



Media Release  
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## **BIGGEST AND BRIGHTEST EVER SPARK FESTIVAL TO OPEN IN SYDNEY NEXT MONTH**

Spark Festival, a celebration of technology, innovation and startup companies is set to be the biggest event of its kind that Sydney has ever seen, said Spark Organiser Maxine Sherrin.

The 13-day festival, kicks off at the State Library of NSW on the 13<sup>th</sup> October and will include scores of events to be held in Sydney and Newcastle.

“Don’t be surprised to see a drone with a sophisticated new mapping technology hovering over the CBD,” said Sherrin. “And kids will also have the opportunity to program robots at one of our many workshops.”

“In just a few years from now the *Internet of Things* is expected to generate more than \$10 trillion globally and it’s crucial that we are positioned to capitalise on those opportunities,” she said.

Sherrin said the festival would hold appeal to people of every age group and that parents should consider attending the illuminating talk by Mike Priddis, CEO of research and development firm, Faethm.ai.

“Mike’s talk on the future of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics and the Internet of Everything, will focus on the impact of automation and what the jobs landscape will look like in 10 years-time,” she said.

“Students today may need to consider a very different path to be employable.”

Deputy Premier John Barilaro and Minister for Small Business said the annual Spark Festival is an increasingly important event for NSW.

“This is a terrific way to bring the start-up community together with ASX listed companies, universities, industry groups, investors, think tanks and researchers,” said the Deputy Premier.

“The future of the NSW economy will rely heavily on our ability to transform and respond to rapidly evolving digital world,” he said.

Complementing the Spark program is a two-day event at Australian Technology Park from the 11<sup>th</sup> of October. [Everything IoT Global Leadership Summit](#) will hear from international and local guest speakers how the *Internet of Things* will revolutionise a range of Australian industries.

Spark Festival highlights will include:

- The Future 50-years of Space Activity at Cicada Innovations, Eveleigh
- Steam pop-up for school children at the Powerhouse Museum
- Future of Work in the next decade talk at International Towers Barangaroo
- Artificial intelligence in your business at Tank Stream
- Australian Chinese 2-day expo on the start-up ecosystem at the China Pavilion in Martin Place
- Start-up Speaker School at the Sydney School of Entrepreneurship

Jobs for NSW CEO Karen Borg said the event is a significant milestone in the startup calendar.

“Jobs for NSW is proud to be supporting Spark Festival for the next three years – it’s a fantastic celebration of our startup culture and it underlines Sydney’s status as the nation’s startup capital.

Our investment in the Spark Festival shows how deep is our commitment to provide opportunities for NSW startups to share ideas, network and realise their potential,” she said.

Lord Mayor Clover Moore agreed Sydney’s startup scene was key to building Australia’s future.

“Events like Spark Festival are an important step to helping Sydney build the skilled and connected community,” the Lord Mayor said.

“Sydney is home to Australia’s highest concentration of new technology startups and we want to encourage these entrepreneurs to stay in the city, build their businesses and help create the jobs of the future.”

“We’re also looking at what we can do to encourage the startup founders of the future, and the robotic workshop with school children at the Sydney Town Hall is a terrific way to start.”

Details about the Spark Festival Events and their locations can be found [here](#) and some events require bookings.

**Media:** Contact Maxine Sherrin 0425 273 773 or Jennifer Havilah M:0421 829 913 to arrange interviews.