

Management report to Council**Agenda item 6.1****Global Entrepreneurship Congress - Melbourne 2023****Council
13 December 2022****Presenter:** Andrew Wear, Director, Economic Development and International**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support for the 2023 Global Entrepreneurship Congress (GEC), to be held from 1-4 May in Melbourne.
2. Support of GEC is linked to the Council Plan Major Initiative 9 – 'Partner with industry to support the development of globally competitive innovation ecosystems, including through international engagement, emerging technology trials and digital infrastructure delivery.'
3. GEC has been hosted in an emerging entrepreneurial city each year since 2009. It brings together 2500-5000 people from more than 200 countries to participate in the creation of an inclusive global ecosystem by networking, learning, and sharing. The Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) made a successful bid to host next year's GEC in Melbourne with the event to be held from 1-4 May at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. The City of Melbourne (COM) has the opportunity to present itself to a global audience as a leading city of innovation and to lead discussions on the building of capacity in innovation ecosystems.
4. The GEC is delivered by the Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN), which delivers projects and programs in 180 countries around the world and works to fuel healthier start-up and scale-up ecosystems that create more jobs, educate individuals, accelerate innovation and strengthen economic growth. The GEC was designed to build one global ecosystem - creating a community for entrepreneurs and those that support them. It strengthens and connects local and national ecosystems venturing beyond simple matchmaking and deal flow to broker trust and collaboration.

Key issues

5. Council's financial support of the 2023 GEC is via its partnership with the MCB. Council's support contributes to the securing of large conferences for Melbourne.
6. Due to the strong alignment of the GEC with Council objectives and the unique opportunity to engage with a global-scale innovation event, it is appropriate that Council provide additional in-kind support for the event. This can include:
 - 6.1. direct input to the congress program, through participation of Council staff on the GEC steering committee and relevant working groups
 - 6.2. volunteer City Ambassadors to provide delegates with tourism information about the city
 - 6.3. welcome and engagement of attending VIPs
 - 6.4. tours and events adjacent to the main program, to showcase Melbourne's unique business and innovation ecosystem.
7. Council's support for the GEC will generate global attention for Melbourne's world-class business event offerings whilst also delivering short and long terms benefits to our tourism industry and economy more broadly (the economic contribution to the local economy of this event is estimated to be \$30 million). It will further support Melbourne's entrepreneurial leadership and reinforce Victoria's international reputation as a major exporter of ideas and innovation.
8. Previous host cities, such as Istanbul, Riyadh and Bahrain have shown that hosting the GEC can further reinforce global entrepreneurial connections, investment pipelines and better enable government policies that seek to support innovation ecosystems.

9. The GEC program is being informed by the four domains of industry, technology, function, and impact. Up to 15 sectors and themes have then been attributed to each domain, with subject matter experts from the Australian innovation ecosystem appointed as Stream Leads. Leads were selected on evidence of their experience, strength of networks, reputation and respect, capacity and alignment to GEC goals. Leads have already been identified and have been working since June to establish working groups that will develop vision and content for the program.
10. Working groups will also produce Challenge Statements. These describe a problem to be solved in a way that generates exponential impact and growth through the involvement of a community. They are intended to provide sustainable legacies after the conclusion of the Congress for the improvement and progression of each sector and stream, in the context of Melbourne, Australia and the world.

Recommendation from management

11. That Council:
 - 11.1. Endorses management further supporting and leveraging the opportunity of hosting the Global Entrepreneurship Congress (GEC) through the following activities:
 - 11.1.1. Provision of strategic direction through Council staff membership of the GEC steering committee to ensure Council's key interests and sectors are positioned favourably.
 - 11.1.2. Embedding of subject matter experts into working groups of key streams such as climate, health, youth and education and female entrepreneurship.
 - 11.1.3. Installation of a pop-up visitor desk staffed by volunteers during the GEC to provide tourism information about the city.
 - 11.1.4. Hosting by the Lord Mayor and/or Councillors of a welcome event at Melbourne Town Hall for selected VIP delegates.
 - 11.1.5. The leading and facilitation of innovation tours for delegates in key sectors such as life sciences, advanced manufacturing, sustainability and climate change to showcase Melbourne's leading infrastructure, research and human capital capabilities.
 - 11.1.6. Championing and promoting meetups and other events to delegates to showcase the rich diversity of organic entrepreneurial events that occur daily on Melbourne's business calendar.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 3)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. There are no direct legal implications for Council in the recommendation of this report.

Finance

2. The approved 2022-23 Council Budget includes an allocation to support a Welcome to Melbourne event to be hosted by the Lord Mayor or Councillors at Melbourne Town Hall.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. In developing this proposal, OHS issues or opportunities have been considered. In working closely with the GEN and MCB, and particularly by leaning on the expertise that MCB holds in delivery of safe, large events and conferences, COM will focus on the delivery of a well maintained and secure Congress for all participants.

Stakeholder consultation

5. In formalising the program for the 2023 GEC, extensive consultation will be undertaken to ensure Congress themes and content deliver on COM's strategic objectives. Consultation will take place through participation in the GEC Steering Committee and stream workshops. Furthermore, it is expected that GEN will engage with traditional owners from the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation to ensure that appropriate acknowledgements are delivered and that an opportunity is created for elders to perform a Welcome to Country ceremony at the Congress.

Relation to Council policy

6. Support for the 2023 GEC is consistent with Council Plan 2021–25 strategic objective, *Economy of the Future* and Council Major Initiative 9 – '*Partner with industry to support the development of globally competitive innovation ecosystems, including through international engagement, emerging technology trials and digital infrastructure delivery.*'

Environmental sustainability

7. The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre's sustainability strategy is shaped by the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs are an urgent call to action for all countries to improve human lives and protect the environment through sustainable development. In particular, the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre is committed to the following sustainability goals:
 - 7..1. Eliminate unnecessary and problematic single-use plastics and divert 90 per cent of waste from landfill by 2025.
 - 7..2. Be 100 per cent powered by renewable electricity by 2028.
 - 7..3. Reduce venue net carbon emissions to zero by 2030.
 - 7..4. Improve biodiversity, habitats and ecosystem health in Victoria.