



BUSINESS EVENTS  
SYDNEY

# **A Scoping Study of Business Events: Beyond Tourism Benefits**



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# A Scoping Study of Business Events: Beyond Tourism Benefits



Carmel Foley, Katie Schlenker,  
Deborah Edwards, Bruce Hayllar

**FINAL REPORT**

Carmel Foley  
School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism  
University of Technology, Sydney  
PO Box 222 Lindfield NSW 2070  
Ph: 9514 5102  
Email: [carmel.foley@uts.edu.au](mailto:carmel.foley@uts.edu.au)

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The School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism has prepared this report in accordance with the project purpose outlined in the Research Agreement dated 29 March 2010.

The methodology adopted and sources of information used by the authors are outlined in this report. While all care and diligence has been exercised in the preparation of this report, the authors assume no responsibility for any inaccuracies or omissions. No indications were found during our investigations that information contained in this report as provided was false.

This report was prepared between April 2010 and June 2010 and is based on the conditions encountered and information reviewed at the time of preparation.

This report should be read in full. No responsibility is accepted for use of any part of this report in any other context or for any other purpose or by third parties.

## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

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## *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

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### *Project Purpose and Rationale*

The purpose of this study is to provide an empirically-based assessment of the range and impact of contributions made by business events to host communities beyond the tourism dimension. This project is classified as a scoping study, delivering baseline data on which future stages of research could be built. Future stages of the project could be designed to deliver quantitative data on the contributions made by business events to complement the more qualitative focus of this study.

It is well established that business events make a substantial contribution to the Australian economy from a tourism perspective. However, the Business Events Council of Australia (2009a) argues that impacts from business events in areas such as innovation, education, networking, trade, research and practice are likely to far outweigh the financial returns of the tourism spend. They have called for evidence-based research to be undertaken in this area (Business Events Council of Australia 2009b).

### *Methodology*

The research upon which business events have traditionally been valued (financial contribution to tourism) has typically involved the collection, analysis and presentation of quantitative data. It is a useful way of measuring the impacts of business events in a relatively straightforward way. However, techniques to evaluate the broader contributions of business events are somewhat more complicated (Wood, 2009) given the complexity and nuances involved in evaluating these factors. Consequently, the broader benefits of business events have been largely overlooked (Dwyer et al, 2000). What is known about these impacts is limited and often speculative resulting in a lack of accurate, meaningful, and useful data.

In order to meet the methodological demands of the project, a case study approach was adopted for this enquiry. The case study approach provides the researcher with flexibility to situate people, organisations, events and experiences in their social and historical context and treat the subject of the study as a whole rather than abstracting a limited set of preselected features (Veal, 2006). This allowed the complexities and fine distinctions of each case to be taken into account while investigating the overall benefits derived from the business event.

The business events that formed the basis of each case study were held in Sydney in the period 2007-2010 (see table below).

BUSINESS EVENT	DATE HELD	SECTOR
<b>4<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2007)</b>	22-25 July 2007	Medical
<b>3rd Asia Pacific Regional International Solar Energy Society Conference (ISES 2008)</b>	25-28 November 2008	Environment
<b>19<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Society for Labour and Social Security Law (ISLSSL 2009)</b>	1-4 September 2009	Law
<b>7th International Orthodontics Congress (IOC 2010)</b>	6-9 February 2010	Medical
<b>5th IWG World Conference on Women and Sport (IWG 2010)</b>	20-23 May 2010	Sport/gender

## *Conclusions*

The study has established that the benefits derived from business events extend well beyond the tourism contribution. Evidence presented in this report verifies an extensive range of contributions that have been made by five business events held in Sydney in the period 2007-2010.

The events have brought the world's best practice and international knowledge to local sector researchers and practitioners in the fields of medicine, law, sport and the environment. Growing Australian knowledge has contributed to capacity building within each sector. The events have exposed delegates to new knowledge and ideas which have been incorporated into educational offerings. This has improved the quality of education in the various sectors, which has flow on benefits for the quality of graduates who enter the field after their studies.

The events have allowed the dissemination of new knowledge, techniques, materials, and technologies in each of the sectors, providing Sydney/NSW based educators, practitioners and researchers with access to a network of international colleagues. This networking has provided local delegates with new business and research collaborations, and will generate innovation, ideas and research agendas for many years to come.

Significantly, for the continued health and growth of each of the sectors, attendance at these business events has delivered all of these benefits to emerging leaders working in each of the sectors, including Australian postgraduate research students.

International delegates have been exposed to local knowledge, research capacity, sites and facilities and this has increased the attractiveness of Sydney's education sector. This growth in the education sector has wider benefits for increasing the future capacity of New South Wales in the various sectors.

The events have provided Sydney organisations, associations, and research centres with new funding from both the Federal Government and private sector. This has allowed growth in the research capacity of each sector.

Awareness of sector specific issues has increased as a direct result of the events through media coverage and the involvement in the event of key and influential stakeholders, including Federal Ministers and high profile business people. Sydney has been branded as a city of action and social change. The profiles of the Australian organisations, associations, and centres involved with the event have been raised and enhanced.

The events have showcased Sydney's capacities, putting the destination 'on the map', fostering a reputation as a place of highly skilled, capable, world leading researchers. Successful hosting of the events has enhanced Sydney's reputation as a business events destination. Sydney's capability as a business events destination has also been strengthened through the development of the event management skills of those working within this field.

The extensive range of outcomes delivered by business events has been summarised in the table below.



## **BUSINESS EVENT OUTCOMES**

### **1. KNOWLEDGE EXPANSION**

- Growing local knowledge
- Knowledge improving education
- Knowledge improving professional practice

### **2. NETWORKING, RELATIONSHIPS AND COLLABORATION**

- Access to networking opportunities for local practitioners and researchers
- Networking fosters creation of long term relationships
- Networking as a catalyst for knowledge expansion and research development
- Networking as a catalyst for research collaborations
- Research collaborations lead to development of new products and technologies

### **3. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**

- Opportunities for local postgraduate research students
- Increased attractiveness of education sector

### **4. FUNDRAISING AND FUTURE RESEARCH CAPACITY**

- Fundraising opportunities
- Greater access to Government and/or private sector funding sources

### **5. RAISING AWARENESS AND PROFILING**

- Generating awareness of sector specific issues
- Raising awareness of broader societal issues
- Profiling local organisations, associations, and/or centres
- A catalyst for Government support

### **6. SHOWCASING AND DESTINATION REPUTATION**

- Showcasing local talent
- Enhancing Sydney's reputation as a global leader
- Enhancing Sydney's reputation as a business events destination

The examination of case studies across a four year period has identified a further research issue. While some contributions are apparent almost immediately, others require a longer timeframe in which to be fully realised. For example, funding for research centres and other organisations associated with the events tended to be delivered in a short timeframe, however, some of the benefits in terms of future research capacity take longer to be realised. This finding suggests a need to evaluate the benefits associated with business events over a longer time frame if the full extent of the contributions made by the sector are to be understood.

### ***Recommendations***

- Business events provide substantial and enduring value to Sydney and NSW. *It is recommended that the findings of this research be used to support submissions for Government investment in this sector.*
- This study presents a broad range of potential contributions that can be leveraged by future business events. *It is recommended that Business Events Sydney use this range of contributions in working with event committees to guide strategic planning and goal setting for their events.*
- This study provides baseline evidence of the broader contributions of business events. The findings in this study, based on a sound qualitative methodological approach, would benefit from being rounded out by further study based on a quantitative approach. *It is recommended that further research be commissioned to deliver quantitative data on the contributions identified in this study. It is further recommended that timeline be considered when data is collected and analysed.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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*A much stronger emphasis is needed on the positive impact of business events beyond the direct tourism spend. More evidence-based information has to be gathered to drive this message (Business Events Council of Australia, 2009b, p. 2).*

Government and industry are aware that the full value of the business event sector needs to be fully established. To date, the business event sector has been evaluated predominantly on its contributions to the tourism sector. The tourism contributions have been impressive in themselves; however, the narrow focus has failed to account for a more extensive set of contributions to economies and communities. This project examines the range and impact of contributions made by business events beyond the tourism dimension.

### *Background*

The Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) defines ‘business events’ as a collective term referring to association conventions, corporate and government meetings, exhibitions and incentive travel reward programs. Business events are held for a specific purpose, in a specific venue, are hosted by an organisation and attract a minimum of 15 attendees (Business Events Industry Strategy Group, 2008, pi).

Traditionally, the measures used to assess the value of the business event sector have focused almost exclusively on the contribution to host destination tourism. Indeed, the business event sector contributes significantly to Australia’s tourism industry and has been aptly described as a ‘seam of gold’ running through Australian Tourism (Carlsen, 1995; Jago & Deery, 2010). In 2008, 7.3 million international and domestic business event and/or incentive travellers spent 22.9 million visitor nights in Australia and generated \$5.7 billion in expenditure (Tourism Australia, 2009). Business event travellers are high yield visitors. In 2008 they spent an average \$234 per night compared with \$163 per night for the average traveller (Tourism Australia, 2009). In 2005, the Australian business event industry was estimated to be generating \$17.3 billion per annum to the economy (Deery, Jago, Fredline & Dwyer, 2005). This figure relates solely to the tourism dimension of business events and does not represent the broader value of the business event sector (Jago & Deery, 2010).

