




DELIVERING INNOVATION,
KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE:
The Role of Business Events

Professor Leo Jago (University of Nottingham, UK)
Professor Margaret Deery (Victoria University, Australia)



“Although there is a growing recognition within government and the community that business events make a broader contribution to the host destination than simply tourism benefits, the measures used to assess the value of business events still focus almost exclusively on tourism.

As a consequence of this narrow focus, opportunities to recognise and derive maximum benefit for Australia from business events are likely to be missed. This paper examines the broader value of business events and seeks to identify opportunities to leverage this value beyond the obvious economic benefits to the host destination”.

Delivering Innovation, Knowledge and Performance

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Contents

Glossary	2
Recommendations	3
Report	4
1. Rationale	4
2. Background	4
3. Development of the Business Events Industry	5
4. Business Events and Tourism: why the Nexus?	6
5. The Challenges of Moving Beyond Tourism	6
6. The Broader Value of Business Events	7
7. Fostering Innovation	9
8. The Role of Universities	13
9. Outcomes of Business Events	14
Examples	16
10. Conclusions	19
References	20

Glossary

BECA defines a Business Event as: Any public or private activity consisting of a minimum of 15 persons with a common interest or vocation, held in a specific venue or venues, and hosted by an organisation (or organisations). This may include (but not limited to): conferences, conventions, symposia, congresses, incentive group events, marketing events, special celebrations, seminars, courses, public or trade shows, product launches, exhibitions, company annual general meetings, corporate retreats, study tours or training programs.

AACB	Association of Australian Convention Bureaux
ABES	Australian National Business Events Strategy
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
BE	Business Events
BECA	Business Events Council of Australia
CVBs	Convention & Visitors Bureaux
CTSR	Centre for Tourism and Services Research
CEMI	Convention, Exposition and Meeting Industry
ERA	Excellence in Research for Australia Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFC	Global Financial Crisis
ICCA	International Congress and Convention Association
JMIC	Joint Meetings Industry Council
MICE	Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions
MCVB	Melbourne Convention & Visitors Bureau
NBES	National Business Events Study
NCHECR	National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
R&D	Research and Development
TSA	Tourism Satellite Account
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
VECCI	Victorian Employer Chamber of Commerce and Industry



Recommendations

- As fostering innovation is such an important national building endeavour and business events have a key role to play in this activity, strategies need to be identified that can best leverage the role of business events, particularly in key industry sectors targeted for growth by government.
- Given the view that the impacts of business events are largely synonymous with tourism, there needs to be greater efforts made to raise awareness within key government portfolios and industry sectors as to the broader value and potential of business events.
- The broader-based benefits of business events should not be referred to as being 'intangible' as this implies that they don't really exist.
- Whilst the business events industry is making solid efforts to more effectively quantify the 'beyond tourism benefits' of business events, this activity should not be seen as a reason to delay the introduction of strategies to enhance these benefits.
- At a time when Australian universities are under substantial pressure to cut costs, a campaign should be launched to highlight the important role that business events play in helping researchers create and disseminate innovation. The benefits to individual universities from hosting international research conferences should also be highlighted.
- More effort should be made to encourage associations and companies to assess the ROI of the business events they stage so that the outcomes from these events are captured and there is wider recognition of the benefits that can be derived.

Delivering Innovation, Knowledge and Performance

The Role of Business Events

1. Rationale

Although there is a growing recognition within government and the community that business events make a broader contribution to the host destination than simply tourism benefits, the measures used to assess the value of business events still focus almost exclusively on tourism. As a consequence of this narrow focus, opportunities to derive maximum benefit for Australia from business events are likely to be missed. This paper examines the broader value of business events and seeks to identify opportunities to leverage this value beyond the obvious short term economic benefits to the host destination.

2. Background

Internationally, the business events industry has demonstrated enormous growth over the last decade in terms of the number of events that are staged each year, the total number of attendees and the investment in business events infrastructure. Business events are quite distinct from the sporting, cultural and community events known as ‘festivals and major events’ that are now so important for many destinations even though business events sometimes get caught up in the media hype surrounding major events. Whilst business events may sometimes run in connection with major events, they operate quite differently, draw on different resources and produce substantially different outcomes.

For an industry to be taken seriously, it must be able to produce credible numbers to show its economic contribution to the economy. This is why the development of Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSAs) was so important for tourism as it provided a means by which tourism could demonstrate to government the contribution it makes to the economy. TSAs represented a ‘coming of age’ for tourism and showed that the tourism industry makes a much larger contribution to the economy than many traditional industries that get substantial government support. This outcome helped justify investment in new tourism infrastructure and increased government support for the promotion of tourism.

The business events industry faced the same dilemma as tourism in that few outside the industry had an appreciation of its value to the economy. Given that the industry requires substantial public sector investment to underpin the infrastructure needed for the industry to compete in a global market and for marketing support internationally, it was essential that the industry could demonstrate to government its economic value. In relation to the infrastructure needed for the business events industry, most state governments have invested large sums, particularly in the provision of high quality convention centres.

An important step in Australia in helping to understand the size of the business events industry was the National Business Events Study (Deery, Jago, Fredline and Dwyer 2005) that demonstrated that Australia’s business event industry generated expenditure of \$17.3 billion per year. Despite the fact that this figure is based on 2003 and 2004 data and is thus now somewhat dated, it is still quoted in most submissions and publications related to the industry. It is important to note that the National Business Events Study (NBES) only examined the tourism dimension of the business events Industry and makes no claim to represent the industry’s broader value.

In the National Business Events Strategy for Australia (ABES), commissioned by the Federal Minister for Tourism, The Hon. Martin Ferguson AM MP, that was released in late 2008, “business events deliver wider benefits in networking and business generation...[that]...arguably provide the most enduring advantages for the nation” (pii). Not only is there a pressing need to update the results of the NBES, but it is crucial that a more holistic value of the industry be determined in order to demonstrate the industry’s true contribution.

Estimating the value of the business events industry based simply on its tourism dimension is not unique to Australia; in other countries that have sought to estimate the value of

