

Program Overview

Overview

The Business Event Sponsorship Program (BESP) is designed to provide financial support to business events such as conferences, showcases, workshops, symposiums, seminars and exhibitions that are held within the City of Melbourne municipality.

The proposed business event must take place between **1 February and 31 December 2027** within the City of Melbourne municipality boundaries.

City of Melbourne Municipality

Our geographic footprint compasses the following suburbs:

- Docklands
- East Melbourne
- Fishermans Bend
- Jolimont
- Kensington
- North Melbourne
- Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD)
- Parkville
- South Wharf
- West Melbourne

Including areas of:

- Carlton
- Carlton North
- Flemington
- Port Melbourne
- South Yarra
- Southbank

The municipality does not cover the full Melbourne metropolitan area. If in doubt about your event venue location check our [interactive boundaries map](#) or contact us for more information.

Before you start your application ensure that you:

- Read the [program guidelines](#)
- Review the resources available on [our website](#)
- Attend the online information session, or watch the recorded video later if you cannot attend the session
- Contact us for any questions via businessfunding@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Program objectives and priority considerations

The program aims to support business events that align with Council's strategic priorities:

Leverage economic strengths

Leverage business events to position Melbourne as a globally competitive, inclusive knowledge and innovation hub by attracting investment, enabling cross-sector collaboration, strengthening industry-academia ties, and driving growth, capability, and jobs.

Vibrant and Creative Melbourne

Boost Melbourne's vibrancy and global reputation through a year-round calendar of high-quality business events that attract delegates, activate the city, and reinforce Melbourne's identity as a dynamic, globally connected destination.

Healthy, safe, clean and connected communities

Enhance Melbourne's liveability and foster inclusive participation by supporting business events that deliver economic, social and environmental benefits, while creating opportunities to engage diverse communities.

Eligibility

* indicates a required field

Eligibility check list

To be **eligible** for BESP, the applicant must:

1. Submit a business event proposal featuring a single or multi-day program (e.g. conference, exhibition, pitch competition, showcase, workshop, symposium, or seminar) with a minimum attendance of 150 participants.
2. Host the event at a venue within the [City of Melbourne municipality](#).
3. Schedule the event to take place between **1 February 2027 and 31 December 2027**.
4. Deliver an in-person event with a minimum in-person audience of 150 attendees.
5. Hold a valid Australian Business Number (ABN), noting that individuals and sole traders are not eligible.
6. Provide a valid Certificate of Currency for public liability insurance of at least \$20 million.

Applications will be **ineligible** if any of the following apply:

- The event is a cultural event, festival, musical, fair, market, community or sporting event, competition, fundraising activity, or primarily promotes the applicant's own business.
- The event is a standalone PR event, award ceremony, or networking event, not part of a broader conference program.
- The activity is a teaching program, lecture, or university open day.
- The event poses risks to public health, safety, the environment, or heritage.

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- The event does not comply with anti-discrimination or anti-vilification legislation, or is inconsistent with Council policies, priorities, or values (including the *Inclusive Melbourne Action Plan 2024-26*).
- The event promotes unethically sourced animal products or involves harmful use or exploitation of animals.
- The event, or any component of it, receives funding from another City of Melbourne program or the Melbourne Convention Bureau.
- The applicant has outstanding debts to the City of Melbourne, has breached previous funding agreements, or is involved in legal conflict with Council.
- The applicant engages in canvassing or lobbying of Elected Members or Council staff during the application and assessment period.
- The applicant has acted in a way that is harmful to the reputation or interests of the City of Melbourne.
- Funding is sought for debt reduction, operational deficits, or reimbursement of expenses already incurred.
- The applicant is a Commonwealth or State Government department, a City of Melbourne employee or elected member, or their immediate family (excluding organisations they are affiliated with).
- The applicant is a political party, or the event is primarily political in nature.

Ineligible applications will not advance to the assessment stage and applicants will be notified once final recommendations have been endorsed by Council.

The business event is eligible to apply for BESP funding *

- ☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

If you would like to discuss your eligibility for BESP funding, please contact us at businessfunding@melbourne.vic.gov.au.

The City of Melbourne offers a range of grants and sponsorship opportunities for individuals, community organisations and businesses across the arts, recreation, events and business sectors.

For more information about available programs, visit the [Grants and Sponsorships](#) webpage.

Applicant Details

* indicates a required field

Applicant contact information

Applicant name *

Title	First Name	Last Name

Applicant position *

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Applicant phone number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

Applicant email *

Must be an email address.

Alternative contact information

Alternative applicant name *

Title	First Name	Last Name

Alternative applicant position *

Alternative applicant phone number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

Alternative applicant email *

Must be an email address.

Business/organisation information

Organisation name *

ABN *

The ABN provided will be used to look up the following information. Click Lookup above to check that you have entered the ABN correctly.

