



**IT'S SHOWTIME AT AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER CONVENTION, EXHIBITION AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUE**  
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## “Everything begins with a meeting”

**P**ROFESSOR Greg Clark CBE, a world expert in the emerging sphere of the science of cities and their role in economic development, delivered the keynote at yesterday's opening ceremony. Clark, who works with around 100 of the world's cities, helping them develop the strategies they need to deliver long-term economic development, said it was a fascinating period in the history of the city.

“We are in the middle of a century of change, and this middle segment of the next 33 years really matters. The decisions we make now on issues such as infrastructure, trade, population movements, and dealing with climate change, will set the pattern that will endure for the next 100 to 200 years.”

Clark said that the role of the meetings industry was crucial in advancing these areas, yet it remained “almost invisible to many policy makers. It does not appear in economic

development strategies as much as it should. An industry that brings large numbers of elite decision makers to cities should be acknowledged more.”

Advising on closing what he called the “partnership gap”, between cities and the meetings industry, Clark said that the successful cities of the future would be those who best solved these issues and who made meetings a component of the way ahead.

“Without meetings to think about the issues we face, we would not know where to start. Everything begins with a meeting,” he said.

Addressing the packed opening ceremony, Ray Bloom, IMEX Group chairman said that the meetings and events industry was responding proactively and looking forward at a time of great change in the world. With IMF figures for global growth at 3.5% for 2017 and 3.6% for 2018, expectations were for



robust global demand and a resilient and optimistic meetings industry.

“At IMEX our aim is to help the industry make valuable connections and build powerful working relationships,” he said. “With 3,500 companies exhibiting from over 150 countries, and a packed schedule of education and social events, there are plenty of opportunities to make fresh connections and do business over the next three days.”

Wolfgang Marzin, president and CEO of Messe Frankfurt said: “As trade show people, the last day of the set-up is always the most important, and as I walked the show yester-

day, it was astonishing to see how IMEX keeps adding value to the show every year. Thank you for bringing the meetings community together.”

Representing the German meetings industry, Matthias Schultze, managing director of the GCB, said that the continued growth of its meetings sector, indicated how face to face remained an essential tool of business. “There is no substitute for meeting together. Despite digitalisation, meetings have grown because they strengthen international understanding and cooperation. They are now more important than ever.”

### 3 ways to find your way around the show

1. Use the IMEX App provided by DoubleDutch. Download by searching IMEX Group in the iTunes App Store for iPhone or Google Play Store for Android.
2. Visit the IMEX Information Zone powered by Giant iTab, ground floor, level 9.0, hall 9.
3. Pick up a copy of the IMEX Show Planner.

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## New leaders step up at INCON

**I**NCON the partnership of conference and association management companies has announced a leadership change.

Patrizia Semprebene Buongiorno, vice president, AIM Group International, and Carol McGury, EVP, SmithBucklin, will serve as the new co-chairs of INCON. They will be joined by Lior Gefland, CEO of Ortra, who will serve as treasurer. Additionally, McGury will serve as INCON's newly appointed dean, leading INCON's education programme and annual university, which brings INCON team members together to cross-fertilise knowledge and experience.

Buongiorno and McGury replace, Roslyn McLeod OAM, managing director of Arinex, and Inge Hanser, managing director of CPO Hanser Service, who served as co-chairs for

a decade. Under their leadership, INCON has driven thought leadership in event trends and championed the quality of infrastructure in venues through the Global Digital Infrastructure Award.

Buongiorno said: “We are deeply grateful for the leadership of our outgoing co-chairs, Inge and Roslyn, who have provided enthusiasm, creativity, wisdom and a global network of contacts to the partnership. We are delighted that they will remain on as active board members.”

Going forward, INCON's vision for the partnership is to generate more clients; foster best practice in client service; strengthen the collaboration with key meeting industry organisations, and further invest in INCON's digital marketing engagement.

“This is such an exciting time for the events and meetings industry, and the collaboration through INCON provides world-class opportunities for all of our client organisations,” said McGury. “Our

continued focus on education will also help all of us deliver value to our attendees.”

Stand A400 [incon-pco.com](http://incon-pco.com)