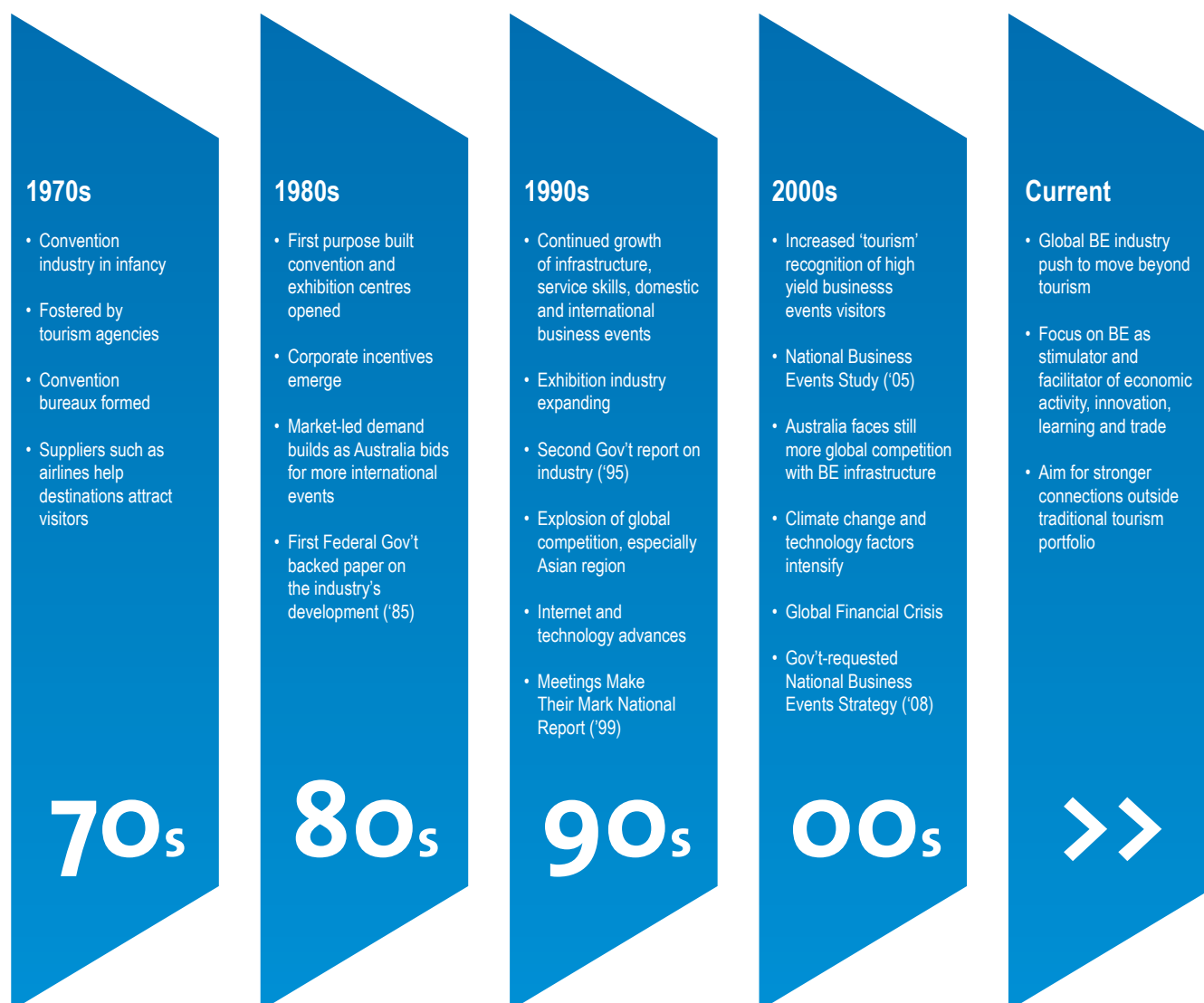
1970 / 1980 / 1990 / 2000 Current

the business events industry, the same approach has been adopted. Not only does this approach grossly underestimate the contribution that business events make, but it distracts attention away from the key outcomes of business events and as a consequence, opportunities to leverage the development potential of business events are lost.

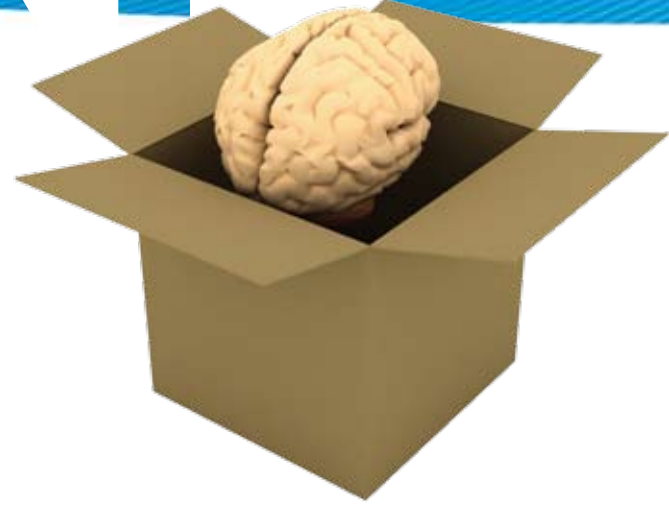
3. The Development of the Business Events Industry

The following timeline (Figure 1) presents a brief overview of the development of the business events industry which has really only developed in any substantial way since the 1970's.

Figure 1: Brief Overview of the Australian Business Events Industry History



‘MIND



4. Business Events and Tourism: Why the Nexus?

Business events have had a long association with tourism dating back to at least the nineteenth century where they were seen as an important way to promote destinations and fill hotel rooms. These were seen as the key reasons for the creation of Convention and Visitors Bureaux (CVB). The following quote from the *Detroit Journal* newspaper journalist Carmichael in 1896 exemplifies the nexus between conventions and tourism and helps explain the reason for the first CVB being opened in Detroit:

‘During the past few years Detroit has built up a name as a convention city, delegates coming from hundreds of miles, manufacturers holding their yearly consultations around our hotels...’

(Carmichael in Ford and Peeper, 2007: 1105).

Closer to the Australian scene, Carlsen (1995) quoting Sandilands (1993) reported that meetings, conventions, incentives and events have been described as ‘the seams of gold that run through Australian tourism’, citing the higher delegate expenditure and longer length of stay (particularly when compared to all other tourists) as being positive economic indicators of the benefit of business events to tourism. More recent support for this argument can be found in the National Business Events Strategy for Australia (2008) with comments such as “the world has woken up to the fact that the business event delegate is the most lucrative visitor” (pii). Largely as a consequence of the link between business events and tourism, government responsibility for business events in many countries has resided within the relevant Tourism Department.

Given this connection, the contribution made by business events has focused on the tourism contribution, something with which Tourism Departments are most familiar. The other

advantage of this alignment with tourism is that the impact can be calculated relatively easily and since it is a short term benefit, the result can be determined very soon after the event has taken place. As the performance of Tourism Departments is generally assessed based on visitor numbers and visitor expenditure, the same measures have been applied to business events.

5. The Challenges of Moving Beyond Tourism

Although many within the business events industry have long recognised that the benefit of business events extends well beyond tourism, the fact that government support for business events, particularly for promotional activities has generally come through Tourism Departments has made it difficult for the industry to extend outside tourism. Little work has been done to quantify the ‘beyond tourism’ benefits of business events although some work has recently commenced in this area. Mr Leigh Harry, President of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) stated that:

‘the meetings and events industry should rightly be thought of as a key component in the global knowledge economy, rather than as a branch of tourism. It’s all too rare that we are invited to sit at the main table when knowledge, education, scientific and medical advances are on the agenda, and spending a few days with visionary leaders from all sectors of business and academia reminded me of why we should be fighting for a permanent seat.’ (ICCA, October 2009)

SHIFT,

Whilst tourism is a major beneficiary of business events and the tourism industry makes a considerable investment in this sector, these benefits flow from the host organisation's decision to stage a live event to achieve specific business outcomes. Business events are key tools in the knowledge creation and dissemination processes that are so fundamental to underpinning innovation.

Such outcomes tend to have longer timelines and are more difficult to quantify and as a consequence, the focus has tended to be on the tourism impacts for which there are well recognised evaluation techniques.

