



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

STB virtual show

THE Singapore Tourism Board has announced a collaboration with local MICE players, in the form of a two-day virtual event taking place 03-04 Mar.

Dubbed the SingapoReImagine MICE Virtual Show, the event will feature a locally curated program of live-streamed cultural and leisure shows, culinary masterclasses from celebrity chefs, and a live panel discussion with industry leaders on organising pilot events in Singapore.

It will also facilitate one-on-one virtual meetings between participants and around 40 key suppliers including tour operators, hotels and convention venues.

An online 3D environment will allow delegates to navigate the virtual show floor, with five lucky buyers to win a hosted trip to Singapore - for more show info [CLICK HERE](#).

Vic lifeline

A RAPIDLY implemented \$143 million "circuit breaker support package" announced by the Vic state government will help partly recompense businesses for their losses due to last week's snap five day lockdown.

The shutdown of business across the state due to a total of 25 active cases came at a crucial juncture, forcing the last-minute cancellation of events around Valentine's Day and the Lunar New Year.

The Victorian Tourism Industry Council cited "devastating losses" for the state's tourism, hospitality and events operators, with the snap lockdown having "really rocked the sector to its core" according to CEO Felicia Mariani.

Up to 50,000 businesses will receive support, reimbursing direct losses from stock wastage and cancelled accommodation.

BECA URGES INDUSTRY INPUT

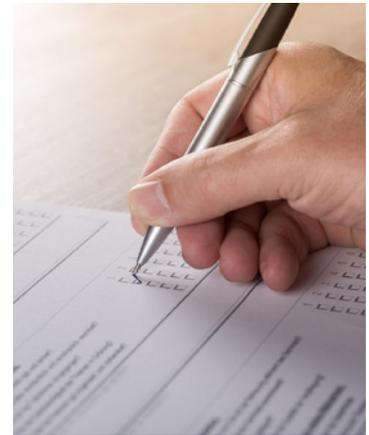
THE Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) is pleading with anyone involved in the business events sector in Australia to urgently complete a survey, as it continues to press for ongoing Government support from Apr 2021 onwards.

BECA's COVID-19 Business Events Recovery & Rebound Framework, developed as the pandemic took hold, has been continually reviewed to incorporate input from the industry and has "contributed significantly to our ongoing engagement with Government - aimed at introducing appropriate and effective support for the industry," said BECA Chair Vanessa Findlay.

"We need your help to strengthen our evidence base around the current state of the industry and future prospects... this next survey is likely the most important yet," she said.

As well as prospective Commonwealth support arrangements once JobKeeper ends, the results will also help inform state governments about the state of the industry.

Anyone who is an employer, freelancer or contractor representing an organisation or



individual associated with the supply chain that contributes to the creation and delivery of business events across Australia is urged to participate by completing the brief survey.

The poll aims to assess the current operating environment, the impact of government support mechanisms and those that will best assist in 2021/22, and measure the level of business confidence and future business expectations.

Findlay urged a completion deadline of tomorrow, Wed 24 Feb, so the results can be used to feed into the next round of discussions with government.

The survey is now online - to complete it [CLICK HERE](#).

Catch up on the news of the week



Travel Daily

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TA gets chatty

TOURISM Australia (TA) has launched its first ever WeChat Mini Program aimed at raising awareness of Australia as a business events destination in China.

The new Mini Program sees TA as one of only two national tourism organisations with a dedicated business events Mini Program worldwide.

The new WeChat portal acts as an information hub with inspiring content, research and planning tools.

Sydney bid win

SYDNEY has been announced as the host city for the 2023 SIGGRAPH Asia conference, which will see 2,500 delegates discuss the latest developments in graphics, animation, art and technology.

Scheduled to take place 12-15 Dec 2023, the major business event is among 20 new international meetings secured for the NSW capital over the last 12 months, according to BESydney CEO Lyn Lewis-Smith.



THINGS really hotted up in the South Australian town of Willunga last weekend, when it hosted the 2021 Chilli Fest with a full array of spicy food, products, cooking demonstrations and of course lots of chilli plants.

It's the third year that the community event has operated, and of course 2021 includes the festival's regular showcase of some of the world's hottest sauces.

"Adelaide's south is a mecca for chilli," according to festival coordinator, Heather Williams, who said that while international travel is off the agenda the Chilli Fest 'is the perfect opportunity to allow your tastebuds to travel without leaving South Australia'.

It wasn't just about the food, with chilli-themed jewellery, giftware and of course plenty of humour, including this musical-themed pun: "How do you measure the heaviness of a red hot chilli pepper? Give it a weigh, Give it a weigh, Give it a weigh now". Hmmm.

Arinex hybrid

EVENT management specialist Arinex has boosted its technical resources in recognition that "2021 will be the year of hybrid events".

The company last year added the concept of a Digital Conference Organiser (DCO), saying that often what is involved in the production of a virtual or hybrid event is "radically underestimated".

"It is assumed that an online event just needs a virtual platform," said Arinex CEO Nicole Walker.

"This assumption is far from reality - a virtual platform is just like a conference room...we all know that a conference room does not ensure a quality event, and the actual event still requires conference expertise in event management," she said.

"We are excited to be one of the leading DCOs in Australia that can offer integrated technology and full or part service end-to-end event management".

Arinex has partnered with eTechSuite to provide multiple platform options and seamless integration.

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\$20M FOR NSW EVENTS

A NEWLY announced Regional Events Acceleration Fund from the NSW Government will provide \$20 million in grants to boost major events in regional areas of the state.

NSW Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, said the initiative would help showcase towns internationally, boost regional economies and provide valuable jobs for locals.

"We have proven our ability to stage major events that accommodate large crowds in a COVID safe environment, and now is the time to bring entertainment to the bush and provide much needed stimulus to local economies," he said.

The grants program will provide successful applicants with a minimum of \$100,000 to help bring major sporting, lifestyle, food & beverage,

music, art and cultural events to regional NSW that provide "national and international exposure," Barilaro said.

Organisers can also apply for between \$50,000 and \$200,000 for activities that enhance events, including the provision of extra seating, pop-up camping sites, temporary car parks, fencing and accessibility infrastructure.

Applications opened today and will close on Fri 17 Dec 2021, or whenever funding from the scheme is fully committed.

Barilaro said event organisers, regional NSW councils, sporting bodies, not-for-profit organisations and Aboriginal Land Councils are eligible.

Program details, including guidelines, applications and more information, are available at www.nsw.gov.au/REAFund.

MCEC appoints health advisor

TINA Blythman has been named as Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre's (MCEC) Health and Wellbeing Advisor.

The newly created role aims to ensure the venue achieves the highest standards and

performance in mental health and wellbeing by providing a safe working environment.

Blythman will lead large-scale targeted health projects at MCEC, optimising the health, wellbeing & injury management of staff.

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