heritage conservation, and our hosting the General Assembly aligns closely with our commitment to the management of 20 World Heritage properties - with more nominations on the way. As an active member of the World Heritage Committee, and one of the first nations to adopt the World Heritage Convention, we are delighted to partner with the NSW Government and ICOMOS to bring this prestigious global gathering to Sydney”, she said.*

NSW Heritage Minister Don Harwin MLC observed that the 2023 ICOMOS General Assembly would highlight NSW's significant achievements in cultural heritage management and the role of the cultural sector in the State's post-pandemic recovery.

*“Sydney and NSW boast wonderful heritage places ranging from important Aboriginal sites with rich stories, to the convict Hyde Park Barracks and Parramatta's historic Female Factory. Our ICOMOS visitors will share knowledge of great conservation practice and enjoy amazing cultural experiences at iconic venues like Sydney Opera House. This event will boost cultural tourism, and attendees will become advocates for the amazing experiences that our cultural heritage offers”, he said.*

Tourism Australia and Business Events Sydney recognise that this global cultural event will draw millions of dollars into the visitor economy, and will have wide-ranging benefits for future cultural tourism.

Australia ICOMOS President Helen Lardner welcomed strong government and corporate backing, which enabled Australia's successful bid for 2023.

*“The General Assembly theme: ‘Heritage Changes: Resilience – Responsibility – Rights – Relationships’ reflects the tumultuous changes taking place in the world, but also a positive message about the role of our heritage in supporting rapid recovery and inclusive approaches”, she said*

Delegates will visit iconic heritage sites including Sydney Opera House, Hyde Park Barracks, Luna Park, National Trust properties and the Greater Blue Mountains, which are being showcased on the world stage. Events and tours both pre and post the General Assembly will offer opportunities for participants to visit many cities and regions across Australia, including many famous World Heritage properties.

*“GA2023 will highlight stories and techniques for conserving important cultural sites and will make an important contribution to the re-emergence of Sydney and Australia more broadly as a leading cultural tourism destination”, Ms Lardner said.*

The Sydney gathering will include the International Committee on Cultural Tourism; highlighting the importance of heritage as a driver of Australian tourism.

Further Information: **Richard Mackay, Australia ICOMOS, Convenor GA2023: 0412 673 548**