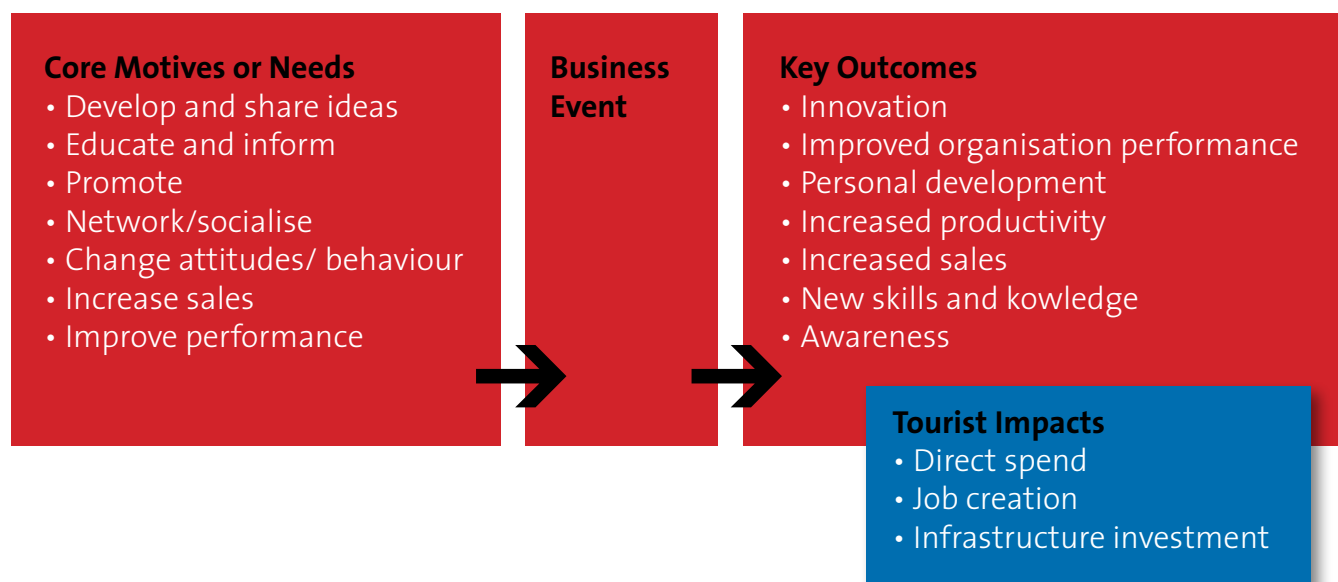
If the business events industry is to realise its true potential, there needs to be a 'mind shift' on the part of government, destination and event managers such that there is true focus on the key outcomes of business events, which relate to knowledge creation and dissemination and performance improvement. Strategies can then be crafted and implemented to maximise the benefits that business events generate.

6. The Broader Value of Business Events

Whilst there are many benefits that can flow from staging business events, it is crucial that these benefits be identified and then quantified in a fashion that will be accepted by government treasuries. This is the key difficulty in that it is hard to quantify many of these benefits in a way that attributes them specifically to the staging of an event. The fact that these benefits are difficult to quantify in a meaningful fashion runs the risk that they are simply ignored in estimates of overall value. As argued in MICE International (Mar/Apr. 2007), meetings and conventions are much more than just visitor spending "and all too often it is easy to lose sight of the importance of the role they play in business, trade, investment and professional development".

There are many reasons to hold a business event and Figure 2 attempts to overview some of the key drives/motives and outcomes.

Figure 2: Key Motives and Outcomes for Business Events





It can be seen in Figure 2 that the tourism industry is a financial beneficiary of the business event that is staged rather than a driving force for staging the event in the first instance. Despite the fact that some in the tourism industry seem to believe that events are staged for the purpose of filling hotel rooms, this is just a consequence of an event that was held for another purpose. It is not surprising, therefore, that the tourism impacts are seen by so many to be the key measure of the impact of a business event.

However, over the last two years in particular, there have been a number of studies that have started to explore the broader value of business events. One of the most comprehensive studies resulted in a report prepared by Oxford Economics (2009) that sought to determine “the relationship of business travel to company performance” (2009, 4).

This study was based largely upon surveys of corporate executives and business travelers and found that “for every dollar invested in business travel, companies realise \$12.50 in incremental revenue” (p4) and that “the average business in the US would forfeit 17% of its profits in the first year of eliminating business travel” (p4).

In an attempt to identify the range of benefits that flow from business events and to quantify these benefits, the Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCVB) has commissioned a world-first three year study involving four large business events. Key stakeholders associated with these events are being surveyed at the end of the event and at six monthly intervals after each event for three years to track the benefits of the events. A three year period has been chosen for this

study as it is anticipated that some of the broader based benefits may take some time to be realised. This is the first example that has been found of an attempt to identify and attribute the broader based longer term benefits back to specific events.

In a briefing paper released by the global peak body of the meetings industry, the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC, 2009), entitled “*Key Messages for the Meetings Industry*”¹ a wide range of benefits derived from business events were identified. Aside from the more obvious economic impact generated as a result of delegate expenditure, the benefits listed in this paper that “are critical to the business, scientific, professional, educational and cultural life and development of a community” were:

1. Meetings attract investment by attracting an often influential audience of participants, and creating opportunities for showcasing local products, services, and investment opportunities;
2. Meetings enhance professional development by bringing regional and international expertise into the community where it is accessible to local professionals.
3. Meetings enhance science and technology, which helps generate new forms of technology itself, improves understanding and access to it, and helps improve local knowledge and skills by bringing outside information and technology into the host community and providing a vehicle for local businesses and professionals to access the latest developments in their respective fields.

¹ “Meetings” is a generic term adopted by a number of international industry bodies to cover the business events sector.

Over the last couple of decades, Australia has fallen well behind most developed countries in terms of the funds allocated to research and development (R&D).



4. Meetings promote cultural exchange by providing new forums for cultural exchange and new opportunities to expose local culture to national and international audiences.

It is argued in this paper that the most important outcome of business events relates to the third point in the above list which can be termed as the creation and dissemination of innovation. Although the focus in the above list is on the host destination, innovation created and disseminated at business events often have applications well beyond the host destination. Failure to recognise the important role that business events can play underpinning innovation greatly reduces the contribution that they can make to both the host destination and society in general.

