

# Media Release

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## Melbourne lands the largest conference ever for Victoria, Rotary International Convention 2023

Melbourne has been chosen as the host city for the 2023 Rotary International Convention, a massive gathering expected to draw tens of thousands of visitors.

The convention is the most valuable conference ever won for the state, expected to attract 20,000 Rotary members from over 200 countries and regions worldwide and injecting over \$88 million into the Victorian economy.

The bid led by Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) and supported by the Victorian and Australian Governments had stiff international competition, which makes it even more prestigious for Rotary to select Melbourne.

MCB took it up a notch in showcasing Melbourne's capability to meet stringent bid regulations and strategically demonstrate its ability to accommodate the specific needs of Rotary delegates and the convention format.

The successful bid win was made possible by the unified approach with partners, with acknowledgement to the engagement of the local Rotary members and collaborative Team Melbourne determination.

Often described as a "mini-United Nations" because of its global scope and cultural diversity, Rotary's International Convention will see a kaleidoscope of energy, colour and excitement where Rotary members will exchange ideas for how to improve lives and bring positive, lasting change to communities around the world.

The convention is expected to create millions of dollars in economic spinoffs, including the most significant room block in Melbourne's history for hotels guaranteeing high occupancy levels for up to 50 properties across Melbourne during the off-peak winter season.

Convention events will be hosted across two venues - Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) and Rod Laver Arena at Melbourne & Olympic Parks.

### **Quotes to be attributable to Melbourne Convention Bureau Chief Executive Officer Karen Bolinger:**

"Victoria is a world-leader in the business events sector, and we intentionally pursue events of this size and scale as they deliver significant benefit back to the State, as well as create further bidding opportunities from other worldwide associations that hold numerous major international conferences."

"The MCB's strong connections and collaboration with government and local suppliers – its 'whole-of-city' approach to winning and delivering events in Melbourne – provides invaluable support to Victoria's visitor economy."

"No two events are the same. The MCB recognises the importance of being able to tailor solutions to the individual requirements of such esteemed business events and this requires teamwork. It's this unity that enables Melbourne to deliver above and beyond expectations, time and again."

### **Quotes to be attributable to Rotary International President Barry Rassin:**

"We are excited to host our 114<sup>th</sup> international convention in Melbourne."

"Recently named the happiest city in the world and known for its diversity, Melbourne is a reflection of the enthusiasm and internationality of Rotary members. Our members in Melbourne have worked hard to make the world a better place

from redistributing surplus fresh food to community food programs around Australia, to their goal of immunising 100,000 children in nine Pacific countries.

“We’re looking forward to being welcomed into this world class city and showing the people of Melbourne the Internationality of Rotary and the enthusiasm of Rotary to make our world better for those in need”.

**Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula:**

“Events of this calibre put Melbourne and Victoria on the world stage and boost our economy.”

“Securing the 2023 Convention allows us to showcase the very best that Victoria has to offer visitors from across the globe and provides more opportunities for local businesses to increase trade.”

**Quotes attributable to Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Simon Birmingham:**

“Over the course of the four-day event an extra 20,000 visitors will be filling up Melbourne’s hotel rooms, local restaurants and also driving visitation to the city’s key venues and attractions.”

“Tourism Australia’s Business Events Bid Fund is helping to bring significant international events like this one to Australia. Importantly, these events often attract the type of visitor that extends their stay to regional parts of Australia and are also more likely to return for a holiday in the future.”

**Quotes attributable to City of Melbourne Lord Mayor, Sally Capp:**

“We’re proud to be a global city that attracts international events of this scale and the convention will be a huge boost for jobs, businesses and tourism across Melbourne and Victoria.”

“Rotary’s history of service is inspiring. I’m delighted convention guests will be able to enjoy the sights and sounds of Melbourne’s famed cafes, laneway culture and world-class hospitality.”

**Quotes to be attributable to Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Chief Executive Officer Peter King:**

“The announcement was testament to Melbourne’s status as Australasia’s leading meetings and conference destination.”

“The Rotary International Convention will allow us to showcase Melbourne and the best convention and meetings venue in the business – the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

“Additionally, and importantly, the MCEC is excited by the community legacy outcomes that result from these large significant events. Business events deliver visitation and investment to our city like no other activity.”

**Quotes attributable to Melbourne & Olympic Parks Chief Executive Officer, Brian Morris:**

“We were delighted to team up with the Victorian Government and the MCEC to win this event on behalf of the people of Victoria.”

“Not only will this convention bring significant economic benefit to the state, it will also highlight the world-class nature of our venues and encourage even more international business events to choose Melbourne as their next destination.

“We are very much looking forward to welcoming the Rotary International Convention to Melbourne & Olympic Parks, in particular our iconic Rod Laver Arena in 2023.”

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**Media enquiries:**

Giselle Lloyd, Melbourne Convention Bureau

T +61 3 9002 2325 / +61 429 553 183

E [giselle.lloyd@melbournecb.com.au](mailto:giselle.lloyd@melbournecb.com.au)