Impacts from business events in areas such as innovation, education, networking, trade, research and practice are generally considered to far outweigh the financial returns of the tourism spend (Business Events Council of Australia, 2009a).

From an economic perspective, meetings and conventions attract decision makers – promoting local business prospects as well as trade and investment potential. From a professional development perspective, major international events attract world-leading expertise, providing

local opportunities for knowledge and skill development which benefits the quality of service in the local community (Business Events Council of Australia, 2009a).

Anecdotal evidence of the value of business events beyond the tourism dimension has been apparent for some time. However, empirical research in this area is limited. Research is currently being carried out for the Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCVB), and BECA is calling for further research in this area (Business Events Council of Australia, 2009b).

For multiple reasons it is crucial that the broader value of the industry be recognised. The business event sector requires support from governments – particularly in the areas of infrastructure development and global marketing. The sector needs to demonstrate its full value to governments in order to attract and maintain adequate funding and support. The industry needs full insight into its potential and achievements for both marketing and strategic planning purposes in order to maximise opportunities for both maintaining its strong domestic market and growing Australia's share of a highly competitive global market.

### *Project Purpose*

The purpose of this study is to provide an empirically-based assessment of the range and impact of contributions made by business events to host communities beyond the tourism dimension. The project utilises a case study approach and the business events that formed the basis of each case study were held in Sydney in the period 2007-2010.

This project is classified as a scoping study, delivering baseline data on which future stages of research could be built. Future stages of the project could be designed to deliver quantitative data on the contributions made by business events to complement the more qualitative focus of this study.

## ***2. LITERATURE REVIEW***

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Business events have, historically, been associated with the tourism industry, where they have demonstrated solid economic benefits. They are well established as valuable investments by national governments in the social and economic development of their countries (Business Events Council of Australia, 2010). Visitors to business events have higher daily expenditure and longer duration of stay, compared to all other tourists (Carlsen, 1995) resulting in the business event delegate being widely regarded as the most desirable visitor in the world (Business Events Council of Australia, 2010).

The implicit connection between the tourism industry and business events has led to the value of business events being largely determined by directly measurable, economic benefits that relate, almost exclusively, to the tourism industry. The merit of business events has often been measured, for example, by: visitor numbers; daily expenditure; nights spent away; and other economic contributions by visitors to business events. As a result there is a strong understanding of the economic impact of business events in terms of tourism spend.

There is a growing understanding, however, that the value of business events extends well beyond these benefits and that a business event should not be measured merely by its direct financial contribution (Dwyer Mellor, Mistilis & Mules, 2000). Evaluation of business events has traditionally focused on economic impact despite the fact that the objectives of events are varied and wide reaching and rarely focused solely on profit maximisation (Pickernell, O'Sullivan, Senyard & Keast, 2009). A number of studies have demonstrated that the wider impacts of events are not being recognised (Carlsen, Getz, & Soutar, 2001; Wood, 2009). There is a clear need to evaluate events in more sophisticated ways that take us beyond the traditional economic impact (Pickernell et al, 2009).

While research in this area is still in its early stages, a small number of studies have begun to explore the broader value of business events. A recent study found that there is a strong positive relationship between the amount spent on business travel and overall company revenue (Moyn, 2009). A recent briefing paper produced by the Joint Meetings Industry Council (2008) identified a wide range of business event benefits. Enhancing professional development, generating new forms of technology, promoting cultural exchange, and attracting investment by attracting influential visitors were some of the benefits identified (Joint Meetings Industry Council, 2008). Strengthened relations and improved communication as a result of increased engagement have also been identified as indicators of benefits beyond the economic (Pickernell et al, 2009). For the majority of events it has been found that social benefits were substantial in comparison to the direct economic benefits (Wood, 2009).

For example, Dr David Garman, President of the International Water Association states that “International Water Association meetings are an absolutely critical network for water professionals, where they learn and interact with each other trying to get another league in

understanding by exchanging information and building relationships ... when we get a critical mass [it] leads to big changes, to new ideas and the rethinking of water research and strategies. It generates a lot of innovation” (cited in Business Events Council of Australia, 2009a, p4).

Previous research (Teulan, 2010; Jago & Deery, 2010; Business Events Council of Australia, 2010; Business Events Council of Australia, 2009a; Business Events Council of Australia, 2009b; The Business Events Industry Strategy Group, 2008) has identified the sorts of opportunities that business events can provide. The opportunities identified include knowledge expansion, community ‘outcomes’, innovation and collaborative projects, international relations, trade opportunities, networking opportunities, education, and enhanced business to business relationships.

A number of industry reports (Teulan, 2010; Jago & Deery, 2010; The Business Events Industry Strategy Group, 2008) have offered evidenced based examples of the benefits that business events can bring, however no peer-reviewed, academic literature appears to exist in this area.

In the New South Wales context, existing data from Business Events Sydney (2009) provides the following examples of the broader contributions made by business events hosted in Sydney during the period 2002-2008.

The 29th International Congress of Ophthalmology was held in Sydney in 2002. The Congress proved valuable in showcasing Sydney and Australia to the rest of the world. Notably, the Congress produced a financial surplus, with \$1.2m staying in Australia, which was used to establish the Eye Foundation. The Eye Foundation provides funding for research and training of ophthalmologists in Australia and across the Asia Pacific region. Establishment of the Eye Foundation represents a direct, long-term benefit of the Congress. This delivers benefits not only to the profession, but to the community as a whole (Business Events Sydney, 2009).

The International Association of Paediatric Dentistry Congress was held in Sydney in 2006. The Congress provided an opportunity to showcase Australian talent in paediatric dentistry to an international audience. This had numerous beneficial outcomes, including increased interest in relevant postgraduate teaching programmes from international applicants; a new international research project; and an increased international profile for one member of the Australian paediatric dentistry sector, evidenced by their appointment as President of the International Association of Paediatric Dentistry (Business Events Sydney, 2009).

The International Congress on Obesity held in Sydney in 2006, played an important role in showcasing Australian research to delegates from around the world. The Congress attracted media attention, which assisted in raising awareness of obesity as an important social issue, and a national health priority on the Government’s agenda. As a direct result of the Congress and raised profile of obesity, funding was gained for development of a Centre of Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease (CODCD). This Centre represents a direct, long-term benefit of the

Congress, which will help build Sydney's capacity for leading research in the sector (Business Events Sydney, 2009).

The 22<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of the Transplantation Society was held in Sydney in 2008. The Congress provided opportunities to profile Australian work in the sector to an international audience. Having this work recognised internationally played a role in fostering Australia's reputation as a world leader in transplantation. *“By holding the International Congress of the Transplantation Society in Sydney, we augmented the reputation, collaborations and connections of people working in the field of transplantation in Australia. We put Australian transplantation firmly on the map”* (Professor Jeremy Chapman OAM, cited in Business Events Sydney, 2009).

Given the long lead time in moving from scientific discussion and debate to the development of new techniques, technologies and practices, it has been suggested that there may still be other benefits yet to be realised out of the Congress. For example, *“much of the scientific debate in Sydney centred on bioengineering and how to construct organs, rather than transplant them. We may well find that in a decade's time the Sydney meeting will be the turning point in this field”* (Professor Jeremy Chapman OAM, cited in Business Events Sydney, 2009).

These examples highlight the significance of business events to Sydney and NSW and shed light on the potential for broader contributions to be made by this sector. A richer understanding of the wider benefits of business events will inevitably lead to the development of strategies to maximise these benefits.

Such strategies would be particularly timely given the current status of the business events industry. Australia's international business events performance has been decreasing in recent years and Australia has been losing market share (Business Events Council of Australia, 2010). Given the current economic climate there is an existing need to strengthen the industry's position and profile. At BECA's 2009 Business Events Summit, there was a call for a new paradigm to respond to the changing environment. It was argued that business events need to more effectively communicate with politicians, the media and the business community to provide a strong, consistent and clear message of the positive impact of business events beyond the direct tourism spend (Business Events Council of Australia, 2009b). The drop in the current market has led to the necessity for stronger justification to hold or attend an event. A richer understanding of the full potential of business events may provide such a justification.

The perceived benefits and costs of events are also associated with the level of government funding for events (Dwyer et al, 2000). Evidence-based confirmation of the value of business events (economic and otherwise) could lead to greater government investment. A better understanding of wider benefits may also lead to more sophisticated marketing strategies for business events.

Developing business event profiles outside the traditional tourism parameters allows a more extensive understanding of business events and their contributions. There are significant gaps in

current understanding of the real value of business events. While some factors have been identified there is a need to begin the process of a more comprehensive evaluation of these benefits.