7. Fostering Innovation

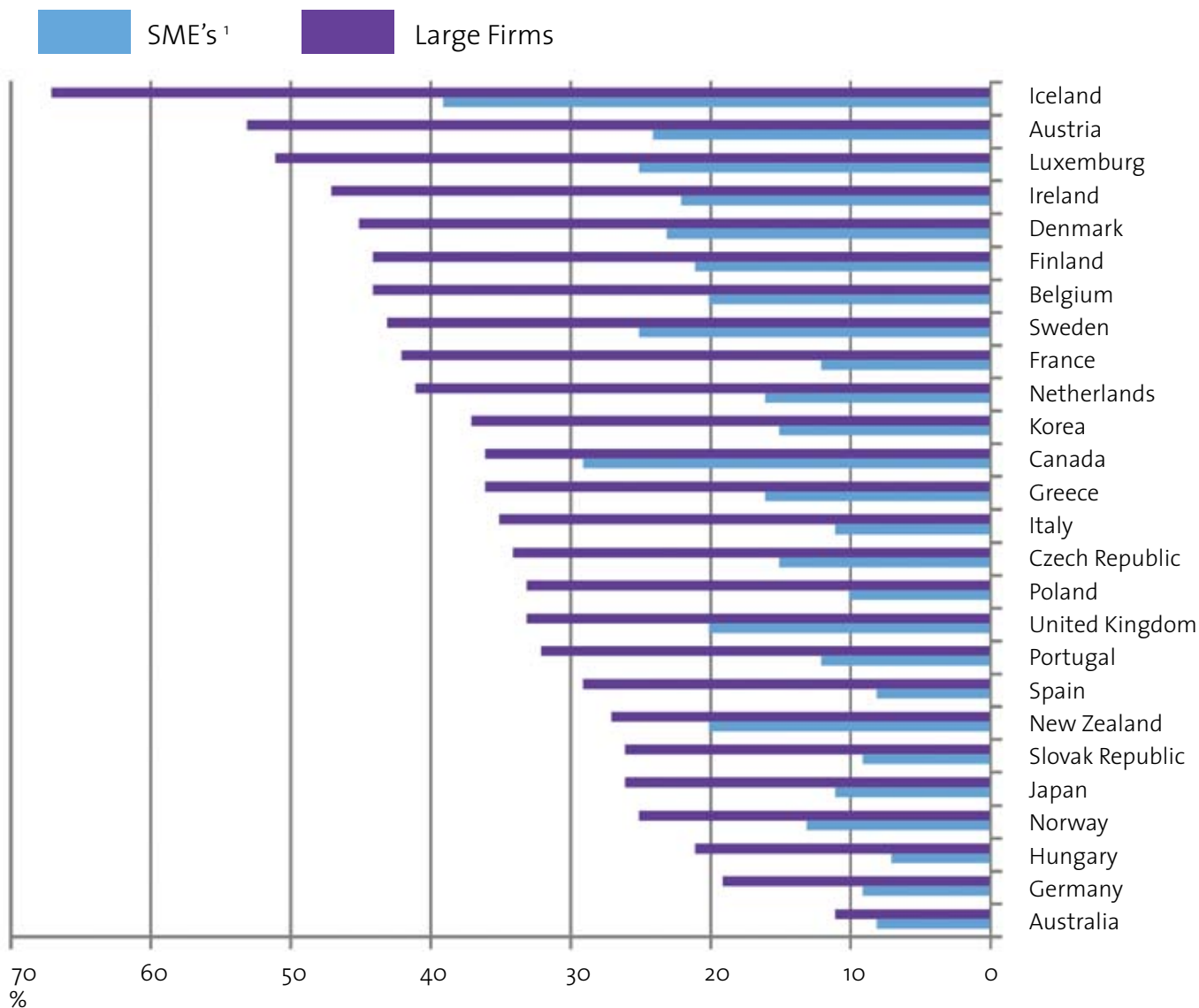
It has become widely recognised that for countries to be competitive globally, they must be seen to be innovative and it is crucial that governments provide the necessary support to foster innovation and capitalise on the outcomes of innovation. Over the last couple of decades, Australia has fallen well behind most developed countries in terms of the funds allocated to research and development (R&D).

“China’s R&D spending has grown by 22 per cent a year since 1996, compared to 8 per cent a year in Australia. Australia spends 2 per cent of GDP on research and development. Austria, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Switzerland, Taiwan, and the United States spend more than 2.5 per cent; Finland, Japan, South Korea, and Sweden spend more than 3 per cent; Israel spends more than 4 per cent.” (Powering Ideas 2009. 3).

A consequence of Australia’s failure to keep pace in its spending on R&D has been that over the last eight years, “Australia has slipped from fifth to eighteenth in the World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Index” (*Powering Ideas* 2009. 2). Figures 3 and 4 highlight the fact that Australia’s performance in relation to innovation compares poorly with other countries and this needs to be rectified if Australia is to be competitive on the world stage.

Whilst there are many definitions of innovation, the definition used by the Victorian Employer Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) in its recent Task Group Report seems most appropriate for this discussion. Innovation is defined as ‘the transformation and application of knowledge and ideas into something that creates or adds value’ (VECCI, 2009: 20). Such innovation can be either ‘breakthrough’ or ‘adaptive and adoptive’ with most innovation falling into the latter category according to VECCI (2009). >>

Figure 3: Firms with New-to-Market Innovations by Size, 2002-2004 ²



1. SMEs: 10-249 employees for European countries, Australia. 20-249 for Canada
2. Or nearest available years.

Source: OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard, 2007

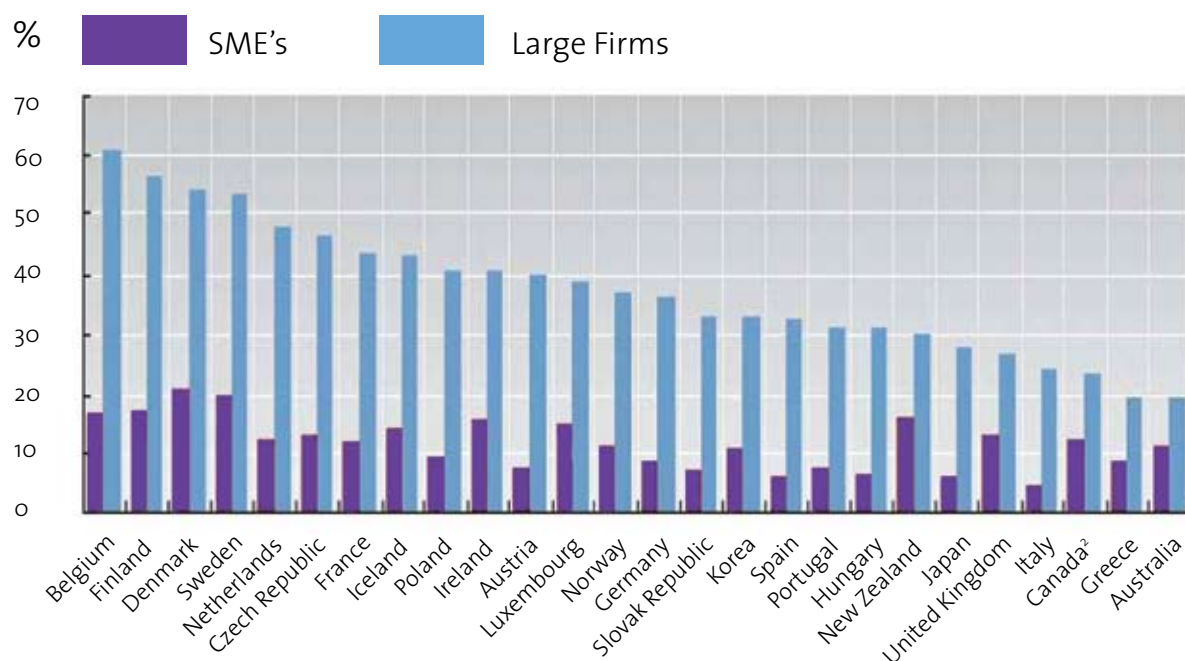
The Australian Government is seeking to rectify Australia's poor performance in terms of innovation with the release in 2009 of its report *Powering Ideas; An Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century*, which sets out the guidelines for innovation over the next ten years. In Minister Carr's Foreword to this report, he states that 'investing in innovation is also one of the most effective ways we can cushion Australia against the effects of the global downturn and accelerate recovery. It will simultaneously keep people in work today and generate jobs for the future' (p1). As Professor Roy Green (UTS) stated in a recent presentation, 'innovation is....

