



MEDIA RELEASE

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Thousands of Lions and Leos are set to descend on Melbourne

With just a day to go until the commencement of the Lions International Convention 2024 (LIC2024) in Melbourne, anticipation is mounting among organisers, participants, and local businesses. The city looks forward to welcoming over 10,500 Lions members and participants from more than 170 countries, converging to exchange ideas and inspiration with a vision for the future of service.

Taking place from 21 – 25 June at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC), the Convention is poised to generate substantial social and economic benefits for the local economy.

The influx of delegates is expected to inject millions of dollars into the city's economy, providing vital support to Melbourne's restaurants, retailers, venues, attractions, and accommodation sector, as well as benefiting regional Victorian businesses.

Melbourne Convention Bureau Chief Executive Officer Julia Swanson said the Lions International Convention will be one of the biggest business events for the year.

"We're delighted to host this year's convention in Melbourne. It presents an excellent opportunity for us to highlight our city's prowess as a premier global destination for hosting large-scale conventions.

"Preparations for this event have been underway for several years, and we are confident that our top-tier facilities, exceptional event infrastructure, and city-wide cooperation will guarantee an unforgettable experience for all attendees," said Ms. Swanson.

The convention is expected to deliver \$68 million to the local economy and drive hotel occupancy in a typical low season period.

Throughout the five-day conference Lions members can look forward to a packed program of events, including keynote speeches, workshops, and networking opportunities, all set against the backdrop of Melbourne's world-renowned hospitality and cultural offerings.

In addition to LIC2024 itself, a further 80+ ancillary events will take place in easy-to-access leading venues across Melbourne including the Melbourne Zoo, Eureka89 and Crown Towers to name a few.

While in Melbourne, Lions and Leos can also join forces in a meaningful way to serve others at special offsite service projects like working with Foodbank Victoria, FareShare Meal Prep and Vision Australia Braille Book Assembly. Foodbank Victoria anticipate Lions volunteers will pack up to 10,000 kilos of food - the equivalent of 20,000 meals for people in need for distribution across its network of 500+ charity partners.

Kicking-off with *The Parade of Nations* on Saturday 22 June 2024, thousands of Lions members from every corner of the globe will gather along the Kings Domain Gardens in a street parade, to honour a year of boundless service and showcase the rich tapestry of their diverse cultures, traditions, and talents.

Organised by Lions International in conjunction with the Host Organising Committee comprised of members from Lion clubs across Victoria and Australia, thousands of visitors are expected to frequent tourist hotspots such as Southbank and the central business district enjoying Melbourne's hospitality, food, wine and shopping.

Chairman of the Host Committee, Tony Benbow OAM, said visitors to Melbourne are keen to experience the food and culture on display that will keep the city's restaurants, night spots and major arenas buzzing with activity.

"We're absolutely thrilled to host this year's Lions International Convention in Melbourne, which will provide an outstanding combination of inspiration and entertainment for our members and participants, and for those interested in learning more about us.

"It's also an opportunity for Victorian Lions members to experience the international scope of Lions and to showcase the positive change they are bringing to communities on a global stage," Mr. Benbow said.

The bid led by the Melbourne Convention Bureau with support from the Victorian State Government, sees this hero event come to Melbourne for the first time and only the third time the event has been held in an Australian city in 33 years.

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