



Media Release: Monday, 19 February 2024

ABEA and ICCA sign MOU at AIME to propel diversity, sustainability and talent development sector

The **Australian Business Events Association (ABEA)** and **International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)** have signed a memorandum of understanding today at the Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) to strengthen their partnership through a commitment to work together on three key issues facing the Australian business events industry.

ABEA and ICCA will collectively amplify their core values and positions on three pillars: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); Legacy and Sustainability; and Talent Development and Retention by the publishing of white papers, access to programs and information sharing, and developing key opportunities for emerging leaders.

Peter King, Chair, ABEA, said that as the leading voice for business events, this was an opportunity to harness well-renowned international expertise and connections to amplify the work of ABEA for its members.

"We know our members are needing to embed DEI principles, sustainability, and develop talent to thrive in the competitive marketplace. Our partnership with ICCA is designed to provide unparalleled opportunities for our members, and the sector, to tackle these challenges head on.

"No one organisation can do this on their own. By joining forces with ICCA, the global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry, we can pool our resources and focus to achieve the outcomes we all need," said King.

Senthil Gopinath, CEO, ICCA, said that the Australian Business Events Association had led the way with its unification of industry bodies, providing a powerful entry point into the Australian sector.

"We are delighted to work with the Australian Business Events Association team to take strong, practical, and impactful steps to supporting the success of the Australian industry.

"ICCA brings world-class programs, connections and experience that we willingly share with our Australian colleagues. This is an exciting partnership, and we look forward to its ensuing success," said Gopinath.



The MOU details the work that the two organisations will complete together under the three pillars.

Pillar One: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. ABEA and ICCA will support members and associations in their DEI practices by:

- Collecting and sharing case studies.
- Co-publishing a White Paper focusing on the impacts and opportunities of multiculturalism in the Business Events industry.
- ABEA members will have access to ICCA's *International Business Events Preceptorship Programme* that facilitates educational mentoring opportunities with ICCA global members (Preceptors), allowing ABEA members the opportunity to learn about global best practices.

Pillar Two: Legacy and Sustainable Industry. ABEA and ICCA are united in their goal to advocate to government and stakeholders on the importance of the Business Events industry as a key economic and social impact driver.

- ICCA to initiate cross-regional collaboration on Business Events legacy impact with ABEA through case studies and other information sharing.
- ABEA and ICCA will host quarterly meetings to discuss progress, stakeholder engagement and advocacy programs.

Pillar Three: Talent Development and Retention. This pillar works to address workforce challenges.

- ABEA and ICCA to collaborate on the Emerging Leaders Challenge at AIME 2024. This programme aims to provide recognition and a voice for emerging leader professionals to share their ideas on refining the Business Events proposition in the area of talent attraction and retention.
- The winner will be awarded ICCA's scholarship to pursue the ICCASkills certification as a Certified International Convention Specialist (CICS).
- ABEA and ICCA will review the Emerging Leaders Challenge in 2024 to address how the program will be delivered for 2025.

The MOU commenced 19 February 2024 and will be reassessed in December 2026.

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IMAGES



L-R: Peter King, Chair ABEA; Matt Pearce, Board Member ABEA; Melissa Brown, CEO ABEA; Senthil Gopinath, CEO ICCA



L-R: Peter King, Chair ABEA; Senthil Gopinath, CEO ICCA

NOTES TO EDITORS

IMAGES available via Kirsty@zadroagency.com.au

The **Australian Business Events Association Ltd (ABEA)** is the leading industry body responsible for representing and supporting the prosperity of the organisations and people that work in, or benefit from, the Australian Business Events Sector.



ABEA represents the unified ambitions of the Australian business events industry and its people. We will drive real impact regarding sector growth and development through advocacy, members support and innovation.

ABEA logo available for [download here](#).

The **International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)** is the global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry. ICCA is committed to creating more business opportunities and growth for global members by championing innovation, knowledge sharing, data analysis, advocacy, and education, especially for young industry professionals. Since its establishment in 1963, ICCA has grown to be a global leader in this field and now comprises a membership base of over 1,000 members from almost 100 countries and territories. This gives an estimated number of 100,000 meetings professionals linked to the ICCA worldwide network.

ICCA logo available for [download here](#).

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

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