- More than science and technology
- Non-linear with multiple sources
- Incremental as well as breakthrough
- Aligned to both low tech and high tech industries
- Driven by collaboration not silos²

Powering Ideas (2009, 4) lists seven National Innovation Priorities that are set out in Table 1 (opposite), which provide a sense of where the Government's funding and focus will be:

² TA's Dreamtime Leaders Forum, Sydney, October 16, 2009

Figure 4: Firms Collaborating in Innovation by Size, 2002-2004 (as a percentage of all firms)



Source: Powering Ideas (2009)

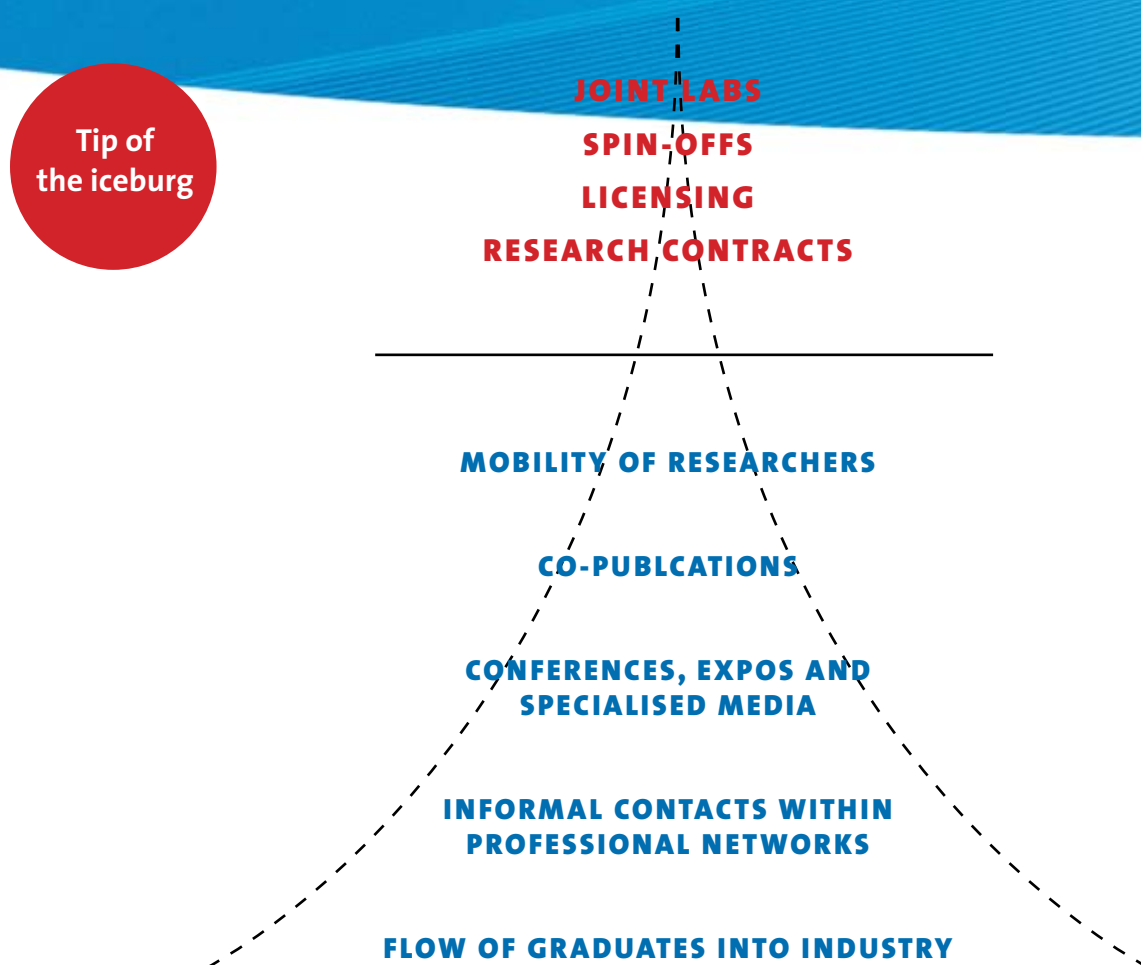
Table 1: National Priorities in Innovation

Priority	Description
1	Public research funding supports high-quality research that addresses national challenges and opens up new opportunities.
2	Australia has a strong base of skilled researchers to support the national research effort in both the public and private sectors.
3	The innovation system fosters industries of the future, securing value from the commercialisation of Australian research and development.
4	More effective dissemination of new technologies, processes, and ideas increases innovation across the economy, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises.
5	The innovation system encourages a culture of collaboration within the research sector and between researchers and industry.
6	Australian researchers and businesses are involved in more international collaborations on research and development.
7	The public and community sectors work with others in the innovation system to improve policy development and service delivery

As a major objective of business events is to provide opportunities to bring together researchers and practitioners to discuss and disseminate ideas, they can play a fundamental role in helping to foster innovation, indeed, they can be a driving force in this endeavour. Given this, it is clear that business events are important facilitators in helping Australia achieve its innovation objectives. As business events foster collaboration, enhance research skill development and provide forums for the dissemination of outcomes, they are essential ingredients for achieving priorities 2 – 7 listed in Table 1.

Whilst there is some recognition of the important role that business events play in underpinning formal collaboration in industry and science as well as fostering innovations that occur between industry and academe (see Figures 5 & 6), there is little evidence to indicate that governments have formally recognised this role. For business events to realise their potential in relation to creating and disseminating innovation, it is vital that governments recognise this role and establish the appropriate support mechanisms for business events. Strategies are needed to more effectively engage government in this activity. >>

Figure 5: Industry—science relationships (Figure 7.2 in *Powering Innovation*)



Source: *Benchmarking Industry-Science Relationships* (Paris: OECD, 2002).

The work undertaken by Maskell, Bathelt and Malberg (2006) from the Danish Research Unit for Industrial Dynamics examines the role of trade fairs, conventions and meetings in knowledge building and knowledge transfer. These authors argue that conventions, meetings and trade fairs are examples of temporary clusters which are ‘short-lived hotspots of intense knowledge exchange, network building and idea generation’ (p. i). In focusing on trade fairs, they suggest that the information exchanges lead to new lines of thinking and provide scope for creating new and profitable combinations of existing ideas.