### **3. METHODOLOGY**

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The research upon which business events have traditionally been valued (financial contribution to tourism) has typically involved the collection, analysis and presentation of quantitative data. It is a useful way of measuring the impacts of business events in a relatively straightforward manner. However, techniques to evaluate the broader contributions of business events are somewhat more complicated (Wood, 2009) given the complexity and nuances involved in evaluating these factors. Consequently, the broader benefits of business events have been largely overlooked (Dwyer et al, 2000). What is known about these impacts is limited and often speculative resulting in a lack of accurate, meaningful, and useful data.

In order to meet the methodological demands of the project, a case study approach was adopted for this enquiry. The case study approach provides the researcher with flexibility to situate people, organisations, events and experiences in their social and historical context and treat the subject of the study as a whole rather than abstracting a limited set of preselected features (Veal, 2006). This allowed the complexities and fine distinctions of each case to be taken into account while investigating the overall benefits derived from the business event.

Case study investigations can involve single or multiple cases (Veal, 2006). While there is no 'required' number of cases, consideration was given to the research context and resources available. Five cases were selected for this study (see Table 1 below). The cases were drawn from Business Events Sydney's list of bid wins and were selected on the basis of two criteria. Firstly, selection was made on the basis of the year in which the business event was held in order to compare and contrast the timeframe in which outcomes were realised. Case studies were selected from business events held in each year of the period 2007-10 inclusive. Secondly, business events were drawn from a cross-section of sector types. While Business Events Sydney supports a significant number of medical sector conferences, an effort was made to include business events from three other sectors to permit analysis of a reasonable breadth of contributions across different sector types.

*Table 1 - Business Event Case Studies*

BUSINESS EVENT	DATE HELD	SECTOR
<b>4<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2007)</b>	22-25 July 2007	Medical
<b>3rd Asia Pacific Regional International Solar Energy Society Conference (ISES 2008)</b>	25-28 November 2008	Environment
<b>19<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Society for Labour and Social Security Law (ISLSSL 2009)</b>	1-4 September 2009	Law
<b>7th International Orthodontics Congress (IOC 2010)</b>	6-9 February 2010	Medical
<b>5th IWG World Conference on Women and Sport (IWG 2010)</b>	20-23 May 2010	Sport/gender

Each event potentially produces a unique set of outcomes and the five cases provide the opportunity to compare and contrast, and gain information on a variety of business event outcomes.

Data for the case studies were collected during May/June 2010 using in-depth interviews and secondary data analysis. The literature indicates that potential intangible benefits of business events may include knowledge expansion, community ‘outcomes’, innovation and collaborative projects, international relations, trade opportunities, networking opportunities, education, and enhanced business to business relationships. With the aforementioned as background, we framed the design of our interview schedule and the starting point for discussions around:

- Knowledge expansion - exposure to, and promotion of, world’s best practice;
- Networking and enhancing business-to-business relationships;
- Innovation;
- Education;
- Trade opportunities from exhibitions and commercial sponsorships;
- Exposing original research to the marketplace;
- Fundraising opportunities;
- Enhancing international prestige;
- Showcasing host-nation infrastructure and capability; and
- Community outcomes.

(Adapted from Business Events Council of Australia, 2009a)

Initial interviews were held with representatives from the organisations responsible for hosting the events. Further interviews were held with key stakeholders to confirm initial claims and to gather additional data on business event outcomes. All interviews were transcribed and ‘texts’ produced for analysis. In addition to the interview data, secondary data, in the form of event and industry information, including event evaluation reports, were collected and analysed.

The interview texts were analysed in a two-stage process. The first stage involved the development of common themes from the literature. These themes were used as the initial units of analysis of the texts. As with any qualitative study, thematic analysis helps give a degree of order and control to significant quantities of textual material. The second stage involved using these themes and applying them directly to the interview data. In this process new themes evolved that moved beyond those previously identified in the literature. At this stage ‘codes’ were applied to the data and further reviewed. In order to enhance the accuracy of the interpretation, each of the coded themes was then reviewed independently and then jointly by the research team. Where points of difference arose, the original text was reviewed and revised until there was agreement on its thematic placement. Categories (or sub-themes) were also used as a way of refining the analysis.

## 4. CASE STUDIES

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This section presents the data compiled for each of the five business event case studies held between the period 2007-2010:

- 4<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2007);
- 3rd Asia Pacific Regional International Solar Energy Society Conference (ISES 2008);
- 19<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Society for Labour and Social Security Law (ISLSSL 2009);
- 7th International Orthodontics Congress (IOC 2010); and
- 5th IWG World Conference on Women and Sport (IWG 2010).

### *Case Study 1 – IAS 2007*

<b>BUSINESS EVENT</b>	<b>4th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2007)</b>
<b>Organisation</b>	International AIDS Society in partnership with the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM).
<b>Date</b>	22–25 July 2007
<b>Location</b>	Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour
<b>Case study data sources</b>	The initial interview was held with a representative from ASHM, the organisation responsible for managing the conference. A further interview was held with a representative from the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR) to confirm initial claims and to gather additional data on conference outcomes. In addition to the interview data, information from the conference website and two conference evaluation reports was collected and analysed.

The 4th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2007) was held in 2007 in Sydney, Australia. This conference occurs every two years and focuses on the scientific and medical aspects of HIV/AIDS. The aim of IAS 2007 was to: “provide new insights into HIV disease development, prevention and care that can lead to novel research directions, help advance translational research, and move theoretic advances into clinical practice and prevention programmes” (International AIDS Society, 2008).

IAS 2007 was organised by the International AIDS Society in partnership with the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) as the local host. The International AIDS Society is an independent non-profit organisation, its members comprising HIV professionals from around the world. The Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) is the peak Australasian organisation representing the medical and health sector in HIV, viral hepatitis and related areas. ASHM was the local host of the conference, whose roles included generating local marketing and attendance, as well as providing input into developing the 'local flavour' of the Conference.

IAS 2007 attracted over 6,000 delegates from 140 countries, including over 1,000 Australian and New Zealand delegates, as well as media representatives from across the world.

The Conference was attended by a wide range of participants from the Australian HIV sector including clinicians, basic scientists, researchers, students, policy and government representatives, educators, nurses, allied health work workers and social workers. The Australian HIV sector is said to be very collaborative and *"they were all interested in attending this and hearing about the latest in research in the clinical and basic science and clinical prevention areas... and to be part of the international meeting here which perhaps they wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to be part of"* (ASHM Interview).

IAS 2007 was considered important in raising awareness of the research and scientific excellence of those working in the Australian HIV sector to international delegates. Having over 1,000 Australian and New Zealand delegates at the Conference provided a good local presence, and contributes to the reputation of the Australian HIV sector being known *"as leaders in this area"*. At the Conference *"people are looking at this country and what we do and saying 'wow, they've got these key people, they've got this key research happening ... certainly it would put us on the map for this sort of work'"* (ASHM Interview).

*"In Australia we don't have many international conferences relating to HIV. So the conference gave us the chance to increase awareness of the issues in Australia and of the work being conducted here"* (NCHECR Interview).

Professor David Cooper of the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research at UNSW, was the Conference Co-Chair. He has previously been quoted as saying *"being the successful bidder for the IAS scientific conference reinforced to the international HIV research community the value of the work done in Australia. We bat a long way above our weight in this field"* (Cooper cited in Business Events Sydney, 2009).

IAS 2007 provided opportunities for members of the Australian HIV sector, including clinicians, researchers and students to participate in an international conference that is well recognised around the world.

*"To be part of that and to network with all their colleagues or people who are key figures in HIV internationally – that opportunity is great and not everyone in the sector can travel to international meetings, especially perhaps new researchers"* (ASHM Interview).

*“The high profile researchers within the centre attend many international conferences however the clinical staff and junior researchers don’t have the same opportunity so being staged in Sydney gave them the opportunity to attend and subsequently meet high profile international delegates”* (ASHM Interview).

*“The NCHECR took the opportunity of the conference to celebrate the organisation’s 20th anniversary. They had 1,200 national and international delegates attend the anniversary celebrations – which they were absolutely thrilled about. It increased their profile and enhanced the national and international of the awareness centre”* (NCHECR Interview).

As a result of hosting IAS 2007, a AU\$17.7 million grant was awarded to the University of New South Wales from the National Health and Medical Research Council to support research into HIV. This has led to the University of New South Wales being recognised internationally as a leader in HIV AIDS research, as was demonstrated through a recent AU\$18 million grant to the University from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support a research project into HIV drug therapy (Teulan, 2010).

Networking with others in the international HIV community provides the impetus for *“people to go away and be enthused about what they are doing locally”*. This is seen as particularly important in building the young people working in a sector. *“Certainly young researchers or people who are not in the field, being able to attend that meeting, an international one, or a national one if it’s in their state is a benefit that they otherwise wouldn’t have and it can build their passion or their interest in the area, or their focus”* (ASHM Interview).