Information from the Australian Business Register
ABN
Entity Name
ABN Status
Entity Type
Goods & Services Tax (GST)

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DGR Endorsed

ATO Charity Type

[More information](#)

ACNC Registration

Tax Concessions

Main Business Location

Must be an ABN.

Organisation website *

Must be a URL.

Provide a link to the business event website

Organisation address *

Address

Address Line 1, Suburb/Town, State/Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Upload your Certificate of Currency Public Liability Insurance - minimum \$20 million *

Attach a file:

Is the organisation delivering the event different from the organisation making the application? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Event delivery organisation details

Event delivery organisation *

Organisation Name

Event delivery organisation phone number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

Event delivery organisation email *

Must be an email address.

Event delivery organisation phone number *

Must be an Australian phone number.

Business Event Details

* indicates a required field

Event name *

Event start date *

Must be a date and between 1/2/2027 and 31/12/2027.

Event end date *

Must be a date and between 1/2/2027 and 31/12/2027.

Venue name and address

Address

Is the event venue confirmed? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Evidence of event venue confirmation

Upload evidence of the event venue confirmation here *

Attach a file:

A minimum of 1 file must be attached.

Accepted evidence include: copies of venue invoices, contracts or confirmation email displaying the name of the event, the confirmed venue and event dates clearly displayed. The venue must be located within the [City of Melbourne municipality](#)

Evidence of venue search

Upload evidence of venue search here. *

Attach a file:

Acceptable evidence include request for quotation, emails enquiring for venue availability clearly displaying the name of the event, the venue requested, and the event dates.

Event type *

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- ☐ Conference
- ☐ Seminar
- ☐ Workshop
- ☐ Showcase

- ☐ Symposium
- ☐ Exhibition
- ☐ Other

At least 1 choice and no more than 2 choices may be selected.

If more than two descriptions apply, please select the two most applicable types and provide further details in the Event Description

Event description *

Word count:

Must be no more than 300 words.

Event target audience - provide a general overview of who your attendees are. *

Word count:

Must be no more than 100 words.

There will be an opportunity to provide a detailed description in the Assessment Criteria.

Number of expected attendees *

Must be a number.

The minimum required attendance is 150 unique in-person attendees to be eligible for funding. For events held over multiple days, repeat attendees must not be counted more than once.

Is the event part of a bigger program? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Describe the type of business event

What type of business event are you applying for?

Description of the bigger program

Provide a brief description of the 'bigger program' this event is part of. *

Assessment Criteria

* indicates a required field

1 - Global Competitiveness, Innovation and Economic Impact (30%)

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Demonstrates how the event drives cross-industry collaboration, delivers measurable economic impact, and supports capability building.

CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- Demonstrates strong, effective collaboration across sectors (industry, government, academia, startups, peak bodies, and corporates).
- Clearly shows how the event builds capability through knowledge sharing, skills development, research commercialisation, and talent growth.

How does your event support collaboration and capability building across different sectors? Include a list of all sectors involved. *

Word count:

Must be no more than 400 words.

Include all industries and sectors involved in your event including keynote speakers, attendees, and sponsors.

Attach any files that support your response

Attach a file:

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Provides economic benefits to the municipality, including but not limited to attendees' spending, business engagement, and business outcomes as a result of your event.

Provide an estimated expenditure amount per delegate per day. *

Must be a number.

Include in your estimate: travel expenses, transfers from airport to hotels and event venue, food outside the event, value of event registration-tickets, entertainment and leisure.

What economic benefits will your event deliver to the City of Melbourne, including but not limited to visitor and attendee spending, engagement with local businesses, and any business outcomes? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 400 words.

In your response, consider how your event will engage with local businesses and retailers, such as promoting or using supplies from local businesses.

Attach any files that support your response

Attach a file:

2. City Vibrancy and Global Reputation (25%)

The business event showcases a high-quality program with compelling content that attracts influential speakers, leading organisations, and global audiences.

BUSINESS EVENT QUALITY AND PROFILE

- Demonstrates a high-quality, well-researched program with clear themes and strong content design.
- Attracts influential speakers, leading organisations, and global, high-caliber attendees.

Describe how your event program is well researched, relevant to your audience, and supported by clear themes and strong content design. *

Word count:
Must be no more than 300 words.

Please provide a concise overview of the proposed program for each day of the event. This information is intended to help assessors understand the quality of the event content.

You can add more rows by clicking on "+" button.

Day/Date	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Must be a date and between 1/2/2027 and 31/12/2027.	E.g. Welcome and opening remarks. Keynote speaker, panel, etc.	Keynotes speakers, workshops, guest panel, etc.	Networking functions, awards functions, etc.