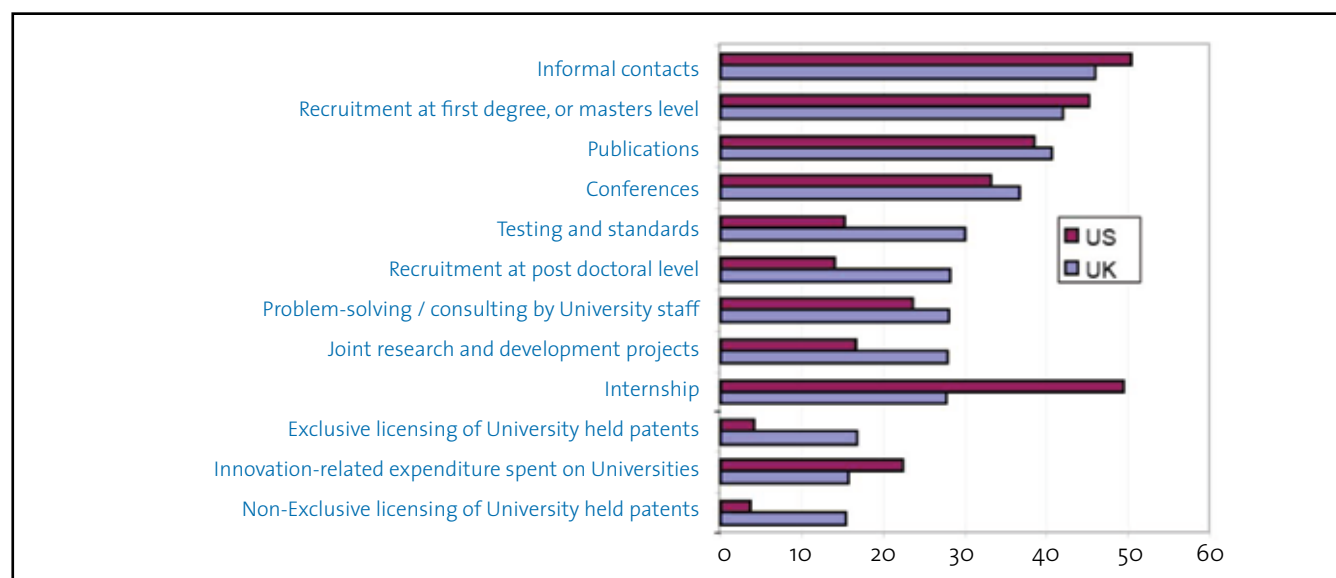
Trade fairs, as temporary clusters, provide an important opportunity for firms exploring suitable collaborative partners in joint ventures and through consecutive trade fairs and conventions, potential partners get to know each other and

establish a level of trust. Maskell et al (2006) argue that commonalities that are developed over time, lead to the ‘formation of latent networks that do not have any immediate economic value....tentative initial contacts might gradually develop into strong and durable partnerships’ (p. 7).

Business events bring people together in face-to-face mode in order to provide a stimulating environment in which innovation can be created and outcomes disseminated. As Harry (2009) stated:

‘human interaction, especially face-to-face interaction, drives innovation and inspiration. Accidental connections between leading thinkers studying different topics can unlock seemingly intractable challenges and insoluble puzzles’.

Figure 6: University—industry interactions contributing to innovation (% firms)



Source: A. Cosh, A. Hughes and R. Lester *UK PLC Just How Innovative Are We?* Cambridge MIT Institute 2005

8. Role of Universities

As universities house much of Australia's research capacity, they play a fundamental role in the creation of innovation. There is a strong tradition of academics attending conferences to present their research findings, enter into debate on research methods, findings and conclusions, and explore opportunities for collaboration. Conferences are a stimulating environment for academics to 'road test' their ideas and to learn from the presentations of others. At conferences that also involve representatives from industry as well as academe, there are potential opportunities for the uptake of knowledge by industry partners and for research grants to be provided for subsequent research endeavours, which is now the 'life blood' for universities. Connections made at conferences can also potentially underpin commercialisation activities for the research.

Australian universities are about to embark on a comprehensive assessment of their research activities across all fields in a process known as the Excellence in Research for Australia Initiative (ERA). This is based on the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) that was introduced in the UK about a decade ago and whilst there are likely to be some very strong benefits from a comprehensive assessment of research performance, there are already some negative impacts appearing consistent

with what occurred in the UK. Most of the assessment of research is based upon the standing of the international journals in which an academic's work is published and little recognition is given to conferences. Academics are now under much pressure to produce high quality journal articles and conference attendance is often seen, incorrectly, as a distraction from this activity. Given the importance that conferences play in fostering research excellence via debate and discussion, reduced emphasis on conferences has very serious long term ramifications for knowledge creation and dissemination.

Whilst advances in communication technology allow academics to communicate easily with a wide range of other academics all around the world, these technologies don't replace the key benefits that can be derived from face-to-face discussion and debate that occurs at a conference. Diminution of the role of conferences for academics risks reducing the contributions made to innovation. When an Australian university hosts an international conference in a particular field of research, it helps position that university as a key player in the field. There are also substantial potential benefits for the host destination in having international experts in the field visit the region in that it provides access for locals to expertise that would otherwise be largely inaccessible. >>

Business Events Pipeline

9. Outcomes of Business Events

There are a diverse range of types of business events that involve different stakeholders and produce a wide variety of key outcomes. Whilst the development and dissemination of innovation have been shown to be key outcomes for business events, there are many other outcomes involving improved personal and organisation performance for example. The following diagram (Figure 7) is intended to illustrate the range of outcomes that can be produced by business events. Although the lists contained within this diagram are not exhaustive, they do indicate that business events have substantial potential to add value for individuals, organisations as well as the host destination including its government.

Whilst some of these benefits are difficult to quantify and attribute specifically to attendance at a particular event, they are nonetheless real. To classify these benefits as 'intangibles' as occurred in the National Business Events Strategy for Australia (2008) suggests that these benefits are not real because they can't easily be measured.

Aside from the role of business events in helping to create and disseminate innovation as has already been discussed, the knowledge delivered and contacts made at business events are also very important in helping to enhance individual and organisation performance. Such improvements can be due to personal development, sales leads, improved operating procedures and cost minimisation to name just a few.