There are also benefits to be gained from hearing about what others are doing in the field internationally, for example *“meeting African researchers or people working in different types of epidemics to see what we can learn from that and how can we collaborate in that sense”* (ASHM Interview). The opportunities to engage in these networking and knowledge sharing elements of a Conference can therefore be seen to have implications for future clinical practice and research in the Australian HIV sector.

One of the potential benefits to be realised from this networking is the formation of collaborative research partnerships. *“As with much research in different areas, people do form collaborative research partnerships with people across the globe and these [conferences] present opportunities to do that”* (ASHM Interview).

As part of the conference evaluation conducted at the 2009 IAS Conference in South Africa, researchers sought to understand the longer term impacts of the IAS conference on delegates. In order to achieve this, they conducted interviews with delegates who attended IAS 2007, seeking to understand what longer term impacts had resulted from their attendance at this conference.

Delegates identified the following (in order) as the greatest individual benefits they gained from attending IAS 2007:

- The opportunity to network and share information with other experts
- Gaining information on ongoing research, new drugs or new technologies  
(International AIDS Society, 2009)

The ability of a conference to facilitate face to face interactions between people is seen to be important in realising such outcomes. *“You don’t know who you’ll meet at a conference and we all know that because we’ve been and we’ve met someone, then we say ‘what do you do’ and something happens with that physical meeting and you just don’t have that electronically”* (ASHM Interview). Conferences are therefore considered important in bringing people together to share new knowledge and ideas and spark potential collaborative relationships.

The event facilitated the *“bringing together of similar minds, people researching in similar areas across international contexts ... intense discussion and debate ... catalyst for driving new research”* (NCHECR Interview).

*“Professors from Africa, UK, US and Australia may find that they each (in their own countries) have been working on similar studies, they will then decide to do the same study as an international cohort – this helps to identify new knowledge, similarities and differences on topic being studied. So a professor from the UK may introduce a professor from France to a professor in Australia and this then creates the opportunity for shared collaboration. The opportunity to meet face to face is extremely important in increasing the understanding of what others in the field are doing”* (NCHECR Interview).

*“One of the big discussion points at the conference was about circumcision in Africa leading to marginally lower rates of HIV infection in heterosexuals – the question became is this the same in the Australian community. Subsequently a study has been conducted to explore this issue”* (NCHECR Interview).

As part of the long term evaluation of IAS 2007 conducted at the 2009 IAS Conference, 55% of delegates reported they had done something differently in their HIV work as a direct result of attending IAS 2007 (International AIDS Society, 2009). Such changes are able to be achieved as a result of the opportunities for networking and gaining new information provided by the conference. Changes were achieved across three main areas:

- Clinical practice eg. Use of new drugs or technologies in treating patients;
- Research eg. Commencing a new research project, or modifying a research approach;
- Knowledge sharing eg. Informal knowledge sharing with colleagues; formal knowledge sharing through workshops or publications; using new knowledge to inform teaching practice.

As the local host, ASHM realised benefits for the organisation and its members.

Benefits to ASHM were in the form of not only financial gain, but increased memberships and increasing the media profile of the organisation as “*we were certainly mentioned in a lot of articles*”. Also, since ASHM runs their own national conference annually, involvement with IAS 2007 allowed them to see “*how a big international conference was run, which gave us some good ideas to expand and improve our own meeting*” (ASHM Interview).

Involvement with IAS 2007 also provided benefits to ASHM members through the opportunity to showcase their work, network and attend an international conference.

A greater media profile of the HIV issue was achieved around the time of the Conference. “*There was a lot of media locally, Asia Pacific and internationally around the event – if that serves to put HIV at the forefront of people’s minds - public, government and others, then that could have benefits*” (ASHM Interview).

Professor David Cooper believes hosting the IAS Conference in Sydney had benefits for future dealings with Government. “*The conference attracted significant media interest and generated support from the private sector as well as State and Federal Governments. In fact, we drew attention to our goal of transforming the National Centre into an Institute with the receipt of funding from the State and Federal governments in association with private philanthropy*” (Cooper cited in Business Events Sydney, 2009).

Attracting over 6,000 delegates to Sydney, IAS 2007 was considered “*a good meeting to have had here to say we won this and we can hold this sort of meeting*” (ASHM Interview). Successful hosting of a conference of this size has benefits for Sydney’s reputation as a capable business events destination.

There are also potentially benefits for development of the conference sector within Sydney that come through hosting of a conference of this size. Provision of necessary IT and technical components to the conference serve to strengthen the destination’s capability, which represents a “*benefit for future conferences held here and people’s skills in working on something like that*” (ASHM Interview).

It is thought that many of the benefits realised through IAS 2007 are actually ongoing benefits. For example, although delegates may have met back in 2007, that face to face meeting and networking that took place at the Conference allows people to feel as though they can still contact each other, having shared that conference experience a few years back (ASHM Interview).

Also, there are thought to be ongoing benefits for knowledge sharing and information dissemination. This is facilitated by the ongoing operation of the IAS 2007 website, which houses the abstracts from the Conference. This represents a living resource which people can still access to grow their knowledge on research, drugs and treatments in the HIV sector.



## Case Study 2 – ISES 2008

<b>BUSINESS EVENT</b>	<b>3rd Asia Pacific Regional International Solar Energy Society Conference 2008 (ISES 2008)</b>
<b>Organisation</b>	Australian New Zealand Solar Energy Society (ANZSES)
<b>Date</b>	25-28 November 2008
<b>Location</b>	Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour and Sydney Olympic Park
<b>Case study data sources</b>	The initial interview was held with a representative from ANZSES, the organisation responsible for managing the conference. Further interviews were conducted with representatives from organisations Infinilec, Edentiti and Griffith Hack who were involved with the conference as sponsors, presenters and/or exhibitors to confirm initial claims and to gather additional data on conference outcomes. In addition to the interview data, information from the conference website was collected and analysed.

The 3rd Asia Pacific Regional International Solar Energy Society Conference (ISES 2008) was held in Sydney in 2008. It is considered a premier conference on renewable energy for the Asia Pacific region. The Asia Pacific region is seen as important to the future growth of the renewable energy industry in terms of both manufacture and markets. The perspective is that renewable energy presents the best opportunity for offsetting climate change and energy efficiency is the best opportunity globally.

The aim of ISES 2008 was to inform and allow integration of international solar and renewable energy researchers, industry personnel and funding bodies. The conference program included an industry forum for formal discussion of new research and developments, oral and poster sessions, solar energy tour and informal networking opportunities for the exchange of ideas and fostering collaboration. It is a space in which delegates, from Sydney, Australia and overseas who are at the cutting edge of work being undertaken in this area, can meet.

During the conference delegates were taken on tours of solar energy labs, facilities and sites in Sydney and Newcastle. The aim of the tour was to showcase the capacity of the work being done in Australia in renewable energy. During the tour delegates could network informally with potential research and funding partners. *“We showed people our sites and facilities so they can get a better idea of where the cutting edge is. It is pushing the barriers for research through networking”* (ANZSES Interview).

The ANZSES representative believes the conference attracted interest from people in both senior positions and emerging scholars from the education sector *“especially as we are a leader in this*

area". It is believed that as a consequence of the site visits and delegates' experiences of Sydney some people have subsequently sought to undertake higher degree research in the renewable energy sector in Australia. *"I know individuals who have come back as students. Students want to be where a place is pushing the barriers. Our conference demonstrated that we are pushing the barriers in Australia"* (ANZSES Interview). It is believed that these benefits are wider than the destination and they can flow on to all Australian universities.

Educational outcomes also include a growth in the calibre and skill base of people working in this area. *"The people who are coming are largely upwardly mobile senior people who want to work in the university sector and they also bring their children to study in Australia as well"* (ANZSES Interview).

Networking and collaboration opportunities were facilitated by the conference through lecture opportunities and breakout discussions where people were encouraged to expand on particular ideas. *"So we specifically focused on structuring the conference so that people could discuss and build on their ideas. 80% is networking and 20% is the paper"* (ANZSES Interview).

Collaboration means that individuals or groups work on projects that lead to intellectual property and commercialisation of projects. *"Good collaboration will lead to good research. [For example] in renewable energy, as a result of the conference, collaboration has occurred that is resulting in the creation of integrated affordable building products"* (ANZSES Interview). This work was started as a result of networking at the conference.

However it was believed that the impacts of attending the conference continue to be felt long after the conference has finished. Looking at the total benefit *"way over 50% of the benefit"* comes after attendance at the conference as people convert their knowledge and networking into new opportunities. *"When people go home after a conference and they have had a good experience and made good memories and networks they continue discussions with other researchers they met here. Our university has licensed products in many countries, so the conference facilitated business links that strengthen commercialisation opportunities in the future"* (ANZSES Interview).

The ANZSES representative said that his university in particular was currently pursuing a partnership with organisations in Canada and Wales which will lead to further innovations in their ongoing work.

Copenhagen put climate change on the agenda so ISES 2008 was perceived as timely for showcasing New South Wales as a world leader. For these reasons it was decided that the Conference should be held in Sydney. The benefit of being held in Sydney is that 90% of the action in renewable energy is in NSW - production facilities, leading researchers – *"New South Wales universities are at the top"* (ANZSES Interview). Therefore the Conference links Sydney to the renewable energy space internationally.

