

US Studies Centre

The joint bid of the University and the Victorian Government was submitted on 15 September. In my view it is an excellent bid, a view that has been endorsed by several others who have seen the document confidentially. Copies of the full bid are available for Council members. We have been fortunate to receive very generous assistance from M&C Saatchi (in compilation of the video that accompanies the bid), Mallesons Stephen Jacques (in preparing a draft constitution for the Centre) and B&B Design (in designing the bid document and associated materials). While the University of Melbourne would be the Host University, the bid includes the ANU, Flinders, UNSW, UQ and UWA as Australian partner universities. The bid proposes that the Centre should be named "The Keith Murdoch Centre for United States Studies", after the notable Melburnian who founded the American Australian Association in 1948.

The bid was launched officially by Minister Brumby on 3 October at a large cocktail reception at the National Gallery of Victoria, with an announcement that the State Government would contribute \$10 million to the Centre if our bid is successful. Senator Rod Kemp read a letter of support from the Federal Treasurer. Many prominent Melburnians, including Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, were in attendance.

Other known bids are from the University of Sydney and from the ANU on its own. The NSW Government's financial contribution to the University of Sydney's bid is not known.

The interviews for bidders with the Selection Advisory Committee convened by the American Australian Association Ltd will occur in Melbourne on Wednesday 11 October. Our Chancellor will lead the Melbourne presentation, as I will be in London. The announcement of the successful bidder will be on 14 November at the inaugural Australian AAA benefit dinner in Sydney, but we understand that the decision will be made in late October or early November and we have asked the AAA to notify us of the decision well before 14 November.