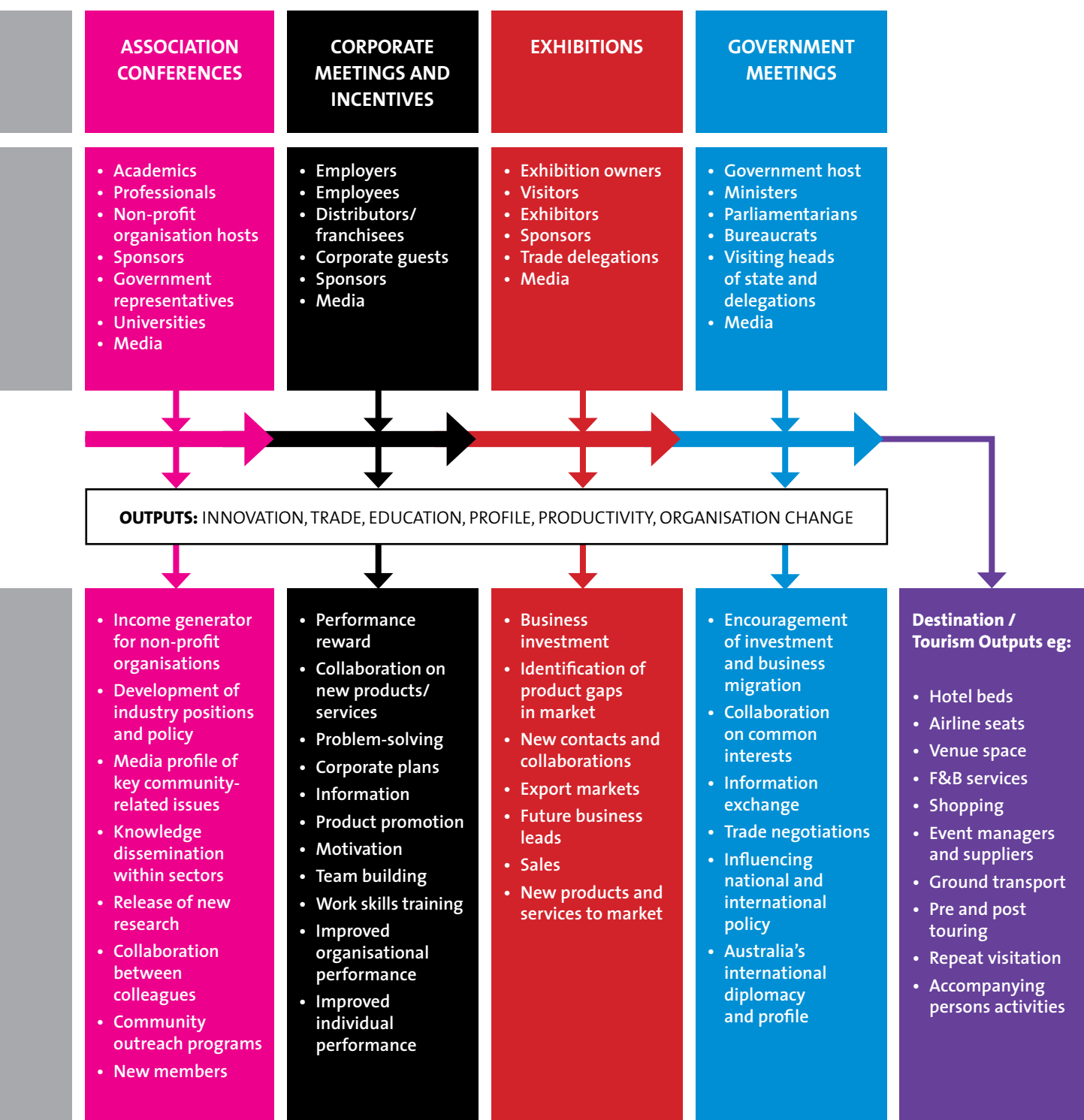
With companies being forced to review carefully all expenditure items, there is now appropriate pressure to assess the real value that individuals and organisations derive from their participation in business events. Techniques such as ROI (return on investment) are being used more frequently to ensure that acceptable returns are being received from involvement in business events. For the ROI process to be undertaken, clear objectives must be set for each business event and action must be taken to determine whether the objectives were achieved. This action greatly enhances the prospects of improved performance being achieved.

CATEGORIES

PARTICIPANTS

OUTCOMES

Figure 7: *Business Events Pipeline*



Listed below in Figure 8 are some examples of the benefits that have been derived from business events over the last few years to help illustrate this discussion. These examples show that business events deliver a range of benefits beyond the well recognised tourism benefits.

Research Collaborations and Grants

International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2007), Sydney

- According to the Director of the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research at the University of NSW, the profile and success of IAS 2007 was a factor in the subsequent increase in Government funding for HIV AIDS research.
- This increase included a \$17.7 million grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council awarded to the University of NSW in Feb 2008 to advance understanding of HIV and hepatitis C - the largest grant in the university's history. In addition, NCHECR received one-off enhancement grants from the Office of Science and Medical Research of New South Wales.

The main objective of the conference was to provide extensive networking opportunities to delegates and deliver the most relevant information on all matters concerning hydrogen and fuel cell technology. Positive outcomes directly linked to the conference included:

- Australia to be represented on the Partnership for Advancing the Transition to Hydrogen (Australian nominee for board membership).
- Potential research alliances between the University of Queensland, and CNR-TAE (Italy) on reforming of ethanol.
- Potential research alliance between RMIT and the Gas Technology Institute on unitised regenerative fuel cells.
- Fuel cell educational kits that were provided for the forum by Heliocentris are to be retained in Australia by the Institute of Energy for educational activities throughout the country.

- Research Collaborations
- Contacts & Relationships
- Product Development

17th World Hydrogen Energy Conference 2008, Brisbane

Community Education, Skill Development and Networking

29th International Symposium of Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation 2009, Brisbane

- A survey of delegates at this symposium was undertaken and respondents were asked to provide thoughts on what was the impact and legacy of the symposium (immediate and ongoing outcomes). The strongest themes were around networking (with both new and old contacts) and exposure to information and expertise from around the world, and the ability of the symposium to engage and enthuse both old hands and new entrants to the "turtle world". Personal outcomes reported as a result of the symposium included receiving advice, ideas and encouragement relating to postgraduate studies, feeling part of a community, finding a job, finding an employee, learning technical skills, and accessing technology products. Attendees noted the participation of Indigenous communities and effects on their own awareness of related presentations. Most important was the knowledge obtained by all participants in the management and care of the turtle populations around the world.

- Following the Congress, obesity became an issue for governments. This helped the University of Sydney get funding for a new Centre for Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease (CODCD) to be built by 2013 (total cost \$360 million). "The world class centre will create jobs and attract leading researchers from all over the world as well as provide ongoing opportunities well into the future." (Professor Caterson, Foundation Director of the Institute of Obesity, Nutrition & Exercise, University of Sydney)

Employment Opportunities Public Education

International Congress on Obesity 2006, Sydney

Media profile of key community-related issues

National Lutherans Principals Conference 2009, Canberra

- "With regard to putting us on the map politically, our conference achieved everything we hoped for and more. We had 155 political and government representatives attend our conference dinner. The event significantly raised our profile and provided valuable strategic lobbying opportunities." (Dennis Mulherin, Chair of National Lutheran Principals, Conference Planning Committee)

EXAMPLES

Figure 8 Examples of Business Event Benefits Beyond Tourism

Sales and Sales Leads

Reed Exhibition Gift Fairs
2008-2009

- The following sales were made at the Reed Exhibition Gift Fairs with substantial sales leads and income generation occurring after the Fairs:
 - Melbourne February Gift Fair 2009: \$10.4 million at fair and \$10.5 million post the fair
 - Sydney February Gift Fair 2009: \$72.4 million at fair and \$47.6 million after
 - Brisbane July Gift Fair 2009: \$13.6 million at fair
 - Melbourne August Gift Fair 2008: \$91.1 million at fair and \$96.3 million post event
 - Sydney September Gift Fair 2008: \$25.4 million at fair and \$24.1 million post event
- Some of these exhibitions provide the 'life-blood' for the sector: indeed, the sector would struggle to exist without the business generated by the exhibitions.

- Around 70 people including Australia's leading authorities in pain medicine and consumer groups representing chronic pain sufferers met at ANZCA's Melbourne headquarters on September 17 to work on a national coordinated approach to managing chronic pain. The meeting was an important step in the lead up to developing a national pain strategy prior to holding a National Pain Summit in Canberra in March 2010. The National Pain Summit is being led by ANZCA and the Faculty of Pain Medicine, Australian Pain Society, Chronic Pain Australia, in collaboration with inaugural supporters' MBF Foundation and the Pain Management Research Institute, to minimise the personal and economic burden of pain in Australia.

