



Event Industry Alliance
119 High Street
Berkhamsted
Hertfordshire
HP4 2DJ

25th March 2020

The Right Honourable Boris Johnson
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Mr Prime Minister,

We write on behalf of the Association of Event Organisers (AEO), Association of Event Venues (AEV), and the Event Supplier and Services Association (ESSA), in relation to the announcement yesterday that ExCeL London is to become 'The NHS Nightingale Hospital' next week, and our industries plea to be specifically referenced in support packages and measures.

We would like to thank you, your officials, and advisors for working tirelessly to navigate these uncharted times, and for putting public health and the protection of the NHS at the forefront of your decision making. We as an industry, as evidenced by ExCeL London, and the individual actions of many members, are on hand to help as we can.

ExCeL London host numerous exhibitions, conferences, meetings and other events which contribute some £70bn to the UK Economy each year (exhibitions alone contribute £11bn, supporting 114,000 jobs), and we calculate the economy is losing £1bn a month from the exhibition sector alone, whilst we tackle this deadly virus. However, even on Monday, as measures were taken to lock down the UK, venues like ExCeL London were only referenced as 'other venues' in the ['Guidance: Further businesses and premises to close'](#).

No specific reference to the events sector in the various packages and measures makes it very difficult, and sometimes impossible for event venues, organisers, suppliers, contractors, the self-employed and freelancers to access the support on offer, activate insurance cover, and to obtain the business rates relief from local authorities. Your team at DCMS, who provide a co-ordinating function for the sector, have been very helpful – however with inclusion and clarity the companies, businesses and individuals in our sector would be not need to contact your officials, and be able to access this much needed support quickly and more efficiently. We note the Chancellor gave some clarity in the House last night for exhibition venues which was reassuring.

Looking to the future, the UK Industry leads the world, with UK organisers bringing in over £2.1bn of turnover into the UK economy each year from their activities overseas, and they along with the whole event community are keen to work with you and your officials to consider how they will be able to contribute to the economic recovery. It should be noted as well as the economic impact they create they also stimulate the industries and supply chains in the markets they serve all across the UK and rest of the world.

To be able to help first they must survive, and other countries including Australia, Denmark, and Hong Kong have created industry specific state aid packages, and were able to create confidence amongst their customers to engage in events in the future. On the latter point, they are keen to work with government to

identify how events can safely take place as the control measures are flexed to 'flatten the curve' on this terrible pandemic.

With the support of DCMS, we have the Events Industry Board, and the Event Industry Senior Leaders Advisory Panel and we will contribute our thoughts, concerns and solutions through these channels. Both groups are meeting next week, and we hope they will provide invaluable insight to help in the government's plans and actions going forward.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Most Respectfully,



Chris Skeith,
CEO,
Association of Event Organisers



Rachel Parker,
Director,
Association of Event Venues



Andrew Harrison,
Director,
Event Supplier and Services Association

CC: Nigel Huddleston, Minister for Sport, Heritage & Tourism
The Right Honourable Rishi Sunak MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer