

Media Release

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Melbourne Announces Health Congress Win

Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) today announced that Melbourne will host the 11th World Congress on Developmental Origins of Health and Disease 2019 (DOHaD). This is the first time ever the biennial congress will be held in Melbourne and is the only gathering worldwide for specialists in the field of research in prevention of disease in early life.

The four-day event will take place at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) and is expected to attract to the city of Melbourne over 800 scientists, clinical researchers, obstetricians, paediatricians, public health professionals and policy leaders in the discipline of foetal and developmental disease.

As Australia's knowledge, research and innovation capital, Melbourne boasts a robust biotechnology sector featuring 186 biotechnology companies, 10 major medical research institutes and 10 major teaching hospitals, making Melbourne one of the world's most successful destinations for Association health and medical conferences.

Minister for Tourism and Major Events, John Eren said Melbourne's medical community is delivering significant value to the visitor economy.

"Events of this calibre put Melbourne and Victoria on a world stage, and contribute significantly to our economy. Business events are the highest yielding sector of the Victorian visitor economy, delivering an economic contribution of \$9.98 billion and 65,000 jobs annually," Mr Eren said.

Karen Bolinger, MCB Chief Executive Officer said Melbourne has a proven track record in hosting important health meetings.

"Melbourne has an outstanding international medical research reputation, and we're renowned for our collaborative model across basic and clinical research.

"This collaboration has seen MCB lead in bringing together State Government, MCEC, Club Melbourne, Monash University and Murdoch Children's Institute to deliver a bid proposition to the congress host association; the International Society for Developmental Origins of Health and Disease, that could meet and exceed their objectives for the congress, as well as demonstrate our proven expertise in delivering health events," Ms Bolinger said.

MCEC Chief Executive, Peter King praised the work that had been done to bring this congress to Melbourne.

"Professors Bertram and Wallace are great examples of the world leaders we have in our Club Melbourne Ambassador Program, all of who work tirelessly to collaborate to help secure international conferences for our city.

"Melbourne really is a knowledge hub and MCEC is the place where the world's best thinkers gather to connect and share ideas."

Professor Bertram, Head of Department of Anatomy and Developmental Biology, Monash University, Club Melbourne Ambassador, and Chair of the Local Organising Committee for Melbourne DOHaD 2019 is confident the event will have a lasting impact on the community.

“Melbourne is a major city in Australia for medical and biomedical research, and our local researchers alongside international delegates will collaborate to develop a co-ordinated approach to research strategy for the scientific exploration of early human development in relation to chronic diseases later in life.

“DOHaD is the preeminent international forum for industry experts to address the many challenges that currently impact the health of mothers, babies in the womb, infants, children and adolescents - as well as explore solutions, interventions and policies to optimise life-long health.

“We anticipate effective discussion and debate of universal public health strategies to prevent chronic disease,” Professor Bertram said.

Professor Mark Hanson, President, International Society for Developmental Origins of Health and Disease said, “Melbourne was chosen as the host city for DOHaD 2019 because of its expert medical research community, as well as the collaborative nature of its approach to winning the event. The DOHaD community look forward to meeting in the beautiful city of Melbourne for what we are confident will be a very stimulating and enjoyable Congress.”

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