Government Involvement and Policies

National Pain Summit –
Leaders Meeting 2009,
Melbourne

Business Investment

XXIXth International
Congress of
Ophthalmology 2002,
Sydney

- Associate Professor Frank Martin AM chaired the XXIXth International Congress of Ophthalmology held in 2002. In recent years, the meeting had been sliding, losing delegates and sponsor support. It came to Sydney, ran exceptionally well, setting new standards. It also made a financial surplus of \$1.8 million. One third went to the world body and the balance of \$1.2 million stayed in Australia and was used to set up the Eye Foundation. This fund is professionally managed and is used for research and to train ophthalmologists locally and in our region. Australia's hosting of the world congress made this possible.

- APPEA 2009 lifted the Northern Territory's profile within the International oil and gas community and the wider national and international media. This is significant as Darwin positions itself as a oil and gas hub in the region. The Northern Territory was able promote its oil and gas capabilities to a relevant audience.
- The Northern Territory Government took the opportunity to meet with key industry stakeholders that were attracted to Darwin for APPEA: these meetings established new relationships and strengthened existing ones.

Encouragement of investment and business migration

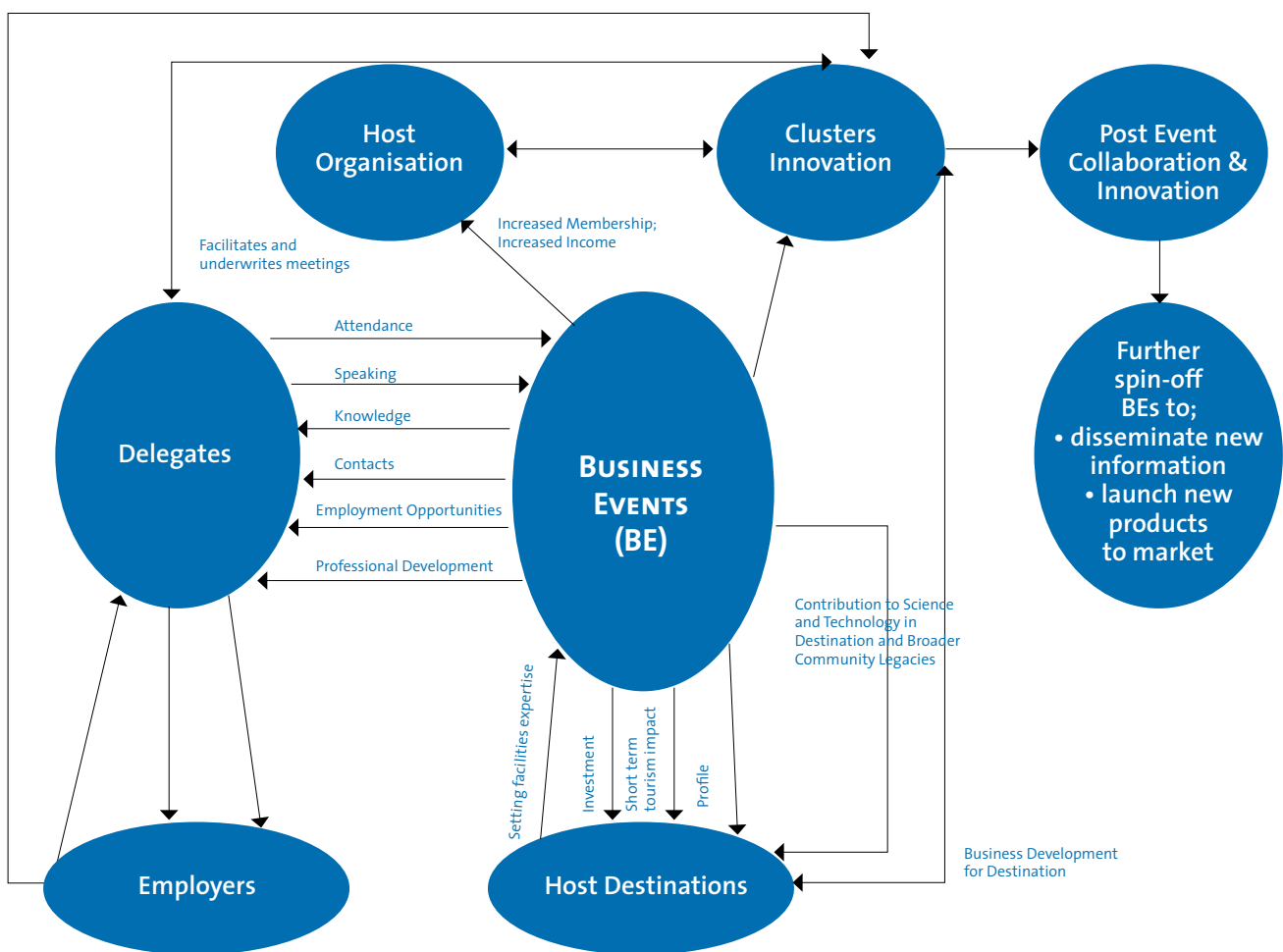
APPEA 2009, Darwin

Community Outreach

46th International Association
of Women Police Annual
Training Conference 2008,
Darwin

- Jo Foley, Detective Superintendent Major Crime Division and convenor of the conference confirmed the strong professional development outcome of the conference. An additional benefit was the extensive community engagement with the volunteers. Collaborative opportunities surfaced as a result of the conference, with requests for contacts with the Tiwi Island community from New South Wales people who wanted to explore the possibility of bringing children up to the Islands for educational purposes. In terms of the training, the NT Police have had ongoing collaboration with WA Police.

Figure 9 provides a visual representation of the relationships between different stakeholders involved in business events, some of the transactions that occur and the benefits that are derived. The right hand side of the figure highlights the collaborations and innovations that can emerge from business events.





10. Conclusions

There is universal agreement that the tourism benefits of business events are very substantial as was demonstrated in Australia's NBES. Delegates travelling to business events from outside the local region have been shown to be higher yielding travelers than leisure based travelers and the fact that many delegates take pre and post event tours as well as bring accompanying persons further adds to their economic impact. It is important to recognise, however, that the important tourism benefits of business events are only one type of outcome in addition to the key outcomes business events aim to produce. These broader based benefits are more enduring, substantial and significant than the tourism benefits. These broader based benefits align much more closely with the core motives for staging business events but are often more difficult to quantify than the tourism benefits.

Whilst these broader based benefits are wide in scope, many of them can be grouped under the two categories of creating and disseminating innovation and enhancing individual and organisational performance. It is important, however, that these benefits are at least recognised so that strategies can be implemented to maximise the value of these benefits and efforts can be made to more accurately assess their value. This is not to detract from the tourism value of business events but simply to enforce the view that the total value of business events is much greater than the tourism impact and that it is critical that the total value be assessed if business events are to realise their potential.

Knowledge that is delivered via business events has the potential to enhance individual and organisation performance. To maximise these outcomes, however, it is essential that clear objectives be set for business events and action be

taken to follow up to ensure that the objectives are achieved. The development of ROI (Return on Investment) programs associated with business events is an increasingly important technique to help deliver increased benefits to individuals and organisations from business events by measuring outcomes against the investment made.

If business events are to realise their potential, it is critical that the focus moves towards leveraging key outcomes rather than simply measuring tourism impact. Whilst there is value in doing more to quantify the true outcomes of business events, the fact that these cannot easily be quantified should not be used as a reason not to leverage the opportunities that business events create.



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Further information: www.businesseventscouncil.org.au

