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MEDIA RELEASE

Forrest Hall launch heralds new era of Australian research excellence

Forrest Hall, a landmark centre of research excellence on the Swan River, has been opened today in Perth by dignitaries including benefactors Andrew and Nicola Forrest.

The facility positions Perth at the centre of the Asia-Pacific region for science, policy, and thought leadership, and will house a unique community of global scholars who will live and work together to generate new synergies and intersections in research.

Launched by the Honourable Julie Bishop MP, Commonwealth Minister for Foreign Affairs, Forrest Hall is the result of a significant \$30.4 million investment, including \$27.5 million donated from Andrew and Nicola Forrest's Minderoo Foundation alongside \$2.9 million from the University of Western Australia.

Minderoo has also dedicated long term funding for scholars and fellows who will reside in the hall as part of its \$130 million contribution to the Forrest Research Foundation. Of the \$130 million, \$65 was committed in 2013 and a further \$65 was allocated within the Forrests' landmark \$400 million donation in May 2017, which has been recognised as Australia's largest ever private philanthropic donation.

Minderoo Foundation CEO Nicola Forrest said Forrest Hall signifies Western Australia's intention to create an independent research hub to tackle evolving research problems in the Asia-Pacific, from marine ecology to public health problems and renewable energy.

"Perth is uniquely positioned, in terms of its geography and mentality, to offer fresh ideas that will supplement Australia's long-standing hubs for policy and research in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne," Mrs Forrest said.

"Forrest Hall is the beginning of a new free-thinking research community that will engage with and help deliver solutions for the world's fastest growing region."

Forrest Hall has been designed to rival the facilities provided by prestigious scholarship programs such as the Rhodes Scholarship in the UK and Fulbright Program in the US. Designed by renowned Western Australian architect Kerry Hill, it is the first of its kind in the Asia Pacific.

Minderoo Foundation Chairman Andrew Forrest AO said Forrest Hall would help to make Western Australia a research centre of excellence.

"We are setting in motion today a multi-generational investment in academia and research that will deliver the state of Western Australia economic and cultural dividends beyond any of our lifetimes," Mr Forrest said.

"Forrest Hall is our contribution to the important nation-building task of cementing Australia at the heart of research, collaboration and problem solving in the Southern Hemisphere."

The additional funding has expanded the Forrest Hall facility and increased the number of awards from 32 to 60 scholars and fellows over ten years. An additional seven scholars and two fellows will be recruited this year bringing the total to 26 scholars and 5 fellows. The highly successful scholarships program is underway, with several students well advanced in their research pursuits.

"The people and places that will prosper in the 21st century knowledge society will be those that are most effective in generating and using new ideas," Forrest Research Foundation Warden Paul Johnson said.



“Australia needs to invest in the people who will create the ideas of tomorrow, so that we don’t get left behind.

“The Forrest Research Foundation brings to Perth some of the brightest young minds from around the world to help build the creative and innovative foundations of tomorrow’s prosperity.”

Forrest Hall consists of 45 self-catered one and two-bedroom apartments, each with river views, as well as an outdoor terrace, communal living spaces and multi-purpose rooms for research, seminars and functions.

It will host scholars in-perpetuity and be a home for big ideas in Western Australia, hosting events for visiting thought leaders and community groups.

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About the Minderoo Foundation

Minderoo was established by Nicola and Andrew Forrest in 2001 based on the mandate to give a hand up, not a hand out. Since establishment the Foundation has committed \$645m to a wide range of causes – from ending modern slavery to improving the lives of Australian children - and worked with over 250 partners in Australia and beyond.

www.minderoo.com.au

About the Forrest Research Foundation

The Forrest Research Foundation was established in 2013 through a \$65m donation that was increased in 2017 to \$130m from Andrew and Nicola Forrest. The Foundation provides PhD scholarships and post-doctoral fellowships to conduct research at any of Western Australia’s five universities. The initiative includes a state of the art accommodation facility in Forrest Hall on the banks of Perth’s Swan River. www.forrestresearch.org.au

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