



BECA BLASTS GRANTS PROGRAM

THE Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) says the industry is now facing a perfect storm, forced to contend with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, the end of the JobKeeper wage subsidy program and an inappropriately targeted grants scheme.

BECA Chair, Dr Vanessa Findlay, particularly slammed the poor design of the \$50 million Business Events Grants Program which has “left the industry with virtually no targeted Government support post JobKeeper”.

“The program established is misaligned and has not delivered support to the industry in the scale or time frame that is critically needed... after more than six months only \$8 million of the \$50 million has been earmarked for distribution to grant recipients,” Findlay fumed.

“In such a challenging environment to see only 16% of the funds used is an incredibly strong indicator of just how poor this program is,” she said.

Findlay noted that while the 28 Mar deadline for the end of JobKeeper had now passed, “what has not passed is the uncertainty, severe limitations and restrictions that are compromising our industry’s survival and pathway to recovery”.



“Investment in ongoing targeted support is needed as an urgent priority to ensure we can sustain our sector and retain our event professionals into the future,” Findlay said.

BECA’s most recent industry survey found that 85% of event businesses were still accessing the JobKeeper program for the Jan-Mar 2021 period, with almost half expecting to make more staff redundant with the cessation of the scheme.

Almost a quarter of businesses in the industry are expecting to be forced to close, with 61% seeing a 75-100% reduction in turnover for 2020 versus 2019.

“The Business Events Grants Program is simply not sufficient nor effective enough to bring the support desperately needed,” Findlay said.

“We will not only see more job losses and business failures in the short term, but also long-term ramifications for the economic potential of the industry...we will lose market share to other countries that

may never return,” she added.

MEANWHILE the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) has also highlighted the difficult situation faced by the industry without ongoing Government support.

“While state, territory and local government-backed convention bureaux continue to strategically bid for and win new business events for their respective destinations over the medium to long term, the immediate future is not clear.

“Since the impacts of the pandemic hit Australia, AACB members have endured 241 international and 182 domestic business event cancellations due to COVID-19,” said AACB President Michael Matthews.

He noted that all key associations behind BECA had repeatedly advised the Government of the flawed design of the grants scheme, “outlining the disconnect between where the grants are being distributed and where the primary COVID-19 risk is being assessed and realised.

“However these calls have been ignored,” Matthews said.

As well as overhauling the grants scheme, AACB called on the Government to deliver additional targeted support measures for tourism and events businesses that still need help post-JobKeeper.

LIVN, TIX deal

THIRD party distributors will now have access to musical and theatre product, under a new partnership between ticket retailer TIX and technology firm Livn.

Livn’s Open Connectivity Hub already offers a simple way for distributors of tours and activities to access third party distribution, with the new deal adding event offerings to the mix.

The pact is being celebrated with the launch of tickets to *Frozen the Musical* by Disney Theatrical Productions, which is now available to Livn distribution partners, travel agents and the travel industry.

TIX CEO Sheila Moloney said the *Frozen* launch is “just the beginning of a promising partnership between two technology companies, Livn and TIX, getting together to expand and grow the live entertainment reach and traction”.

The TIX deal is Livn’s first partnership in the musical, theatre and concert space - more info at www.livn.world.

Today’s issue of BEN


Business Events News today has two pages of news.

Events space?

Let’s talk about how our space can help fill your space.



SPECIAL PACKAGES AVAILABLE

 **business events news**



LET’S Meet AGAIN SOON

WATCH VIDEO

BUSINESS EVENTS GOLDCOAST.



COULD the future of events include segregation?

It's already happening in the USA, where several sporting teams have started differentiating seating between vaccinated and non-vaccinated patrons.

One of the frontrunners is the Miami Heat basketball team, which has announced plans to open two sections in its stadium for fully vaccinated fans only.

Masks will still be required in the special areas, but social distancing rules will be slightly relaxed.

Under new NBA regulations, if a team provides sections within 30 feet of the court, fans in those seats must have a negative PCR COVID-19 test result within two days prior to the game.

Rowing to NSW

THE NSW Government is claiming a sporting coup after securing the Australian Rowing Championships for 2022 and 2024.

The events will be held at the Sydney International Regatta Centre in Penrith, west of Sydney, with Tourism Minister Stuart Ayres saying the deal continues the state's Visitor Economy Strategy to rejuvenate the events sector post COVID-19.

TCEB launches "MICE Winnovation"

THAILAND Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has launched an expanded version of its business events incubation program, which has so far involved 37 successful startups since its 2018 debut.

The new "MICE Winnovation" initiative saw 29 tech firms recently showcase their products and services to 126 trade visitors, with offerings ranging from software for monitoring visitor traffic, face recognition systems, robots, on-demand workforces and live streaming services.

The program aims to give MICE entrepreneurs the opportunity to meet with tech partners as they expand their digital offerings, with TCEB offering funding in the form of Inno-Vouchers.

These vouchers can be used by organisers of domestic and international exhibitions, international conventions and festivals to offset their investment in new digital solutions - for more [CLICK HERE](#).

IBTM expands

IBTM Events has launched a new online event called IBTM Wired which will become a permanent addition to its portfolio.

The inaugural IBTM Wired will take place 28 Jun-01 Jul 2021, with four days of online activity based on the Sector Global event platform used for IBTM World Virtual.

keep dreaming...

Travel inspiration for your next holiday

©Destination NSW

Travel & Cruise Weekly

ONAIR MOVES INTO 3D



EVENTSAIR has given more than 1,000 event planners a taste of the new three-dimensional graphical experience available in its OnAIR v5, after hosting a series of global online bootcamps late last month.

The 90-minute hands-on previews were hosted for attendees in the APAC, EMEA and Americas regions, showing them the basics of creating and configuring each aspect of a 3D OnAIR event.

The first step in the new event journey is the "event lobby" (pictured) where delegates spend a few moments setting up AIRTouch Personal Devices which act as virtual tablets to help navigate through the event.

The lobby is fully customisable with videos, clickable links, scrolling schedules and personalised messages, and with attendees then able to visit the

auditorium which can also display sponsor advertising, session schedules, clickable information links and more.

Function rooms, breakout areas and other venues can be styled using 3D themes, while bootcamp attendees were also able to customise their own exhibition halls including a search function to make it easy to add stands - which can even feature brochure racks linked to downloadable collateral.

Exhibitors are able to interact via text chats or video meetings, conduct presentations and have their stands fully branded.

The company said it had received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the hands-on preview, with free personalised demonstrations of the software now available to interested parties.

For more information see www.eventsair.com.