

MEDIA RELEASE
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AIIA welcomes \$66m cash injection for Digital Restart Fund, but renews calls for bold long-term funding and establishment of NSW Digital Maturity Fund

While the Australian Information Industry Association ([AIIA](#)), Australia's peak body for innovation technology, welcomes the unlocking of a \$66m cash injection for the NSW Digital Restart Fund, the peak body is calling on the Minns Government to give the tech industry long-term confidence in the future of the Fund, following the AIIA's [calls](#) for significant funding and a rebranding as the Digital Maturity Fund. Papers associated with the 2023-24 budget confirmed that \$66 million in funding committed under the previous government had been released for projects supported by the Digital Restart Fund, which has been nearing depletion.

The injection will allow the Digital Restart Fund to continue supporting digital and information and communication technology initiatives across government services in the short term. The AIIA notes that NSW has been a [leader in government digital services](#), but this will only be maintained through continued investment and long-term planning, which the AIIA looks forward to seeing from the Minns Government and its digital-engaged Ministers as it works closely with the new administration.

The AIIA recognises the efforts of the Minns Government to deliver a fiscally responsible budget, but urges the Minns Government to adopt the Digital Maturity Fund recommendation put forward by the AIIA in its 2023 [pre-election statement](#), of at least a \$1.6 billion funding commitment and a rebrand of the Fund as the Digital Maturity Fund. Supporting this recommendation in future budgets will grow NSW's digital and data capability in government, climate and sustainability, and cyber security; and continue to stimulate the NSW economy including start-ups, especially through the "seed" funding of smaller discovery and innovation projects that otherwise would not get started.

A further \$80 million in funding for the Department of Customer Service and Service NSW for critical cyber security activities is also welcomed by the AIIA.

Funding to support the transition of our energy supply, renewables and moving funding from EV rebates to EV infrastructure is also welcomed as technology continues to play a key role in the transition to a net zero economy. The AIIA notes the reprioritisation of the Future Economy Fund as part of the fiscal responsibility measures, but hopes to see future economy and digital economy initiatives made a priority for future budgets given the importance of R&D, business growth and innovation in sectors including modern manufacturing.

AIIA CEO Simon Bush said: "NSW has been a national leader in adopting and implementing digital technologies to provide services that benefit NSW citizens. We welcome the fact that this \$66m has been unlocked to top up the Digital Restart Fund. As the Fund was sitting at \$74 million prior to the Budget, the release of this previously committed funding leads to a combined \$140 million to support innovative digital projects.

"It is now up to the Minns Government to invest in the ongoing digitisation of service delivery and the next steps of digital government, and the AIIA sees a Digital Maturity Fund as the key to this long-term aim. Emerging tech such as Artificial Intelligence can yield so many benefits for NSW citizens. A Digital Maturity Fund would position NSW to capitalise on technology developments accordingly. The AIIA looks forward to the Minns Government continuing to digitise government and commit to a Digital Maturity Fund as the mechanism for achieving this. This will enable NSW to capitalise on the cutting edge of tech, including AI adoption, to grow the local economy and achieve seamless digital government."

The AIIA is a not-for-profit organisation aimed at fuelling Australia's future social and economic prosperity through tech innovation and remains committed to working with all levels of Government to secure Australia's digital future.

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For media enquiries:

Michael Banks

M: 0418 862 545

E: aiia@thrivepr.com.au

About AIIA

The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) is Australia's peak representative body and advocacy group for those in the digital ecosystem. Since 1978 AIIA has pursued activities to stimulate and grow the digital ecosystem, to create a favourable business environment for members and to contribute to Australia's economic prosperity. We do this by delivering outstanding member value by providing a strong voice of influence; building a sense of community through events and education; enabling a network for collaboration and inspiration; developing compelling content and relevant and interesting information.