At the conference the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP announced the largest ever Commonwealth investment in solar power.

*“I am pleased to announce this morning a further boost to the Alice Solar City, with the Australian Government providing funding to support the construction of a large-scale, concentrating photovoltaic project”* (Garrett, 2008).

Infinilec is an Australian company that develops and sells heat engine generator technology. As a sponsor, exhibitor and presenter at ISES 2008 the company gained exposure, networking and business contacts for the development of future relationships. These benefits have been realised and long term business relationships have resulted from contacts made at the conference (Infinilec Interview).

Edentiti was formed in 2004 with the objective of providing identification services for individuals. A representative from Edentiti presented a paper at the conference with the goal of gaining media exposure for an innovative idea. The idea gained credibility through presentation at the conference. This helped in obtaining an interview with ABC radio that allowed the idea to reach a broader audience (Edentiti Interview).

A patent attorney from Griffith Hack in Sydney attended the conference and presented a paper. The conference delivered exposure for the firm and introduced the attorney to prospective clients, increasing the firm’s profile in solar services (Griffith Hack Interview).

### *Case Study 3 – ISLSSL 2009*

BUSINESS EVENT	19 <sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Society for Labour and Social Security Law (ISLSSL 2009)
Organisation	Australian Labour Law Association (ALLA)
Date	1-4 September 2009
Location	Sofitel Wentworth Sydney
Case study data sources	An interview was held with a representative from ALLA, the organisation responsible for managing the conference. In addition to the interview data, information from the conference website was collected and analysed.

The Australian Labour Law Association (ALLA) aims to promote the study of labour law and social security in Australia and internationally, and seeks to provide an ongoing forum for debates and discussion on labour law issues for those working in the field.

ALLA played host to the 19<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Society for Labour and Social Security Law (ISLSSL 2009). The Congress was held in Sydney from 1-4 September 2009, and brought together 400 persons interested in labour law, including lawyers, academics and government representatives from at least 60 countries.

Bringing together delegates and expert speakers from around the world represents an opportunity to advance Australian knowledge in the areas of labour and social security law. This is important for both academics and practitioners who may not have the opportunities to travel to international conferences to meet with others working in the field. Bringing people together from around the world to meet in Australia plays an important role in growing Australian knowledge (ALLA Interview).

The benefit of this expanded knowledge for practitioners is seen in the ability to provide better legal advice in their everyday practices. The Congress involves discussion of key issues in the field, distilling knowledge between participants. An example was given of the ability of practitioners to give better advice to multinational corporations after having gained new knowledge and insights into the labour laws and issues of the other countries where those multinational corporations operate. Such knowledge is gained through participation in the Congress (ALLA Interview).

Exposure to new knowledge and ideas also has implications for educational practice. An example was given of the added value to teaching, which results from the incorporation of cutting edge research gained at the Congress into course content at tertiary education institutions in Australia.

One of the more long term effects of the Congress is said to be increased research levels and collaboration. One of the reasons people come to conferences is to further their own research and meet people working in similar fields. The outcomes around research and collaborative opportunities are evidenced in the following quotes. *“I have no doubt there are other research projects going on not just from people in Australia but other people from different countries who met in Sydney and got together”*. As a result of the Congress, *“a number of my colleagues would be doing things because of people they met”* and *“there are various research groups that have sprung up”* (ALLA Interview). These outcomes of the Congress are a step towards increasing the research output of Australian researchers in the field of labour and social security law.

Attendance at ISLSSL 2009 resulted in an invitation for one individual to participate as a guest speaker in an upcoming International Congress in Washington. This opportunity *“wouldn’t have happened had we not had the Head at the World Congress and she and I hadn’t have met”* (ALLA Interview). Participation in the Washington Congress represents an opportunity to expose Australian talent and ideas to the international community. *“To be one of two foreigners invited there is a big thing”* (ALLA Interview).

In addition to the positive outcomes for academic and industry practice, growing opportunities for Australian research and exposing our talent to an International audience, the Congress also provided positive outcomes for putting Australia on the map in the sub-discipline of labour and social security law with a group of people from around the world.

*“People who came suddenly had a firsthand glimpse of the importance of Australian labour law, which are often the problems of many other developed countries as we are all going through the same economic process. That puts us on the map so when people are thinking about these labour law problems around the world, because they have been to Australia and after they’ve had these discussions they include that in their lexicon of countries and regions. They wouldn’t do that if they didn’t come here”* (ALLA Interview).

*“We are in a world community and we are a distance away from most of the main players and therefore we have to work a little bit harder than others. Everybody goes to London but not everybody comes here. So there are real tangible benefits in getting people to come here”* (ALLA Interview).

It was also suggested that *“people who come here take Australia more seriously. It is much easier to dismiss a country or to dismiss what’s going on if you have never been here. So I’ve been there, you know I was in Sydney and I’ve talked to some people ... and I got a pretty good idea of the country”* (ALLA Interview). This suggests a broader outcome of the Congress, beyond the recognition for Australian labour and social security law specifically, but that people will leave the Congress with a changed view of the host country and city itself. *“In fact the major notion of being an international city is to hold these sort of gatherings as indicative of the nature of internationalisation and globalisation and Sydney ... is the only globalised city in this country”* (ALLA Interview).

Business events are capable of driving broader social issues such as gender inequality, where an organising committee has a focus and commitment to the issue. *“I’m very concerned about conferences I go to in Europe in the Law areas where most of the speakers are men. I wanted a woman to give the key note address ... I think that was important giving her and giving an Australian a number one role”* (ALLA Interview). This suggests that business events can be used to deliver broader social outcomes for society, where organising committees commit to such initiatives.

## Case Study 4 – IOC 2010

BUSINESS EVENT	
	7 <sup>th</sup> International Orthodontics Congress (IOC 2010)
Organisation	World Federation of Orthodontists (WFO), Australian Society of Orthodontists (ASO), Sydney International Orthodontic Congress Committee (SIOCC)
Date	6-9 February 2010
Location	Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour
Case study data sources	An interview was held with a representative from SIOCC, the organisation responsible for managing the conference. In addition to the interview data, information from the conference website was collected and analysed.

The purpose of the World Federation of Orthodontists (WFO) is to advance the art and science of orthodontics throughout the world. The WFO's purpose will be accomplished by fulfilling the following objectives:

- Encourage high standards in orthodontics throughout the world;
- Encourage and assist in the formation of national associations and societies of orthodontists when requested;
- Encourage and assist in the formation of national and regional certifying boards in the field of orthodontics when requested;
- Promote orthodontic research;
- Disseminate scientific information;
- Promote desirable standards of training and certification for orthodontists; and
- Organize the International Orthodontic Congress to be held at least once every five years  
(7<sup>th</sup> International Orthodontic Congress, 2010)

More than 3,600 participants attended the 7th International Orthodontics Congress (IOC 2010) held in Sydney in February 2010. Counting associated persons, 4,087 persons registered. More than 2,200 doctors attended. Delegates came from 93 countries and represented 90 World Federation of Orthodontists affiliated societies and associations.

This was the first time that the IOC had been held outside of North America and Europe and the Sydney location drew a much larger contingent from Asian countries than ever before. Emerging researchers and academics from Australia and the region were provided with opportunities to speak and chair sessions at the congress. Thus, the congress was successful in showcasing Australian research to a global audience as well as providing emerging Australian academics with exposure and status within the international community (SIOCC Interview).

International delegates acknowledged their motivations related to knowledge expansion, and especially gaining an understanding of the knowledge and research taking place in the Australian Orthodontics sector.

*“Hoping to get a real taste of the country and how things are done out here compared to how we do things in Chicago”* (Delegate comment, IOC 2010 Website).

*“Looking forward to ... picking up some new ideas at the exhibitions and some of the lectures”* (Delegate comment, IOC 2010 Website).

*“We’ve had 300 of the best speakers in the world all assembled at the conference here in Sydney... to get a fabulous feeling of what’s happening in the orthodontic world”* (Delegate comment, IOC 2010 Website).

The conference was a *“significant event with decent science and internationally renowned speakers – we tapped into the Asian academic market who wanted to rub shoulders with the leaders in the field”* (SIOCC Interview).

IOC 2010 incorporated congress sponsored symposia workshops, aimed at assisting delegates to improve their professional skills, and use of new technical equipment. One of the symposia forums was presented by a ‘task force’ of Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese orthodontists of considerable experience and knowledge in the field of TAD’s/Micro Implants. The Task Force was headed by Professor Junji Sugawara (Japan) and his co-leaders were Professor Hee-Moon Kyung (Korea) and Professor Chiung Shing Huang (Taiwan). This course was given by a very distinguished group of leaders in the field not just from Northern Asia but from the rest of the world as well. This day represented a unique occasion for delegates to experience a special event in the field of TAD’s/Micro-Implants (Dr Ian Watson, Chair, Scientific Program Committee, IOC 2010 Website).