Attach here your proposed event program *

Attach a file:

How will your event attract influential speakers, subject matter experts, leading organisations, sponsors and global, high-profile panellists? *

Word count:
Must be no more than 200 words.

DELEGATE ATTRACTION

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- Clearly outlines a targeted strategy to attract local, interstate, and international delegates.
- Demonstrates a strong, well-prepared marketing plan with defined channels, messaging, and measurable outcomes.

Please note: This response should outline a separate approach from attracting speakers, sponsors, and partners.

Include all marketing and promotion channels you will use to reach your target audience and maximise attendance, ticket sales, and registrations.

How will you attract local, interstate and international delegates, and what marketing channels will you use to achieve this? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

A detailed marketing plan can be attached at the end of this section.

CITY ACTIVATION AND PROMOTION

- Clearly outlines a targeted, well-defined strategy to attract local, interstate, and international attendees.
- Demonstrates a comprehensive, well-prepared marketing plan with measurable outcomes and appropriate channels.

How will your event promote Melbourne as a destination and encourage visitation across the city? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

Have you shared [What's on](#) with your speakers, and attendees? Further details for this question can be included in your marketing plan attachment.

Attach a comprehensive, well-prepared marketing plan with measurable outcomes and appropriate channels. *

Attach a file:

A minimum of 1 file must be attached.

CITY BRANDING AND GLOBAL POSITIONING

- Clearly outlines strategies to position Melbourne as a leading global knowledge and innovation hub, including media engagement, industry recognition, and international visibility.
- Demonstrates a strong approach to generating media exposure and elevating the city's global reputation and brand.
- Provides clear and compelling sponsorship value for the City of Melbourne.

How will your event strengthen Melbourne's global reputation and visibility as a knowledge and innovation hub? *

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Word count:

Must be no more than 300 words.

Include a brief overview of media and industry engagement. Further details can be added in the marketing plan attachment.

As part of the funding agreement, the minimum sponsorship benefits required for the City of Melbourne include:

- City of Melbourne logo placement
- City of Melbourne physical banners placement
- Complimentary tickets/registrations
- Opportunity for Councillors to deliver welcome remarks

Beyond the minimum sponsorship benefits, what additional benefits will you provide to the City of Melbourne? Please include any opportunities for Council participation, branding, promotion, or speaking engagements. *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

Assessment Criteria - Continued

* indicates a required field

3. Liveability, Inclusion and Community Impact (20%)

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

- Demonstrates how the event ensures equitable and inclusive access for diverse audiences, including underrepresented communities and priority groups.
- Clearly outlines practical measures to support accessibility, participation, and meaningful inclusion across all aspects of the event.

How will your event ensure accessibility, inclusion, and meaningful participation for diverse audiences, including underrepresented communities and priority groups? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 300 words.

E.g. Ensuring your event is fully accessible and inclusive to everyone.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Clearly outlines meaningful opportunities for connection between the event and local communities.
- Demonstrates how community members can actively participate, contribute, and benefit from the event.

How will your event engage local communities and create meaningful opportunities for participation, contribution, and shared benefit? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

Examples of community groups to engage in your event include: Aboriginal community, LGBTIQA+, International students, multicultural communities, people facing economic barriers, older adults, etc.

SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Demonstrates contribution to positive social outcomes, such as education, wellbeing, and community cohesion.
- Integrates sustainable practices aligned with recognised standards, including the [City of Melbourne Sustainable Event Guide](#).

How will your event contribute to positive social outcomes, such as education, wellbeing, community connection, or other benefits for participants and the broader community? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

What sustainable practices will you implement to minimise environmental impact and align with recognised standards, including the City of Melbourne Sustainable Event Guide? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

[City of Melbourne Sustainable Event Guide](#)

ALIGNMENT TO UN SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

The City of Melbourne has a [Commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#).

The 17 [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The Goals are a guiding framework to ensure our city achieves holistic sustainable development. We must play a role, and partner with others to address the challenges we all face, to ensure no one is left behind.

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Please select the ONE goal you believe your business event contributes to the most.

UN Sustainable Development Goals *

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ 1. No Poverty | ☐ 7. Affordable and Clean Energy | ☐ 13. Climate Action |
| ☐ 2. Zero Hunger | ☐ 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth | ☐ 14. Life Below Water |
| ☐ 3. Good Health and Well-being | ☐ 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure | ☐ 15. Life on Land |
| ☐ 4. Quality Education | ☐ 10. Reduce Inequalities | ☐ 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions |
| ☐ 5. Gender Equality | ☐ 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities | ☐ 17. Partnerships for the Goals |
| ☐ 6. Clean Water and Sanitation | ☐ 12. Responsible Consumption and Production | |

Briefly explain how your event aligns with the selected goal. *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

Capacity to Deliver (20%)

- Demonstrates financial viability and sustainability, with or without City of Melbourne funding, supported by a detailed event budget.
- Provides a clear and comprehensive business event project plan.
- Showcases strong organisational capability and relevant experience to successfully deliver the event.

