



Conference ADVANTAGE

Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre



gold | convention and
coast | exhibition centre



WHAT IS THE CONFERENCE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM?

Business events are an important contributor to Australia's visitor economy, attracting high-yield domestic and international travellers who spend more than average on accommodation, food, services and experiences.

In 2025, visitors travelling for business events spent \$17.2 billion in Australia during their trips. Business events also make a significant contribution to the Gold Coast economy, profiling Queensland Universities and contributing to employment by attracting hundreds of thousands of delegates each year.

The Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre's Conference Advantage Program helps promote the Gold Coast as a destination for international business and academic events by providing grants to support individuals' attendance at international association conferences.

GCCEC seeks to attract international conferences that align with Trade and Investment Queensland's 2032 strategy and Tourism and Events Queensland's priority sectors. These include Biofutures, Food and Agribusiness, Advanced Manufacturing, Circular Economy, and Biomedical, Life Sciences and Health. Attracting conferences within these sectors will help strengthen Queensland's international profile, support knowledge exchange and collaboration, and contribute to the state's long-term economic and industry development.

Through this financial support, recipients are offered an opportunity to advance their own professional development and the profile of their institute, company or employer, whilst acting as a global champion for our city and venue.

Grant winners have attended conferences such as:

- International Symposium on Paediatric Pain - **Vancouver, Canada**
- International Shoulder and Elbow Congress - **Rome, Italy**
- Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine International Society - **Hong Kong, China**

OPPORTUNITY

- Raise personal and professional profile and that of the institution
- Broaden skillset and industry knowledge
- Achieve careers goals, whilst creating important connections
- Encourage international collaboration and network globally
- Drive economic benefit to our city and region





APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applicants are invited to nominate an international association conference that has the potential to be hosted at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) in future years.

PART A- Qualification Process

The GCCEC team will assess each application to determine whether there is a realistic opportunity to bid to host the conference on the Gold Coast in the future.

To be eligible, the nominated conference and applicant should meet the following criteria:

- Attract more than 400 in-person delegates per day and run for at least three days.
- Present an opportunity to bid within the next two to three years.
- Have a realistic opportunity to return to Australia in the next 5 – 10 years. Conferences that have been held in Australia or New Zealand recently may be less likely to return to the region in the near term.
- Align, where possible, with the key priority sectors identified by Tourism and Events Queensland, Trade and Investment Queensland and Experience Gold Coast.
- Provide an opportunity for the applicant to engage with and advocate to board members, committee members or other key decision-makers within the international association.
- Demonstrate the applicant's willingness to actively support and champion a future bid for the Gold Coast and GCCEC.
- Applicants must be Australian citizens or hold a visa that permits them to work in Australia for at least the next 10 years.

**If you are not certain if the conference qualifies, contact GCCEC to discuss.*





FAQS

Who is eligible to apply for the grant?

Professional and academic staff are eligible to apply, provided their application meets the program's selection criteria.

How do I apply for a grant?

Applicants must first complete Part A of the GCCEC Conference Advantage Application Form. If the nominated conference meets the initial eligibility criteria, applicants will be invited to complete Part B.

Applicants who progress through the assessment process may be required to attend an interview with the GCCEC team, either in person at GCCEC or via Teams.

Do I need to participate in the bid process for the conference I am applying for?

Yes. Grant recipients are expected to actively participate in advocating for and supporting a future bid to bring the conference to the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Recipients should be willing to engage with relevant board members, association representatives and other key stakeholders within their network. The GCCEC team will provide support throughout the process.

When do I need to spend the grant?

Grant funds can be used immediately or within 18 months of the grant being awarded.

What does the grant cover?

Grants of \$6,000 can be used to cover eligible costs associated with attending the nominated conference, including:

- Flights and accommodation
- Conference registration
- Membership fees associated with the conference or international association

How will the grant funds be processed?

Eligible expenses will be reimbursed post travel and upon submission of receipts for expenses redeemed.

- A post-conference report is required
- Any costs incurred above the approved grant amount are the responsibility of the applicant.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Eligibility of selected conferences must be approved by the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre.
2. Applicants must be over 18 and an Australian citizen or hold a visa that permits them to work in Australia for at least the next 10 years.
3. On approval by GCCEC of Application Form Part A, applicants will be invited to prepare a submission addressing the questions in Application Form Part B.
4. Applicants will be required to attend a meeting in person, or online.
5. Successful applicants will receive the GCCEC Conference Advantage monies to the value of \$6,000 to be used to attend the international conference. The grant money can be used to cover flights, accommodation, conference membership and conference registration.
6. Additional costs over and above the grant value will be covered at the applicant's own expense.
7. The grant monies will be reimbursed after conference travel and upon producing receipts as well as providing a written report detailing the conference experience.
8. The decision of the judging panel is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. Applicants may request feedback on their performance after the winners have been announced.
9. Recipients agree to be included in promotion materials for the GCCEC Conference Advantage Program.
10. The conference must be an international association conference.