

# BUSINESS EVENTS TASMANIA

## City of Hobart 2021/2022 Activity Report

### **Introduction**

Business Events Tasmania (BET) is a specialist bidding organisation responsible for marketing Tasmania as a business event destination.

We are a not-for-profit member organisation, offering specialist bidding services to deliver tangible benefits to the visitor economy. We also drive long lasting legacies through the attraction of strategically valuable business events to Tasmania.

We pride ourselves on the collaborative approach we take with members, key stakeholders and local partners.

For over 30 years, we have taken a lead role in promoting Tasmania as a business event destination to national and international associations, corporate organisations and event planners. Conference connections underpin knowledge creation and in exchange, attract global talent, encourage trade and investment, nurture collaboration, foster innovation and provide social benefits. Backed by strong local relationships, we also work in collaboration with the Tasmanian State Government to attract and support strategically valuable business to the Tasmanian economy.

Conferences and business events not only benefit the main conference and accommodation venues within the city, but they have a flow-on effect to smaller operators including hospitality, retail businesses and transport operators.

As Tasmania's capital city, major gateway into the state and home to Tasmania's key conference and meetings infrastructure, Hobart is the primary beneficiary of all BET sales and marketing activity.

Business events delegates are the highest yielding visitor, often, visiting Hobart during off-peak times. Research conducted in 2019 into delegate behaviours and experiences whilst here in Tasmania showed that delegates on average spend three times that of a leisure traveller per day and stay for an average of 6.1 nights with 55% of delegates intending to return to Tasmania for leisure within the next three years.

After years of border instability, COVID outbreaks and density restrictions, the first half of 2022 has seen a positive milestone in the recovery of Tasmania's business events sector offering the first extended period of market stability since the onset of the pandemic back in March 2020. From 1 January – 31 May 2022, Hobart has hosted 29 business events with an estimated economic impact of around \$17M, representing 5,930 delegates and 19,545 room nights. The recent lifting of density restrictions offers further positivity for our sector, with many operators now able to trade at full capacity and we expect the market to respond enthusiastically to this news. Pleasingly we have also finally seen an end to the ongoing cancellations and postponements due to COVID-19.

### **Key Activities**

Business events delegates are in high demand and our sales and marketing activities throughout the year ensures that Tasmania maintains a strong presence in the market.

### **Business Events Attraction Fund (BEAF)**

The Tasmanian Business Events Attraction Fund (BEAF) allows BET to offer financial support at the critical bidding stage, to help secure national and international conferences to the state. Previously administered by the Department of State Growth, BET took on the administration of BEAF from October. This allows for, quick response to funding opportunities when the team are bidding for Business Events. Since July 2021, 19 business events proposed to take place in Hobart have been approved for funding. Equating to 6,180 delegates, 17,615 room nights and an estimated worth of \$18M, these business events represent a range of sectors including medical science, Antarctic and Southern Ocean and retail.

### **Business Events Tasmania Magazine**

Launched in December, BET produce a magazine, *Business Events Tasmania*, released quarterly. The magazine is a soft sales document that allows BET to convey important messages around Tasmania's unique selling proposition in a competitive marketplace, in an engaging format. Distributed electronically, the magazine is sent to approx. 4,500 event planners and key decision makers nationally and internationally. See here for our [summer edition](#) and [autumn edition](#). Both editions feature a range of Hobart meeting venues and operators located in Hobart city. These include, Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart Walking Tours, The Tasman, *Mustique*, Aura and Drive Car Hire.

### **Digital Bidding Tool**

The digital bidding tool project has remained as a major activity for the 21/22 FY. In line with client feedback, we are overhauling the way we provide information to our customers. This will result in us giving our customers what they want and how they want it, positively building our reputation in-market. The Bidding Tool project is due for completion in the first quarter of 22/23 FY.

### **BE Boost Program**

In partnership with Business Events Australia through their Business Events Boost Program, BET have produced a suite of delegate boosting and promotional videos. The videos are available conferences and business events to use as destination announcements to encourage increased delegate numbers to Tasmanian events, to accompany bids and showcase talented individuals working in Tasmania's key industry sectors. Whilst the full content delivery is not due for completion until July 2022 to allow for inclusion of Tasmania's new Premier, some content is complete and available for viewing [here](#) and [here](#).

### **Familiarisation Program**

In 2021, BET received a grant under the Recovery for Regional Tourism Program to undertake famil activity showcasing Tasmania’s business events capabilities. To date BET have hosted two familiarisation programs, both of which heavily featured programming in the city of Hobart. Additionally, during Dark Mofo 2022, and in collaboration with Business Events Australia, we will be hosting key representatives from the New Zealand business events sector on a familiarisation in Hobart.