Describe how your event will be funded and remain financially sustainable, regardless of City of Melbourne funding. *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

Attach a detailed event budget. *

Attach a file:

Ensure to include all sources of income, other sponsorships, ticket sales, etc. Do not include CoM sponsorship in your budget.

Describe your organisation's relevant experience, skills, and planning processes that will ensure the successful delivery of your event? *

Word count:

Must be no more than 300 words.

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Attach your event project plan. *

Attach a file:

Attach examples that demonstrate your organisation's relevant event delivery experience.

Attach a file:

5. Alignment to Priority Sectors (5%)

- Clearly demonstrates alignment with one or more of Melbourne's priority sectors as outlined in the [Council Plan 2025-29](#): health technology, education technology, sports technology, digital gaming, and climate technology.
- Shows how the event supports growth, innovation, and collaboration within these sectors.
- Business events that drive innovation in the experience economy priority sectors such as live music, hospitality and retail as per [Experience Melbourne 2028](#).

Select the priority sector most aligned with your event *

- ☐ Climate technology
- ☐ Health technology
- ☐ Education technology
- ☐ Digital gaming
- ☐ Sports technology
- ☐ Other industry sectors

If your event does not align with one of the five priority sectors listed above, identify the industry sector and explain how the event aligns with Council priorities and strategies. Include the specific Council strategy, plan, or policy your event supports, and be as specific as possible. *

Word count:

Must be no more than 200 words.

Sponsorship Request

* indicates a required field

Sponsorship request *

- ☐ Level 1 - \$4,000 up to \$7,000 | Attendance between 150 to 400 delegates
- ☐ Level 2 - \$7,001 up to \$10,000 | Attendance between 401 to 700 delegates
- ☐ Level 3 - \$10,001 up to \$15,000 | Attendance above 701 delegates

Sponsorship items

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Please note that funding must be directly related to the delivery and setup of the proposed event.

Refer to the Guidelines to review the 'What the program/City of Melbourne will not support' section. Items deemed ineligible will not be considered.

Be specific when describing the individual items and list the cost excluding GST.

Sponsorship items

\$

Expenditure items

Total Amount Requested

This number/amount is calculated.

Additional Information

* indicates a required field

Upload any additional supporting documentation here

Attach a file:

letter of support, additional promotional material, previous successful events, etc

Has your event previously received City of Melbourne sponsorship or funding through the Business Event Sponsorship Program? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

How did you hear about the Business Event Sponsorship Program?

- ☐ City of Melbourne website
☐ Business in Melbourne newsletter
☐ Other City of Melbourne newsletter
☐ Social Media (City of Melbourne Facebook or LinkedIn)
☐ Internet search
☐ I'm a previous sponsorship applicant/recipient
☐ Other:

Do you wish to receive updates on grants, sponsorships and other business support? *

- ☐ Yes

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☐ No

By selecting yes, you consent to receive City of Melbourne news and updates related to grants, sponsorship, business support or other initiatives that may benefit your business.

Which years did you receive sponsorship? *

Declaration by applicant

* indicates a required field

Privacy

The City of Melbourne is committed to protecting your privacy. The information requested on this form is being collected by City of Melbourne for the purpose of assisting with the assessment of applications for grants and sponsorship. All information collected is securely stored in Smartygrants and City of Melbourne computer systems. The personal information will be disclosed to assessment panel members for the purpose of assessing your application. It will not be disclosed to any other external party without your consent, unless required or authorised by law. If the personal information is not collected, Council may have difficulties in contacting you in a timely manner in relation to your application. If you wish to alter any of the personal information you have supplied to City of Melbourne, please contact Council via telephone +61 3 9658 9658 or email businessfunding@melbourne.vic.gov.au

By submitting an application you consent to council publishing the recommended/successful applicant's name, project name and description and amount funded on our website. This information may also be used for promoting the City of Melbourne's grant program more generally.

I will inform the City of Melbourne if key details such as date(s) of the event, the location or the programming change before I am notified of the outcome of my application *

☐ Yes

I confirm that the information contained in this application is to the best of my knowledge true and accurate. I understand that providing false and misleading information is a serious offence. *

☐ Yes

Declaration

Name of authorised person *

Position *

Organisation name *

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Date *

Must be a date and between 1/10/2026 and 20/10/2026.

Feedback

Thank you for applying to the Business Event Sponsorship Program 2027.

We are seeking your feedback on the application process. Please spare a minute to complete the following questions.

How clear and helpful did you find the program guidelines?

Was any part of the application process unclear or difficult to complete?

Do you have any suggestions for improving the application process, application form or any other comments on the Business Event Sponsorship Program?