



27 May 2021

The Hon. Dominic Perrottet, MP  
NSW Treasurer

By email [Communications@treasury.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Communications@treasury.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Treasurer

### **Supporting the international education sector**

As you are aware, the massive decrease in the number of international students in our universities and other education facilities due to closed international borders has had a significant impact on the economy in Sydney and throughout NSW.

Pre-COVID, international education generated \$14bn in exports and supported more than 100,000 jobs, approximately half of which were in the City of Sydney.

***We therefore ask that significant funding be made immediately available to this critical sector through the State Budget you will deliver on 22 June 2021.***

### **Support provided by the City of Sydney**

As part of the City's \$6.75m COVID-19 Relief Grants Program, international students who remained in Sydney have been supported by numerous projects, including:

- **International Students Hub:** Delivered by Sydney Alliance, this links students to relevant support services and provide them with a sense of belonging with the community.
- **My Legal Mate:** Access to 50,000 subscriptions to the My Legal Mate App at Redfern Legal Centre to support international students with on-demand, individualised legal assistance and resources.
- **City Migrant Organising Project – Relief, Recovery, Resilience:** This project provides emergency relief, advocacy and support to socially isolated temporary migrants and international students.
- **Harris Community Aid Food Security and Community Support:** Community-led program to support vulnerable and at-need community members, including international students, in response to COVID-19 by providing financial/material aid, social support and employment opportunities.
- **Counterpoint Community Services Incorporated:** Its COVID-19 Community Response Project provides access to various services to address local community members' needs, especially those within social housing.

- **University of Sydney COVID-19 International Students Case Management:** - support international students who are experiencing the effects of COVID-19.
- **Relationships Australia:** Its 'Resilience in Times of Crisis for International Students in the City of Sydney' project provides access to various support networks and services to international students who are at risk of mental health issues.

In addition, the City's \$1m donation to OzHarvest provided food security to vulnerable community members, including a dedicated collection point with food and times tailored to suit the needs of international students.

### **State funding is urgently needed**

Despite these concerted efforts of the City of Sydney and many community organisations to support the sector throughout the pandemic, much more still needs to be done.

Based on advice from relevant stakeholders, we particularly request funding for:

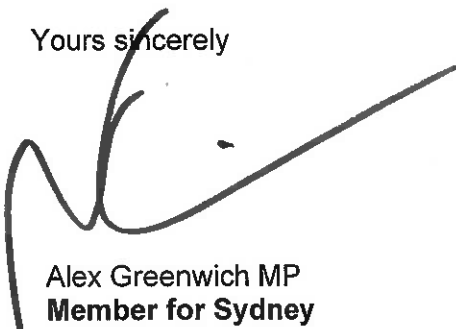
- Grants to education providers to support the industry to rebuild
- Separate quarantine facilities for international students, to support their safe return to NSW
- A promotional campaign to position Sydney as a safe, welcoming and diverse destination for students
- Public Transport Concession passes for international students
- Culturally appropriate, targeted programs to support the mental health and wellbeing of international students.

***In addition, we ask that you advocate to the Federal Government for changes to visa conditions that would allow greater flexibility of working hours for international students.***

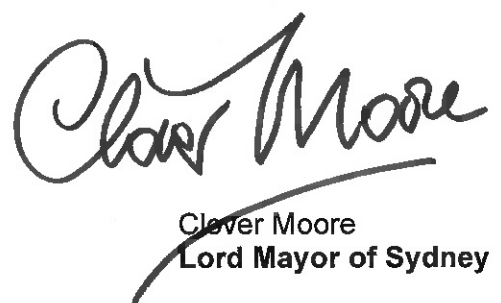
It is clear that the return of international students is critical to the economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, and we ask that you support these requests.

If your staff would like to speak to someone in the Lord Mayor's office about this matter, they can contact Chief of Staff, Adam Cox, on 0400 092 232 or at [acox@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:acox@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



Alex Greenwich MP  
Member for Sydney



Clover Moore  
Lord Mayor of Sydney