*“Clinicians pick up knowledge about new techniques and technologies at the congress. Often there are industry representatives as well who can demonstrate and give information about innovative products”* (SIOCC Interview).

Companies that sell equipment and materials use the conference to showcase products and attract new clients. *“Clinicians can place orders at the congress for new materials and implement new techniques into their practice within a month”* (SIOCC Interview).

*“Communities benefit from the advancement of the science and art of orthodontics. The majority of practitioners acquire their knowledge base from meetings. Journal publications take in excess of two years to be published and many do not read everything published in journals anyway. Knowledge is disseminated at the congress very effectively, it is filtered and presented in clinically appropriate bites”* (SIOCC Interview).

All the ‘doctor lectures’ were recorded and webcast by the conference organisers. This has provided a rich resource for delegates. It is particularly valuable to academics and post graduate students who access these webcasts for training and education.

The Foundation for Research and Education was established by the Australian Society of Orthodontists (ASO) to raise funds to promote and advance orthodontic research and education in Australia. A financial outcome of IOC 2010 was a significant increase in funds for the foundation. This funding boost will support more and larger projects to be undertaken by Australian researchers. The ramifications of the boost to research will create a significant legacy for the field (SIOCC Interview).

### *Case Study 5 – IWG 2010*

BUSINESS EVENT	5th IWG World Conference on Women and Sport (IWG 2010)
Organisation	International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG)
Date	20-23 May 2010
Location	Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour and Sydney Olympic Park
Case study data sources	The initial interview was held with a representative from IWG, the organisation responsible for managing the conference. A further interview was held with a second representative from IWG to confirm initial claims and to gather additional data on conference outcomes. In addition to the interview data, information from the conference website, the conference evaluation report and the Sydney Scoreboard Sponsorship Proposal document was collected and analysed.

The IWG is an independent coordinating body consisting of representatives of key government and non-government organisations from all regions of the world. It has the overarching objectives of promoting and facilitating the development of opportunities for girls and women in sport and physical activity throughout the world. The IWG acts as catalyst for government and non-government organisations concerned with the development of girls and women through sport. The IWG World Conferences on Women and Sport are recognised as landmark events which raise the profile of women and sport issues, demonstrate commitment to effecting positive change and highlight the host community’s contribution to success in this area. Most importantly, well-attended world conferences stimulate action at national, regional and international levels.

Conference sponsorship provided funding for conference attendance for women from developing communities. In line with a conference goal this enabled women from the Oceania region, in



particular, to attend. The NSW government and Zonta International (an organisation of executives and professionals working together to advance the status of women through service and advocacy) provided an additional 18 scholarships to assist women from regional NSW to attend the conference (IWG Interview 1). The Sydney location of the conference provided opportunities for postgraduate students and other volunteers from the Sydney region to be involved with the conference (IWG Interview 1).

The conference attracted over 500 delegates from 60 different countries. A post conference evaluation report indicates that the conference has contributed to networks among practitioners in the field and research collaborations among academics. Delegates indicated that they gained new ideas and information to take back to improve practice in their own countries, as well as an increased appreciation of belonging to a global community of people working towards the same sorts of goals. One delegate stated *“I don’t feel so alone now in what I do”*.

High profile delegates such as Justice Michael Kirby, Liz Ellis MP, and businessman, Peter Holmes à Court ensured good media coverage during the conference for the issues associated with women and sport. Media coverage also extended to the UK and Italy (IWG Interview 1).

Another outcome was the networking that developed collaborations between various organisations that had not previously enjoyed connections. For example, a committee formed in 2009 to develop the conference legacy comprised members from UNIFEM, University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), Australian Sports Commission and Womensport West (IWG Interview 1). It was decided that the legacy of IWG 2010 will focus on increasing the number of women on boards and management committees of all sporting organisations at an international, national and local level.

The legacy will take the form of a web-based scoreboard – ‘The Sydney Scoreboard’. The site will be internationally accessible, interactive and user friendly and will be a ‘real time’ means of tracking progress and showcasing good and bad practices with regards to the gender make up of boards of sporting organisations. Countries from around the world have agreed to submit their ‘scores’ to the Sydney Scoreboard which will operate until at least 2014 when the 6th World Conference on Women and Sport will take place in Finland. Success of the legacy, i.e., progress regarding women in sport governance from 2010 – 2014 will be evaluated at the Finland Conference.

Research collaborations around this topic have already begun among conference delegates from Australia, Tunisia, Botswana, United States, New Zealand and Canada – and collaboration will continue to grow with the Sydney Scoreboard website as a catalyst (IWG Interview 1).

Seed funding of \$10,000 for the Sydney Scoreboard has been provided by the Greater Sydney Partnership (GSP). The GSP is a not-for-profit organisation that has been formed to enhance and promote Sydney's interests as Australia's only global city. Peter Holmes à Court (founder of the GSP) was a keynote speaker at IWG 2010 and has placed his support and financial funding

behind the Sydney Scoreboard. Collaboration between the IWG and the GSP provides an opportunity to brand Sydney as a place of innovation and positive social action.

The Hon Kate Ellis MP (Minister for Sport) was a keynote speaker at the conference. As a direct result of the conference the Minister has decreed that national sporting organisations must now report on gender equity on boards when they apply for government funding (IWG Interview 1).

*The Australian Government will require all national sporting organisations to annually report on the gender representation of their boards - with this information then being published. These figures will be made public so that organisations can be judged on their progress by you and their communities. ... I am pleased to announce that the Government will establish a register of women with appropriate skills and experience to assist sport to improve this record. The Women in Sport Register will enable women to register their skills and interest in being involved in sport and sports can readily access potential candidates and find a match to their needs. ... Nothing delivers a statement about women's leadership in sport more than initiatives like this conference - where sport, women and community leaders can come together to share our experiences and our ambitions for women's sport (Ellis, 2010).*

Many Australian post graduate students were able to attend the conference due to the Sydney location and opportunities to meet leaders in the field of women and sport (both academics and practitioners) has provided post graduate students with vital contacts. In one example, post graduate research is already contributing to the Sydney Scoreboard project (IWG Interview 1).

The conference provided employment and professional development opportunities for staff and students at UTS and the wider community. A professional conference organiser and secretariat were employed in the four years leading up to the conference. An event management student was given an internship position. Many students and community members took the opportunity to volunteer at the event. The following areas of professional development were realised through involvement with the organisation of the conference – *“experience in raising sponsorship, contact and liaison with government, networking skills, international stakeholder management – understanding who those bodies are and dealing people from so many different countries – PR skills...”* (IWG Interview 2).

The conference organisers attribute a significant part of the success of IWG 2010 to the support and guidance they received from Business Events Sydney.

*When I started to put the bid together I had no previous experience and Business Events Sydney provided valuable guidance. I could talk about what we wanted from the sporting context ... and get letters of support from the NSO's ... but Business Events Sydney knew everything about 'destination Sydney' – how you can effectively portray Sydney so you can win a bid and so that was such a good partnership. And they put me in contact with the different politicians and actually ... took me and introduced me to Sandra Nori who was*

*then the Minister for Sport and the Minister for Women ... they helped to get initial sponsorship ... put an option on the venue a few years out ... employ a media person (IWG Interview 1).*

They also believe it is helpful to develop a strategic plan and a clear set of goals when planning a conference.

*When I became Chair one of the first things we did was put together a strategic plan with our committee and putting together a strategic plan made us clear about what our goals were: to deliver a successful conference, to strengthen the relationship with the United Nations and agencies - so we arranged a high profile keynote speaker from UN, to focus on Oceania – to get delegates from our Oceania region, Fiji and so on– they never go to conferences in US or Europe – but with the support of AUSAID we developed an application for funding so we got 10 women coming from places in Oceania that would otherwise not have had the funding to come” (IWG Interview 1).*

## 5. ANALYSIS

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Business events provide a forum for bringing together individuals and groups including researchers, practitioners, organisations and governments to discuss and disseminate ideas, new research, techniques and technologies. Evidence of a broad range of outcomes was revealed as a result of the business events examined in this study. The results indicate that beneficial outcomes are realised in areas including:

- knowledge expansion;
- networking, relationships and collaboration;
- educational outcomes;
- fundraising and future research capacity;
- raising awareness and profiling; and
- showcasing and destination reputation.

### *Knowledge Expansion*

Business event outcomes in terms of knowledge expansion are evidenced through the discussion and dissemination of ideas, knowledge and technologies. Business events provide opportunities for growing local knowledge in the relevant sector. New knowledge, techniques and technologies are also used for improving local educational offerings and professional practice in the relevant sector.

### *Networking, Relationships and Collaboration*

By bringing together various stakeholders (for example, researchers, industry, academics, suppliers, practitioners, national and international associations) within a sector, business events provide opportunities for face to face networking between individuals and groups. Face to face networking can be seen to provide outcomes in terms of establishing long term relationships. These relationships act as a catalyst for knowledge expansion, research development and research collaborations. In turn, research collaborations can lead to the development of new products and technologies.

