

BUSINESS EVENT WINS SET TO BOOST DUBAI ECONOMY AND KNOWLEDGE GROWTH

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Conferences, congresses, incentive travel programmes and other meetings captured by Dubai in the first half of 2022 are set to play a critical role in driving not only incremental growth for the city’s tourism and events sectors, but wider economic and knowledge development, in the wake of a period of successful bidding.

Through the first six months of the year, Dubai Business Events (DBE), the city’s official convention bureau, collaborated with stakeholders across the emirate and wider UAE to register 99 successful bid wins. These events are set to attract over 77,000 delegates over the coming years and yield over 330,000 room nights at hotels across the city. Meanwhile, H1 also saw DBE submit a total of 200 bids and proposals for international business events, many of which are yet to be determined.

Events captured in 2022 so far include the International Congress of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (2023), IFOS ENT World Congress (2023), Congress of the Asia Pacific Orthopedic Association (2024) and International Congress of Endocrinology (2024). Meanwhile key corporate events and incentive travel programmes coming to Dubai as a result of successful bids include Sun Pharmaceuticals Industries Annual Convention and Incentive (2022) and IBM Best in Tech (2023). In line with the strategic priority placed on capturing business events, these bid wins are set to not only boost the events, hospitality and related tourism sectors, but the wider economy by bringing expertise and knowledge from around the world.

Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO of Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment, said: “The success of our bidding activity in the first half of 2022 demonstrates the strong proposition Dubai is able to present to associations, corporates and other organisations around the world and builds on the track record the city has established in providing a respected and attractive platform for the sharing of knowledge, professional development and networking. With international associations bringing some of their flagship events to Dubai, the city will be at the heart of global conversations and development around key sectors and areas of innovation.

“Inspired by the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to make Dubai the city of the future and the world’s best place to live, work and invest in, business events will continue to be a priority, building on the Expo 2020 Dubai legacy and Dubai’s status as a destination where the world can come together.”

Bidding activity through the first six months has been driven by the collaborative approach taken by DBE in working with partners across the public and private sector, including government departments, local associations and societies, universities and other institutions, as well as business events stakeholders including venues, hotels, DMCs and PCOs. The success of Expo 2020 Dubai in the early part of the year provided a platform to showcase the city to key decisionmakers, demonstrating Dubai's ability to effectively host events of all sizes and meet the demands of an international audience. DBE hosted a number of delegations during Expo and through the rest of H1, while also interacting with meeting planners and association executives globally, including on its own roadshows and through its presence at industry events and trade shows, such as IMEX Frankfurt.

Steen Jakobsen, Associate Vice President, Dubai Business Events, said: "The city's success in attracting major events is driven by the collaborative approach taken by stakeholders across the sector and wider economy. Building on the city's strong rebound in the wake of the global pandemic, and the lead it took in resuming tourism and events, we continue to see a strong response from meeting planners and decisionmakers in bringing international business events to Dubai.

As we move through the rest of 2022, our priority is to underline to associations executives, corporate meeting planners and other decisionmakers the power of in-person business events and the strong value proposition that Dubai can offer them. And we continue to welcome opportunities to work with stakeholders to identify and bid for events that align with our strategic objectives."

DBE will build on the performances already recorded this year with an intense period of engagement with meeting planners and association executives through the rest of 2022. Sales missions across key cities in Europe, Latin America and Israel will see DBE joined by stakeholders meet planners in their own markets and explain the compelling propositions available to them. Meanwhile inbound study missions from Japan and Korea, South East Asia, and North America will provide planners with an opportunity to see the destination and its capabilities first-hand. DBE will also lead strong delegations of industry partners to major trade shows – including IMEX America (Las Vegas) and IBTM World (Barcelona).

DBE also continues to leverage key international partnerships and industry collaborations globally to elevate the city's position as a global business events hub, including through its membership and activities with the BestCities Global Alliance, the International Congress and Convention Association, the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers and the Global Association Hubs Partnership. As a founding partner of Dubai Association Centre, DBE is also engaging with associations executives and thought leaders through participation at the American Society of Association Executives Annual Meeting & Exposition.

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