LANDMARK CONFERENCE BRINGS THE WORLD TO MELBOURNE

AIDS 2014

After more than two years of extensive planning and preparation, thousands of delegates from 170 countries world-wide converged on Melbourne in July 2014 as the city played host to the largest ever health conference in Australia — the 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014).

The Conference provides a platform for people working in the field of HIV, policy makers, persons living with HIV and individuals committed to ending the pandemic, to present new scientific knowledge and dialogue on the issues facing the global response to HIV.

AIDS 2014 was the first ever International AIDS Conference to be held in Australia, providing a unique opportunity to explore the diverse nature of the local and regional response to HIV.

The International AIDS Society (IAS) chose Melbourne as the host destination for its collaborative approach, strong support from the city, state and federal governments and the exceptional facilities at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC).

Most significantly, the strength of Melbourne's scientific community and expertise in HIV research lead by Club Melbourne Ambassador, Professor Sharon Lewin, was a major factor to the city's success.

CITY-WIDE COLLABORATION AT ITS BEST

Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) secured AIDS 2014 in 2011 and then worked closely with the IAS right through to the event, particularly in facilitating contacts for ease of visa processing and driving attendance.

AIDS 2014 showcased what Melbourne does so well in a collaborative sense to win, deliver and welcome an event of this scale. MCB teamed with its city-wide partners to deliver the best experience delegates could have, with overwhelming feedback in praise of how the city welcomed them.

The reach of AIDS 2014 was extended through the City of Melbourne's cultural program, which consisted of more than 160 events, encompassing more than 200 local businesses and was the largest city-wide activation in the history of the International AIDS Conference.

SHOWCASING MELBOURNE CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

AIDS 2014 utilised the entire Convention Centre and Exhibition Centre — all 66,333 square metres of it.

The in-house technology team provided all tech requirements and equipment to facilitate more than 100 satellite events and uploaded 700 individual presentation sessions to the AIDS 2014 website.

MCEC's award-winning chefs catered for the 13,300 delegates, offering 11 different food outlets with 60 different menu options and also served 1000 volunteers each day.

To ensure delivery of a world-class event and a memorable experience for a large diversity of visitors more than 500 MCEC employees participated in HIV/AIDS awareness training, in conjunction with the Victorian AIDS Council and Living Positive Victoria.

LASTING LEGACIES

With the global spotlight on the city and more than 13,000 delegates, visitors and media in town for AIDS 2014, the profile and economic benefits for Melbourne and Victoria were significant, including an estimated economic contribution to Victoria of AUD80 million.

But the legacies of AIDS 2014 went far beyond the media coverage and economic impacts. The conference brought great visibility to Melbourne's expertise in HIV research and delivered real action for the HIV/AIDS community. Two key highlights were the Melbourne Declaration and the AIDS 2014 Legacy Statement signifying Australia's health ministers to a commitment to see the virtual elimination of new HIV infections by 2020.

The colourful and vibrant Global Village also provided a space for community to gather from all over the world to meet, share and learn from each other and demonstrate the application of science and leadership.

AIDS 2014 made history in Australia by creating real change and perfectly demonstrating why the business events industry is crucial to the growth and development of the city, state and country.

FAST FACTS

20TH INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE, JULY 2014

DELEGATES: 13,300 from 170 Countries

LOCATION: Melbourne, Australia