### *Educational Outcomes*

Local conferences provide opportunities for educational outcomes for a broad cross section of the local sector. Business events play an important role in fostering opportunities for early career researchers and practitioners, emerging leaders in the sector, including postgraduate students. In addition, exposing delegates to local educational infrastructure can increase the attractiveness of

the destination's education sector. This growth in the education sector also has wider benefits for increasing the future capacity of the relevant sector.

### ***Fundraising and Future Research Capacity***

Business events provide opportunities for local organisations, associations, and/or centres involved with the event to raise funds. Business events deliver opportunities for accessing greater funding support from both Government and the private sector. This can have implications for the sector in terms of growing future research capacity.

### ***Raising Awareness and Profiling***

Many business events receive media coverage and this can raise awareness of significant issues from within a sector. Opportunities can flow from increased public and private sector awareness, including increased funding, revised public policy outcomes, or other forms of support. If international media coverage is achieved these benefits can be even more significant.

### ***Showcasing and Destination Reputation***

Business events showcase local capacity in a number of distinct ways. Putting the destination 'on the map' has positive flow on effects for fostering a reputation as a place of highly skilled, capable, world leading researchers, educators and practitioners in a specific sector. Successful hosting of a business event is important in itself for enhancing Sydney's reputation as a business events destination.

These categories have been further refined in Table 2 (below) to allow the complexities and fine distinctions of each case to be taken into account. The first column provides explanation of the types of outcomes that were found. The second column provides empirically-based evidence of each type of outcome.

*Table 2 - Business Event Outcomes and Empirical Evidence*

BUSINESS EVENT OUTCOMES	EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE
<b>1. Knowledge Expansion</b>	
<p><b><i>Growing local knowledge</i></b></p> <p>Business events represent an opportunity to bring the world’s best practice and international knowledge to members of the local sector.</p> <p>Growing local knowledge contributes to capacity building within the relevant sector in the host destination.</p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing people together from around the world to meet in Australia plays an important role in growing Australian knowledge (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).</li> <li>• “The majority of practitioners acquire their knowledge base from meetings” (IOC 2010 - SIOCC Interview).</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Knowledge improving education</i></b></p> <p>Business events expose delegates to new knowledge and ideas, which within a reasonably short timeframe, can be incorporated into current educational offerings.</p> <p>This improves the quality of education in the field, which has flow on benefits for the quality of graduates who enter the field after their studies.</p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegates are provided with access to cutting edge research in the areas of labour and social security law. Academics attending this conference can incorporate this new knowledge into course content at tertiary education institutions across Australia (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Knowledge improving professional practice</i></b></p> <p>Business events provide opportunities for the dissemination of new knowledge, techniques, materials, and/or technology with regards to a specific sector.</p> <p>This transfer of knowledge has implications for the local community, evidenced in the implementation of this new knowledge, techniques or materials into professional practice in the relevant sector.</p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Clinicians can place orders at the congress for new materials and implement new techniques into their practice within a month” (IOC 2010 - SIOCC Interview).</li> <li>• Delegates reported they had done something differently in their HIV work as a direct result of attending IAS 2007. Changes to clinical practice included the use of new drugs or technologies in treating patients (IAS 2007 – Evaluation Report, 2009).</li> <li>• The ability of practitioners to give better advice to multinational corporations comes through the gaining of new knowledge at the Congress; of the labour laws and</li> </ul>

issues of the other countries where those multinational corporations operate (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).

- Delegates indicated that they gained new ideas and information to take back to improve practice in their own countries (IWG 2010 – Evaluation Report).

## 2. Networking, Relationships and Collaboration

### ***Access to networking opportunities for local practitioners and researchers***

#### ***Evidence***

Business events held in Sydney provide access to network with international counterparts within a sector for a wider number of local practitioners and researchers who are able to attend a local event.

- *“The high profile researchers within the centre attend many international conferences however the clinical staff and junior researchers don’t have the same opportunity so being staged in Sydney gave them the opportunity to attend and subsequently meet high profile international delegates”* (IAS 2007 – NCHECR Interview).
- The Sydney location was considered important for both academics and practitioners who may not have the opportunities to travel to International conferences to meet with others working in the field (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).

### ***Networking fosters creation of long term relationships***

#### ***Evidence***

Business events foster networking by physically bringing people together to share new knowledge and ideas, and spark potential relationships.

The networking that takes place at business events represents a benefit, which continues to be felt long after the event has ended.

Networking is also important for the creation of business relationships.

- *“Way over 50% of the benefit”* was considered to come after attendance at the conference as people converted their networking into new opportunities. *“When people go home after a conference and they have had a good experience and made good memories and networks they continue discussions with other researchers they met here”* (ISES 2008 – ANZSES Interview).
- Although delegates may have met back in 2007, that face to face meeting, and networking that took place at the Conference allows people to feel that they can still contact them, having shared that conference experience a few years back (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).
- Infinilec is an Australian company that develops and sells heat engine generator technology. As a sponsor, exhibitor and presenter at the conference the company gained exposure, networking and business contacts for the development of future relationships. These benefits have been realised and long term business relationships have resulted from contacts made at the conference (ISES 2008 – Infinilec Interview).

<p><b><i>Networking as a catalyst for knowledge expansion and research development</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p>
<p>The networking that takes place at business events acts as a catalyst for knowledge expansion and can result in generation of ideas that drive future research agendas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The conference facilitated intense discussion and debate between “<i>similar minds; people researching in similar areas across international contexts</i>” (IAS 2007 – NCHECR Interview).</li> <li>• “<i>One of the big discussion points at the conference was about circumcision in Africa leading to marginally lower rates of HIV infection in heterosexuals – the question became is this the same in the Australian community. Subsequently a study has been conducted to explore this issue</i>” (IAS 2007 – NCHECR Interview).</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Networking as a catalyst for research collaborations</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p>
<p>Networking acts as a catalyst for developing research collaborations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Professors from Africa, UK, US and Australia may find that they each (in their own countries) have been working on similar studies, they will then decide to do the same study as an international cohort – this helps to identify new knowledge, similarities and differences on topic being studied. So a professor from the UK may introduce a professor from France to a professor in Australia and this then creates the opportunity for shared collaboration</i>” (IAS 2007 – NCHECR Interview).</li> <li>• “<i>I have no doubt there are other research projects going on not just from people in Australia but other people from different countries who met in Sydney and got together. A number of my colleagues would be doing things because of people they met ... there are various research groups that have sprung up</i>” (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).</li> <li>• The conference has contributed to networks among practitioners in the field and research collaborations among academics (IWG 2010 – Evaluation Report).</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Research collaborations lead to development of new products and technologies</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p>
<p>Collaborations formed through the networking opportunities provided by business events can have further outcomes evidenced in the development of new products and technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>As a result of the conference, collaboration has occurred that is resulting in the creation of integrated affordable building products</i>” (ISES 2008 – ANZSES Interview).</li> </ul>



### 3. Educational Outcomes

#### ***Opportunities for local postgraduate research students***

#### ***Evidence***

Attendance at a business event delivers opportunities that are considered important in building the young people working in a sector, including local postgraduate research students.

- Meeting leaders in the field provides the impetus for “people to go away and be enthused about what they are doing locally. It can build their passion or their interest in the area” (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).
- The Conference has provided postgraduate students with vital contacts for future research opportunities (IWG 2010 – Interview 1).

#### ***Increased attractiveness of education sector***

#### ***Evidence***

By exposing delegates to local knowledge, research capacity, sites and facilities, business events can create flow on effects in terms of increasing the attractiveness of the destination’s education sector.

- “*I know individuals [who have attended Australian conferences from other countries] who have come back as students. Students want to be where a place is pushing the barriers. Our conference demonstrated that we are pushing the barriers in Australia*” (ISES 2008 – ANZSES Interview).

This growth in the education sector also has wider benefits for increasing the future capacity of the relevant sector.

### 4. Fundraising and Future Research Capacity

#### ***Fundraising opportunities***

#### ***Evidence***

Business events provide opportunities for local organisations, associations, and/or centres involved with the event to raise funds.

- Organisational benefits were in the form of financial gain (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).
- A positive outcome of the IOC 2010 was a significant increase in funds for the Foundation for Research and Education, established by the Australian Society of Orthodontists to promote and advance orthodontic research and education in Australia. This funding boost will support more and larger projects to be undertaken by Australian researchers (IOC 2010 – SIOCC Interview).

***Greater access to Government and/or private sector funding sources***

***Evidence***

Business events deliver opportunities for accessing greater funding support from Government and the private sector.

This can have implications for the sector in terms of growing future research capacity.