We know that famil activity is one of, if not the most effective ways to convert new business for the state. Our sales team has already identified 48 pieces of business that relate directly to the two groups that have participated in our famil program. Sitting at various stages of the sales pipeline this business equates to an EEI in excess of \$41M, with over \$5M worth of events already confirmed. We anticipate this figure will grow significantly over the next six to eight months as markets continue to stabilise.

### Site Inspections

Prior to selecting a destination, clients often want to visit the region to meet with suppliers, view venues and plan out how their event may work in the city/region. Site inspections have always been a key service offered by BET. In most cases, BET covers the cost of airfares, car hire and plans itinerary and supplier meetings. BET staff meet the client(s) at the airport ensuring they make all of their appointments and venue viewings before returning to the airport at the end of their 1-2 day stay. Since Tasmania’s borders reopened, BET have hosted 14 site inspections within the City of Hobart. Of these, 71% have since confirmed their future business event to Tasmania.

### Tradeshows

National trade shows continue to provide a platform for BET to showcase Tasmania as a business event destination to key markets. February saw the return to face-to-face tradeshows and BET is pleased to have attended 3 tradeshows since; Get Local Expo- Sydney, Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME)- Melbourne, and Associations Forum National Conference- Melbourne.

### Hobart Business Event Activity

#### Bid Wins

A key performance indicator for BET is to win business events to Tasmania.

It should be noted that BET ‘bid won’ data only includes bids directly placed and won by BET. The activities carried out by BET in promoting Hobart as a business event destination also delivers business directly to the venues and the city. A KPI of BET’s funding agreement with the City is to secure 74 bids in 21/22.

Table 1: Hobart – Won Bids July 1, 2014 – 1 June 2022

	2014 - 15	2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Number of Bid Wins	87	65	87	76	80	80	50	81
Delegates	19,041	16,982	20,590	18,471	16,061	16,725	12,321	17,008
Estimated Economic Impact (EEI)	\$ 36,896,672	\$ 31,503,779	\$ 39,766,562	\$ 39,519,601	\$ 39,422,802	\$ 43,486,010	\$ 35,006,484	\$ 53,344,041

## Strategic Bids

The business events sector augments economic activity well beyond measurable metrics, underpinning knowledge creation and exchange, investment among other impacts. These business events are often referred to as the knowledge economy.

A key strategic imperative in BET's strategic plan 2019 -2022, is to position BET for long term sustainable growth through increased awareness of the benefits of the knowledge economy.

In 2021-2022, a number of business events aligning to key areas of science, medical research, planning and property were secured into Hobart. These conferences are expected to attract approx. 4,750 delegates and over \$16 million into the Tasmanian economy.

*Table 2: Strategic Bid Wins for Hobart 2021-2022*

Event Name	Meeting Start	Delegates	Value
International Temperate Reefs Symposium 2023	8/01/2023	250	\$945,000.00
International Seaweed Triennial Symposium 2023	19/02/2023	700	\$3,175,200.00
International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference 2023	6/03/2023	250	\$945,000.00
Planning Institute of Australia National Congress 2022	18/05/2022	500	\$1,101,000.00
Property Council of Australia Congress 2022	26/03/2022	700	\$2,569,000.00
Australia-China Youth Dialogue 2022	6/05/2022	80	\$267,840.00
Australian Rheumatology Association Annual Scientific Meeting 2023	4/05/2023	650	\$2,948,400.00
Australian and New Zealand Association of Neurologists Annual Scientific Meeting 2023	15/05/2023	600	\$2,268,000.00
Australasian Society of Aerospace Medicine Conference 2023	15/09/2023	220	\$665,280.00
Progress in MS Research Scientific Conference 2022	3/04/2022	150	\$440,400.00
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Practice Owners National Conference 2022	14/05/2022	530	\$778,040.00
Inaugural Defence Skilling Summit 2023	8/11/2022	120	\$176,160.00

## Future Pipeline

Business events that are either confirmed for future years or currently awaiting a decision.

22/23	# Conf	Delegates	Room Nights	Estimated Economic Impact
<b>Confirmed</b>	56	16,702	53,575	\$51,611,507.00
<b>Pending</b>	51	9,094	23,263	\$26,179,860.00

23/24	# Conf	Delegates	Room Nights	Estimated Economic Impact
<b>Confirmed</b>	10	3,860	12,570	\$13,362,240.00
<b>Pending</b>	28	9,360	34,125	\$34,204,940.00

24/25	# Conf	Delegates	Room Nights	Estimated Economic Impact
<b>Confirmed</b>	2	480	2,620	\$2,196,780.00
<b>Pending</b>	4	2,150	5,700	\$5,725,650.00

25/26	# Conf	Delegates	Room Nights	Estimated Economic Impact
Confirmed	-	-	-	-
Pending	4	1770	5160	\$5,622,020.00

## Sales Funnel



## Collaborative Activities

### Collaborate on bids where appropriate.

Throughout the majority of 21/22 FY, the impacts of COVID-19 continued to put on hold bidding for large association and international association conferences. It is these conferences where collaboration on bids is imperative. In April, CoH supported a bid in collaboration with the Department of Education, Study Tasmania, UTAS and BET in an effort to secure the International Consultants for Education and Fairs' Asia Pacific Australia New Zealand Agent Workshop in 2023.

