

# 2023 BUSINESS EVENTS Consumer Demand Project

New International business events research outlines the factors influencing decision makers when choosing a destination for events, including how Australia is perceived and the impact COVID-19 has had on decision making.

The Consumer Demand Project (CDP) surveyed 160 associations in UK/ Europe and North America and 402 corporate decision makers from the incentive sector in ten of Australia's key markets to better understand the perception of Australia as a business events destination. Findings from the research have been compared to data from the 2022 CDP to provide insight into how sentiment has evolved over the last 12-months.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS



Decision makers are feeling increasingly confident with running events



There is positivity in relation to future event budgets



Australia is well positioned as an events destination, maintaining high levels of appeal whilst experiencing increases in consideration



Australia is recognised as a leading incentive destination in terms of visitation, consideration and current bookings



Australia's appeal as an association destination remains strong and has experienced positive growth across several key attributes



Previous experience visiting Australia remains the defining factor for how it is viewed as an events destination

“Our annual research is a great resource for our industry partners – it offers insights into how Australia is perceived as a business events destination, and informs our strategy and activity. It’s encouraging to see the sector is in a stronger position compared to 12 months ago, and Australia’s appeal as an events destination remains high.”

– Robin Mack, Executive General Manager, Commercial & Business Events Australia, Tourism Australia

## THE GLOBAL BUSINESS EVENTS LANDSCAPE IN 2023

The business events sector has changed notably in the last 12 months, with more than 90 per cent of decision makers in both the incentive and association sector claiming to have run events in the last year, a 32 per cent increase from 2022. In the short term, global uncertainty and key financial factors are the biggest influences on decision makers’ confidence. This, however, hasn’t impacted future budgets, with 90 per cent decision makers indicating they will retain or increase their budget compared to pre-COVID times.

### TOP FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISION MAKING FOR OVERSEAS EVENTS ACROSS BOTH SECTORS:



Global uncertainty



Ground costs



Cost of airfares



Global economic situation

In light of this, the outlook for the international business events landscape is strong, with decision makers expecting budgets to increase.

### INCREASED BUDGETS

INCENTIVE	84% (+12%)
ASSOCIATION	70% (-1%)

... of decision makers claim to have increased budgets for overseas events in the next 12 months

## AUSTRALIA AS A BUSINESS EVENTS DESTINATION

Event decision makers across key markets in the association and incentive sectors consistently identify five attributes for Australia as an event destination



A safe and secure destination



A range of quality accommodation options



An appealing climate



Good food, wine, local cuisine and produce



Excellent business events facilities

### INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES

For association decision makers, Indigenous experiences hold increasing appeal. Nearly 4 in 5 are drawn to including an Indigenous-guided wildlife, art or culinary experience (+6%) or a traditional Welcome to Country Indigenous ceremony (+2%).

The same rings true for incentive decision makers with 85 per cent recognising the appeal of an Indigenous-guided wildlife, art or culinary experience as part of an incentive program itinerary in Australia (-1%).

### AUSTRALIA IS A LEADING INCENTIVE DESTINATION

Amongst incentive decision makers, Australia is the global leader in consideration, and has experienced increases in appeal and intent over the last 12-months.

90%

view Australia as an appealing destination for an incentive event (+4%)

74%

intend to plan an incentive trip in Australia in the next 6-12 months (+1%)

49%

are considering Australia for an incentive trip in the next 4 years (+7%)

38%

have currently booked an incentive trip to Australia (+11%)

Incentive decision makers ranked Australia as number one across 22 attributes - including the top three most important factors that influence decision makers when choosing a destination for an incentive event:

#1

A safe and secure destination (excluding COVID-19 related factors)

#1

Excellent business event facilities

#1

A destination that offers value for money

The research indicated that those likely to plan an incentive trip in Australia is significantly improved when decision makers have visited before. With the confidence and outlook for the incentive sector looking strong, there is an opportunity for Australia to capitalise on this sentiment and drive conversion.

### AUSTRALIA'S APPEAL AS AN ASSOCIATION DESTINATION

Amongst association decision makers, perceptions of Australia have improved in many areas and has experienced increases in intent in the last 12-months.

78%

view Australia as an appealing destination for an association event (-1%)

79%

intend to plan an association event in Australia in the next 2 years (+6%)

28%

are considering Australia for an association event in the next 4 years (+13%)

16%

have currently booked an association event to Australia (+9%)

Australia is seen as an appealing destination with several positive attributes - including being ranked number three in the world for quality of business events facilities (-4%) and range of accommodation options (-5%).

+12%

A safe and secure destination

+4%

Friendly and passionate event staff

+9%

Opportunity to learn about and engage with the Indigenous cultures

While appeal and intent remain strong, prior experience of Australia as an association events destination makes a significant and positive difference to perceptions. With the confidence and outlook for the association sector looking positive, there is an opportunity for Australia to capitalise on this sentiment and drive conversion through increasing familiarity of Australia's offering.

### THE RESEARCH

The CDP was conducted by Snapcracker Research + Strategy, who surveyed 160 association decision makers and 402 corporates from the incentive sector between May and June 2023.

The CDP covers decision makers for events in the association sector based in North America (USA and Canada) and the UK/ Europe (UK, France, Switzerland and Belgium); and decision makers in the incentive sector based in North America (USA and Canada), UK/ Europe (majority UK), Greater China, Malaysia, Singapore, India, Indonesia, and New Zealand.