- *“The conference attracted significant media interest and generated support from the private sector as well as State and Federal Governments. In fact, we drew attention to our goal of transforming the National Centre into an Institute with the receipt of funding from the State and Federal governments in association with private philanthropy” (IAS 2007 – Professor David Cooper cited in Business Events Sydney, 2009).*
- *“A grant of US\$18 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Institute matched by Commonwealth funding led to the establishment of a major virology institute in NSW which will focus on transmitted diseases such as HIV, AIDS, TB and Hepatitis” (IAS 2007 – Professor David Cooper cited in Business Events Sydney, 2009).*
- Seed funding of \$10,000 for the Sydney Scoreboard has been provided by the Greater Sydney Partnership (GSP). The Sydney Scoreboard will prompt research to monitor global progress regarding women in sport governance until at least 2014. Research collaborations have already begun among delegates from Australia, Tunisia, Botswana, United States, New Zealand and Canada (IWG 2010 – Interview 1).

***5. Raising Awareness and Profiling***

***Generating awareness of sector specific issues***

***Evidence***

Business events are capable of raising both public and Government awareness of sector specific issues.

This outcome is often realised through the media coverage afforded to certain business events, which may have high profile speakers or support.

International media coverage can ensure this message is taken to an even wider audience than the host destination.

- *“There was a lot of media locally, Asia Pacific and internationally around the event – if that serves to put HIV at the forefront of people’s minds - public, government and others, then that could have benefits” (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).*
- The 2010 IWG Conference had several high profile speakers such as Justice Michael Kirby, Liz Ellis MP and high profile businessman Peter Holmes à Court. These speakers ensured good media coverage during the conference, which helped raise awareness of the issues associated with women and sport. Media coverage also extended to the UK and Italy (IWG 2010 – Interview 1).

<p><b><i>Raising awareness of broader societal issues</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p>
<p>Business events can be used to raise awareness of broader social issues.</p> <p>Such efforts to address broader social issues can reflect positively on the reputation of the host destination, as a site capable of driving social change and action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing issues of gender inequality - <i>“I’m very concerned about conferences I go to in Europe in the Law areas where most of the speakers are men. I wanted a woman to give the key note address ... I think that was important giving her ... a number one role”</i> (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Profiling local organisations, associations, and/or centres</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p>
<p>Business events provide opportunities to raise the profile of local organisations, associations, and/or centres involved with the event.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research took the opportunity at IAS 2007 to celebrate the organisation’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. <i>“They had 1,200 national and international delegates attend the anniversary celebrations – which they were absolutely thrilled about. It increased their profile and enhanced the national and international awareness of the centre”</i> (IAS 2007 – NCHECR Interview).</li> <li>• The conference delivered exposure for the firm, increasing the firm’s profile in solar services (ISES 2008 – Griffith Hack Interview).</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>A catalyst for Government support</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Evidence</i></b></p>
<p>Business events can gain support from Government Ministers, who are prompted by the event and associated media attention to announce expressions of support for the sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In his keynote address at the ISES conference The Hon Peter Garrett AM, Federal Minister for Environment Protection, Heritage and the Arts, announced the largest ever Commonwealth investment in solar power - <i>“I am pleased to announce this morning a further boost to the Alice Solar City, with the Australian Government providing funding to support the construction of a large-scale, concentrating photovoltaic project”</i> (ISES 2008 - The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, Speech).</li> <li>• In her keynote address at the IWG conference The Hon Kate Ellis MP, Federal Minister for Sport announced that <i>“the Australian Government will require all national sporting organisations to annually report on the gender representation of their boards”</i> (IWG 2010 – The Hon Kate Ellis MP, Speech).</li> </ul>

## 6. Showcasing and Destination Reputation

<b>Showcasing local talent</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p>The hosting of a business event in Sydney has beneficial outcomes in terms of showcasing local talent in a specific sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Conference was considered important in raising awareness of the research and scientific excellence of those working in the Australian HIV sector to international delegates (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).</li> <li>• The Congress provided positive outcomes for “<i>putting Australia on the map</i>” in the sub-discipline of labour and social security law with a group of people from around the world (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).</li> <li>• The congress was successful in showcasing Australian research to a global audience as well as providing emerging Australian academics with exposure and status within the international Orthodontic community (IOC 2010 – SIOCC Interview).</li> </ul>
<b>Enhancing Sydney’s reputation as a global leader</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p>Business events showcase local capacity, putting the destination ‘on the map’, which has positive flow on effects for fostering a reputation as a place of highly skilled, capable, world leading researchers in a specific sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Conference contributed to our reputation “<i>as leaders in this area. Certainly it would put us on the map for this sort of work</i>” (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).</li> <li>• The Conference provided opportunities to showcase production facilities and leading researchers in NSW, fostering Sydney’s reputation as a world leader in the renewable energy space (ISES 2008 – ANZSES Interview).</li> </ul>
<b>Enhancing Sydney’s reputation as a business events destination</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p>Successful hosting of a business event is important in itself for enhancing Sydney’s reputation as a business events destination.</p> <p>Sydney’s capability as a business events destination is also strengthened through continued hosting of business events, as the sector develops along with the skills of those working within it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting over 6,000 delegates to Sydney, IAS 2007 was considered “<i>a good meeting to have had here to say we won this and we can hold this sort of meeting</i>” (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).</li> <li>• “<i>In fact the major notion of being an international city is to hold these sort of gatherings as indicative of the nature of internationalisation and globalisation and Sydney ... is the only globalised city in this country</i>” (ISLSSL 2009 - ALLA Interview).</li> <li>• This represents a “<i>benefit for future conferences held here and people’s skills in working on something like that</i>” (IAS 2007 – ASHM Interview).</li> </ul>

The case study results indicate that business events deliver a broad range of beneficial outcomes in areas including knowledge expansion; networking, relationships and collaboration; educational outcomes; fundraising and future research capacity; raising awareness and profiling; and showcasing and destination reputation.

These outcomes provide value to various stakeholder groups including individuals, organisations/associations, relevant sectors, and the host destination and community.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

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It is well established that business events make a substantial contribution to the Australian economy from a tourism perspective. This study has established that the benefits derived from business events extend well beyond the tourism contribution.

Evidence has been presented in this report that verifies an extensive range of contributions that have been made by five business events held in Sydney in the period 2007-2010.

The events have brought the world's best practice and international knowledge to local sector researchers and practitioners in the fields of medicine, law, sport and the environment. Growing Australian knowledge has contributed to capacity building within each sector. The events have exposed delegates to new knowledge and ideas which have been incorporated into educational offerings. This has improved the quality of education in the various sectors, which has flow on benefits for the quality of graduates who enter the field after their studies.

The events have allowed the dissemination of new knowledge, techniques, materials, and technologies in each of the sectors, providing Sydney/NSW based educators, practitioners and researchers with access to a network of international colleagues. This networking has provided local delegates with new business and research collaborations, and will generate innovation, ideas and research agendas for many years to come.

Significantly, for the continued health and growth of each of the sectors, attendance at these business events has delivered all of these benefits to emerging leaders working in each of the sectors, including Australian postgraduate research students.

International delegates have been exposed to local knowledge, research capacity, sites and facilities and this has increased the attractiveness of Sydney's education sector. This growth in the education sector has wider benefits for increasing the future capacity of New South Wales in the various sectors.

The events have provided Sydney organisations, associations, and research centres with new funding from both the Federal Government and the private sector. This has allowed growth in the research capacity of each sector.

Awareness of sector specific issues has increased as a direct result of the events through media coverage and the involvement in the event of key and influential stakeholders, including Federal Ministers and high profile business people. Sydney has been branded as a city of action and social change. The profiles of the Australian organisations, associations, and centres involved with the event have been raised and enhanced.

The events have showcased Sydney's capacities, putting the destination 'on the map', fostering a reputation as a place of highly skilled, capable, world leading researchers. Successful hosting of

the events has enhanced Sydney's reputation as a business events destination. Sydney's capability as a business events destination has also been strengthened through the development of the event management skills of those working within this field.

The examination of case studies across a four year period has identified a further research issue. While some contributions are apparent almost immediately, others require a longer timeframe in which to be fully realised. For example, funding for research centres and other organisations associated with the events tended to be delivered in a short timeframe, however, some of the benefits in terms of future research capacity take longer to be realised. This finding suggests a need to evaluate the benefits associated with business events over a longer time frame if the full extent of the contributions made by the sector are to be understood.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

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The following recommendations are based on the findings presented in this report. Consideration has been given to how the results of this study can be used by Business Events Sydney to assist in “promoting Sydney as a business events destination, identifying new event opportunities and bringing these events to Sydney” (Business Events Sydney, 2010) to deliver benefits to organisations and associations, delegates, industry and the city of Sydney.

- Business events provide substantial and enduring value to Sydney and NSW. *It is recommended that the findings of this research be used to support submissions for Government investment in this sector.*
- This study presents a broad range of potential contributions that can be leveraged by future business events. *It is recommended that Business Events Sydney use this range of contributions in working with event committees to guide strategic planning and goal setting for their events.*
- This study provides baseline evidence of the broader contributions of business events. The findings in this study, based on a sound qualitative methodological approach, would benefit from being rounded out by further study based on a quantitative approach. *It is recommended that further research be commissioned to deliver quantitative data on the contributions identified in this study. It is further recommended that timeline be considered when data is collected and analysed.*



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