

Major business event bid wins for Dubai as post-Covid recovery gathers momentum

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Dubai's business events sector continues to lay the groundwork for a sustainable post-Covid recovery, with the city marking a number of major bid wins as meetings professionals around the world look to get their plans back on track. Dubai Business Events (DBE), the city's official convention bureau, has worked with stakeholders across Dubai to add a number of new events into the pipeline in recent months, including the following, all taking place in 2021: International DIP Symposium on Diabetes, Hypertension, Metabolic Syndrome and Pregnancy; World Independent Advertising Award Conference; and Omnilife Latin America Incentive.

These events are set to contribute to both international visitor numbers to the city in coming years and drive knowledge growth in their relevant sectors. They also underline the continued attractiveness of Dubai as a destination for international business events and the efficacy of efforts over the past months to keep Dubai top of mind among decision makers, as well as the increasing appetite among associations and corporates to resume their crucial face-to-face business events.

Other events DBE has played a role in bringing to the city include **Arab Association of Urology Annual Congress (2020)**, **Premier Financial Alliance Annual Incentive (2021)** and **Tfest (2021)**, while Florida-based **Jeunesse Global** is to send three incentive groups – from Asia Pacific, Europe and Japan respectively – to Dubai in 2021. Among the events awarded to the city are a number that have been relocated to Dubai, with organisers taking advantage of the city's rapid response to the pandemic and the implementation of effective health and safety protocols, as recognised by the Safe Travels stamp awarded to the city by the World Travel & Tourism Council.

Issam Kazim, CEO of Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing, said: "Despite all the challenges faced by the global Covid-19 pandemic, Dubai's ability to maintain a pipeline of business events over the coming years is a continued testament to both the response of the city's leadership to tackle the situation and the resilience of our stakeholders, who continued to work together to elevate the city and sustain its appeal to a truly global audience. With international meetings already taking place again in Dubai, the city is primed to lead the business event sector's resurgence, recementing the vital role they play in driving economic growth and providing a platform for networking, professional development and knowledge sharing."

With internationally-recognised practices now embedded across venues, hotels, Dubai's airports and other touchpoints across the city, international and local business events can now take place in Dubai, with a robust framework for planners set in place to ensure the health and safety of all delegates and participants.

Throughout the global Covid-19 pandemic, DBE has maintained its activities and engagement with meetings industry professionals globally, primarily through a rich programme of webinars and virtual meetings. It is planning to combine these digital efforts with a resumption of international roadshows, sales missions and strong presence at trade shows in 2021. Meanwhile, the new Dubai Business Events Stakeholder Committee, formed last month and bringing together senior officials from venues, hotels, airlines, PCOs and DMCs, is also providing a vital platform for the industry to come together to find paths for growth, and design strategies to meet current and future challenges.

Steen Jakobsen, Assistant Vice President, Dubai Business Events, said: "Just as the global calendar of business events has been disrupted over the past few months, so have bidding cycles and timelines for choosing destinations for future events. Nevertheless, we continue to see increasing interest from meetings professionals around the world and clear determination to get plans back on track. In a number of cases, where unfortunately other cities have not proved viable for certain events through 2021, we have been able to step in to provide an alternative, and we continue to work with event planners to identify opportunities where Dubai can play a role in restarting their business events."

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