### Build relationships between BET and CoH officers / elected members.

Both parties continue to build on our relationship. Regular contact is maintained between staff and BET values the support from officers and elected members at BET hosted events including our AGM, Christmas events and client familiarisations dinners.

### Collaborate on social media opportunities.

BET endeavoured to engage with council officers regarding social media opportunities but failed to result in significant activity. With changes in council staff throughout the year, we believe there is a lack of awareness of the relationship and agreements between CoH and BET, and it is something we would like to improve in the future.

### Create appropriate marketing collateral for CoH venues.

BET ensures that CoH venues receive a strong visual presence on the BET website. Conference and event organisers have the ability to add CoH venues to their itinerary and preferred venue lists to be included in a digital request for quote (from BET staff), or to contact CoH directly for bookings and enquiries.

CoH venues have been included in the soon to be launched digital bidding tool. The new digital tool and web platform will transform the way BET presents CoH venues to conference organisers and decision makers as part of our Tasmanian bids. This new way of bidding has been informed by a comprehensive piece of work undertaken by BET to increase our understanding of our customer needs, as well as feedback from our member partners.

Now that bidding is well and truly back, this tool will:

- Save CoH officers time working on lengthy and repetitive proposals
- Streamline BET's communication back and forth with Council officers on bidding opportunities and required proposal information
- Give CoH confidence that your venues are being presented in market in the best possible way
- Stand out from proposals delivered by other destinations and bureaux at the bidding stage.

**Promote sustainable practices in line with CoH priorities to conference organisers.**

BET staff proactively recommend sustainability themes to clients. The Professional Conference Organisers Association (PCOA) conference which was postponed due to COVID but now set to take place in December (for which BET is a Destination Partner for) carries the theme "A Breath of Fresh Air" where key learnings will focus on sustainability. Closer to the time, we will be in contact with the Lord Mayors office with an invitation for them to present to the delegates.

**Identify and bid on business events that align to areas of key focus for the CoH's economic development unit (green and renewable energy, health care and social assistance, information and technology and science.**

During 21/22 FY, BET bid on 15 business events that link back to key focus areas for the City. These bids equate to 21,297 delegates and \$64m in economic value

**Consideration of how the Council's Tasmanian Travel and Information Centre (TTIC) can contribute to incentivising and supporting conference and event bids.**

BET promote the services of the TTIC through the BET website. This is where conference and event organisers have the ability to add the TTIC to be included in a digital request for quote (from BET staff), or to contact the TTIC directly for bookings and enquiries.

**The promotion of the TTIC to BET clients as a preferred booking agent for pre and post business event touring, accommodation requirements and experiences.**

Over the last 12 months, BET staff have worked closely with CoH officers to ensure that BET's promotion of the TTIC aligns with Centre messaging and business goals. This has resulted in a suite of marketing and PR assets that BET provides to conference organisers for use on their conference website, through conference EDM and social activity. Assets promote the TTIC to conference delegates all bookings required for their conference trip to Hobart.

On a case-by-case basis, BET staff work with TTIC staff to promote TTIC services directly to event planners. This may include creation of bespoke itineraries and booking service for significant conferences.

**BET to encourage the TTIC use of the forward calendar to maximise business opportunities arising from confirmed business events being held in Hobart.**

BET staff have met with TTIC representatives to educate them on how to best use the calendar including how and when we recommend contacting the event planners of confirmed business events for the City.

**Conclusion**

On behalf of the BET Board, members and businesses that benefit from business event delegates coming to the region, BET sincerely thanks the CoH for its ongoing support and now seeks consideration to approve funding for the 22-23 FY.

Ongoing funding is critical for BET to continue its efforts to sell and market Hobart as a business event destination of choice. The success of which will continue to aid in the city's recovery post COVID-19.

BET is therefore seeking funding approval of \$114,932.00 for the 2022-2023FY.

I look forward to strengthening BET's relationship with the CoH and to further identify and develop opportunities to work collaboratively in attracting business events to Tasmania's capital.

Marnie Craig

Chief Executive Officer

Business Events Tasmania