

# National Business Events Program

## Guidelines

Melbourne Convention Bureau is offering eligible event organisers funding up to \$25,000 to support costs for hosting National Business Events in metropolitan Melbourne (Grant). This funding can be used for accommodation, venue hire, food and beverage, transport, and other event costs, with 50% paid before the event commences to support upfront expenses.

### 1. Purpose

- The Victorian Government is supporting the National Business Events Program to enable the business events sector to respond to the significant changes experienced as a result of COVID-19. Events must be held prior to 31 December 2022 to stimulate short- and medium-term recovery in the business events sector.
- The Melbourne Convention Bureau (**MCB**) and the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (**DJPR**) will administer the National Business Events Program.
- Strong consideration for support will be given to applicants that can demonstrate alignment with the following objectives:
  - i. The attraction of new national business events to metropolitan Melbourne venues, including the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.
  - ii. The generation of an economic impact to the State including supporting the Victorian business events supply chain.
  - iii. Events offering additional benefits to the State such as regional touring or satellite events, linkages to Victorian businesses or other benefits.

- iv. Events that align with Victorian Government sector priorities ([Victorian Government Sector Priorities](#)) will be viewed favourably, along with those that align to international event opportunities.

## **2. Eligibility**

- Subject to availability, Grants of up to \$25,000 are available for those events that meet the criteria set out below.
- There are several mandatory criteria your event must achieve prior to consideration including:
  - i. Be attended by at least 150 in-person delegates, virtual participants cannot be included.
  - ii. Have a minimum two-day business event program (with one-night stay).
  - iii. Have a minimum of 30% of delegates who reside outside of Victoria.
  - iv. Be a business to business (B2B) national event
  - v. Be held prior to 31 December 2022.
  - vi. Applicant organisations must have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN) and have documented evidence of an appropriate legal structure such as an Australian registered company, business cooperative or partnership.
- A national business event is a corporate meeting, corporate incentive, conference and trade exhibition or association meeting. Events for social and family groups, weddings, student groups, sports groups, leisure tour groups, or consumer exhibitions will not be eligible.
- The following events will not be eligible for funding:
  - i. Applicants that do not meet the eligibility and assessment criteria.
  - ii. Events staged outside of metropolitan Melbourne.
  - iii. Business events that have already contracted a venue in metropolitan Melbourne prior to full EOI approval received and completion of SmartyGrants submission.
  - iv. Virtual events ((unless minimum in person delegate target is achieved).
  - v. Events that commence after 31 December 2022.

## **3. Application, Assessment, and Approval Process**

- Before applying, applicants must read the program guidelines and submit an Event Enquiry (Expression of Interest – EOI) form via the Melbourne Convention Bureau website [Event Enquiry Form](#).

- MCB will undertake an initial assessment against the program eligibility and provide feedback within 48 hours of the EOI being submitted. Following the provision of feedback from MCB, the applicant may then consider submitting a full application.
- A full application must be made via a SmartyGrants online Application Form, this link will be sent to the event organiser once the EOI form has been assessed by MCB and the applicant meets the minimum criteria.
- Applications can be made at any time, up to 30 June 2021 or until the funds have been fully allocated.
- Assessment of Grant applications will be based on the following:
  - i. Capacity of the business event to generate new business event activity in metropolitan Melbourne including spending in the Victorian business event supply chain.
  - ii. Additional benefits to the State such regional touring or satellite events, linkages to Victorian businesses or other benefits.
  - iii. Events that align with Victorian Government sector priorities will be viewed favourably ([Victorian Government Sector Priorities](#)), along with those that align to international event opportunities.
  - iv. Events that are conducted in a low or shoulder period will be considered favourably (for example during Winter).
- Funding applications will be assessed by MCB who will then provide their recommendations to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events. Successful applicants will be notified by MCB. It is expected applicants will be notified of the outcome within 4 to 6 weeks of their SmartyGrants application submission.

#### **4. Conditions of Funding**

- This funding must be used to cover actual event costs, including but not limited to accommodation, venue hire, transport, food and beverage, marketing, or event promotion. Funding cannot be used for administrative costs, payment of salary and related employment costs, purchase of assets, or rent or lease of office space.
- Successful applications will receive 50% of the funding as a grant upon receipt of signed Event Sponsorship Agreement with MCB; signed venue contract and confirmation of payment of deposit; Event Business and Marketing Plan; and Event Budget, to the satisfaction of MCB.
- The remaining 50% will be paid post event upon receipt of an approval of post event reports as detailed in the Event Sponsorship Agreement.

- Applicants must agree to transparency with MCB regarding event details. All applicants must provide supporting documentation if requested by MCB.
- The event organiser must refund all funds previously paid if they fail to meet the agreed delegate target per the signed Agreement, the 30% interstate attendance target, or if the event is cancelled or otherwise discontinued.

## 5. Conflicts of interest

- All applicants will be required to declare any interests of which they are aware, which could reasonably raise an expectation of a conflict of interest or material interference with an application.
- Conflicts of interest can be actual, potential, or perceived, and should be declared to ensure that any risks are managed. Detailed guidance can be found on the Victorian Public Sector Commission website in its Conflict of Interest Policy Framework – [Victorian Public Sector Commission](#) and in its eLearning guide on Conflicts of Interest.

## 6. Funding Agreements

- Successful applicants will enter into an Event Sponsorship Agreement with the MCB.
- Applicants must have the legal capacity to be able to enter into an agreement with Melbourne Convention Bureau in accordance with Australian law. The contract signatory must be the same as per the venue contract. A third party can apply on behalf of an event organiser if they are also signing the venue contract (for example, a Professional Conference Organiser).
- Applicants must not be insolvent and must be in good financial standing to enter into an agreement with MCB.
- To receive the 50% pre-payment, successful applications will be required to provide confirmation of payment of deposit; Event Business and Marketing Plan; and Event Budget, to the satisfaction of MCB.
- To receive the 50% post payment, successful applicants will be required to complete a post-event report. Full details will be provided in the Event Sponsorship Agreement. MCB will provide a post-event report template to event organisers. Post event reports will be required within four weeks of the conclusion of the event.

## 7. Acknowledgements

- Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support of the program. Full details will be provided in the Event Sponsorship Agreement. This may include:

- i. Provide the Victorian Government and MCB with logo or recognition on any relevant event promotional material relating to the event (videos, website, print publications etc).
- ii. 'Melbourne' brandmark and MCB Logo to appear on the Event Website with a link from the 'Melbourne' brandmark to [www.visitmelbourne.com](http://www.visitmelbourne.com).
- iii. Opportunities for Ministerial attendance and/or letter of welcome in official event program.
- iv. Acknowledgement in media releases.

## **8. Disclaimers**

- Any personal information about applicants or a third party in an application will be collected by MCB. This information may be provided to Victorian Government bodies for the purpose of assessing your application. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure they are aware of the contents of the privacy statement.
- Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and other applicable laws. MCB is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find MCB's Privacy Statement online at [melbournecb.com.au/privacy/](http://melbournecb.com.au/privacy/). Enquiries about access to information about you held by MCB should be directed to the Corporate Affairs department of MCB.
- Please note, the National Business Events Fund may be highly contested. Outcome of funding application submissions is at the full discretion of the Melbourne Convention Bureau and the State Government of Victoria. Applicants must not assume they will be successful or enter into commitments based on that assumption before receiving formal notification of the outcome of their funding application. All applicants are encouraged to plan for contingencies and consider other funding sources and options should their application be unsuccessful.

**For more information or application assistance please contact [info@melbournecb.com.au](mailto:info@melbournecb.com.au)**