



## BUSINESS EVENTS REIMAGINED

**INNOVATION** will be key to ensuring the global business events sector weathers the pandemic, according to a new White Paper released last week by the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), Singapore Tourism Board and the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI).

Titled *Reimagining Business Events Through COVID-19 and Beyond*, the document was launched at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore, during the hybrid Singapore MICE Forum x IBTM Wired event.

Acknowledging the massive impact of the pandemic on the business events industry, the paper notes that “although most professionals in the industry agree that face-to-face meetings remain relevant, they also agree on the urgent need to rethink and re-engineer business events”.

In 2017 business events generated US\$2.5 trillion in output, with over 1.5 billion participants from 180 countries - contributing US\$1.5 trillion to global GDP which would make it the 13th largest global economy - ahead of Australia and Mexico.

And while 2020 saw massive losses incurred across the sector,



there are “strong indications of growth and innovation” particularly in the Asia Pacific.

“Exhibitors in Asia are much more optimistic about their budgets, and the number of events they are planning to participate in has recovered to pre-pandemic levels,” the report notes - along with a stronger appetite for digital or hybrid events across the region.

Companies operating in the sector are being urged to reimagine their business models, with the paper suggesting they “think and behave like a start-up”.

Digital transformation will be key both in terms of the delegate

experience and engagement with employees, who will require stronger digital literacy & skills.

“While it is hard to predict what the sector will look like in a few years, it is abundantly clear that organisations must apply hybrid solutions in the short & medium term, and continue to adapt and respond to the changing needs of customers to the best of their ability,” the report suggests.

“Whoever meets customers’ needs in the most effective and economical way will recover fastest and serve as a beacon for the rest of the sector.”

The full report (**pictured**) is available at [stb.gov.sg](http://stb.gov.sg).

### ICC instant pivot

**THE** snap lockdown in Sydney has seen International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC) support a key client by converting the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia (RCPA) Pathology Update 2021 into a 100% virtual experience.

CEO Geoff Donaghy said ICC set in motion the digital event scenario that was built into early event plans, enabling a seamless transition complete with keynote speakers, workshops, breakout sessions & exhibition content, with the transition to virtual enacted in just 48 hours.

“The venue’s ability to remain open to provide these important services to the community is of great benefit, and will enrich the medical profession and the knowledge economy for years to come,” he said.

### MCEC launches sustainability strategy

**THE** Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) has unveiled a five-year sustainability road map, with the aim of further enhancing its reputation as a leading sustainable event destination.

Targets in the plan, led by Sustainability Manager Samantha Ferrier, have been set in nine key priority areas, including climate change, waste and resource recovery, energy, water, infrastructure and transport, procurement, nature, education and equality recognition.

MCEC CEO Peter King said the

strategy embraces everything the venue stands for.

“It commits us to doing things differently, it’s bold in its targets, pursues strong partnerships and aims to leave a legacy,” he said.

King said MCEC acknowledged its responsibility to reduce demand on the planet’s finite resources.

“Through the targets in this strategy we are sending a clear message that we can and will do more to provide better outcomes for our community, our customers and our environment,” he added.

### EIC appointment

**THE** Events Industry Council (EIC) has named Augustine (Gus) Chijioke as its Director of Certification and Education.

The Washington DC-based EIC comprises more than 30 member organisations, with a vision to be the “global champion for event professionals and event industry excellence,” through its Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) program.

Chijioke was previously Director of Membership & Certification at Capital Association Management.

### PCOA keynote

**MATTHEW** Findlay will be a key presenter at the upcoming Professional Conference Organisers Association (PCOA) PCOA21, taking place at Hobart’s Hotel Grand Chancellor 05-07 Dec.

Findlay is Director - Global Markets for Ailevon Pacific Aviation Consulting, with a range of experience at airports across the globe including services, property development, retail and corporate affairs.

PCOA21 program director, Paula Leishman, said “Matthew is a great fit for the program,” able to give delegates a broader view of the aviation world including what airlines are doing to help the recovery of the business events industry - see [pcoaconference.com.au](http://pcoaconference.com.au).